



**Nottingham City Council
Executive Board**

Date: Tuesday, 22 September 2020

Time: 2.00 pm

Place: Remote - To be held remotely via Zoom -
<https://www.youtube.com/user/NottCityCouncil>

Councillors are requested to attend the above meeting to transact the following business

Director for Legal and Governance

Governance Officer: Kate Morris, Constitutional Services, Tel: 0115 8764353 **Direct
Dial:** 0115 8764353

Agenda	Pages
1 Apologies for absence	
2 Declarations of interests	
3 Minutes Last meeting held on 21 July 2020 (for confirmation)	3 - 10
4 Ofsted Focussed Visit and Children's Services Improvement Programme Report of the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People.	11 - 24
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8 Exclusion of the public

To consider excluding the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining item(s) in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs in the public interest in disclosing the information

9 Exempt minutes

69 - 72

Last meeting held 21 July 2020 (for confirmation)

All items listed 'under exclusion of the public' will be heard in private for the reasons listed in the agenda papers. They have been included on the agenda as no representations against hearing the items in private were received

If you need any advice on declaring an interest in any item on the agenda, please contact the governance officer shown above, if possible before the day of the meeting.

Citizens are advised that this meeting may be recorded by members of the public. Any recording or reporting on this meeting should take place in accordance with the council's policy on recording and reporting on public meetings, which is available at www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk. Individuals intending to record the meeting are asked to notify the governance officer shown above in advance.

Nottingham City Council

Executive Board

Minutes of the meeting remotely via Zoom -

<https://www.youtube.com/user/NottCityCouncil> on 21 July 2020 from 2.00 pm - 3.26 pm

Membership

Present

Absent

Councillor David Mellen (Chair)
Councillor Sally Longford (Vice Chair)
Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark
Councillor Neghat Khan
Councillor Rebecca Langton
Councillor Dave Trimble
Councillor Adele Williams
Councillor Sam Webster
Councillor Linda Woodings

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Councillor Kevin Clarke

Councillor Andrew Rule

Melanie Fretwell

Chris Henning

David Johns

Katherine Kerswell

Laura Pattman

Kelly Marie Prentice

Malcolm Townroe

Catherine Underwood

Hugh White

Kate Morris

- Principal Enforcement Officer - Community Protection
- Corporate Director for Development and Growth
- Public Health Registrar
- Interim Chief Executive
- Strategic Director of Finance
- Finance Business Change Manager
- Director of Legal and Governance
- Corporate Director for People
- Corporate Director for COVID Response and Recovery
- Governance Officer

Call-in

Unless stated otherwise, all decisions are subject to call-in. The last date for call-in is 31 July 2020. Decisions cannot be implemented until the working day after this date.

21 Apologies for absence

None

22 Declarations of interests

Councillor Rebecca Langton declared an other interest in agenda item 11 Development of Beckhampton Road, Bestwood for new Council Housing (minute 31) because she is a Director of Nottingham City Homes. She did not comment or vote on the item.

23 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2020 were confirmed as a true record and were signed by the Chair.

24 BAME Health Inequalities: A Framework for Action

The Board considered the report of the Portfolio Holder for Health, HR and Equalities, looking at work and emerging actions to start to tackle health inequalities experienced by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups, which have been brought into sharp focus through the corona virus pandemic.

The Portfolio Holder for Health, HR and Equalities along with the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Highways and Strategic Transport emphasised the complexity of the problem and outlined the joined up and accountable approach that was proposed. The Portfolio Holder for Health HR and Equalities expressed her thanks to officers for their speedy and thorough work on the planned actions.

Resolved to:

(1) Agree the six priority actions for immediate progression in response to BAME health inequalities. These are to:

- **Introduce Health Inequalities Impact Assessment within NCC to assess the impact of changes to policies, practices and services.**
- **Ensure health services respond to the needs of BAME communities through robust equity analysis and moving from models of engagement to co-production.**
- **Develop a NCC BAME communications plan for COVID-19 to ensure that all of our messages are accessible to BAME colleagues within NCC and to our BAME communities across Nottingham.**
- **Collate our intelligence on council and community assets (i.e. buildings, outdoor spaces, volunteers, skills) that can be mobilised to maximise action to reduce BAME health inequalities and strengthen the resilience of communities.**
- **Review current governance and leadership for addressing BAME health inequalities to coordinate existing work, identify gaps, and drive forward sustainable local change**
- **Develop a city-wide ambition to reduce health inequalities in Nottingham**

(2) Endorse the proposed strategic, place based approach to reducing inequalities in Nottingham City in order to work with communities and co-create a detailed action plan

(3) Delegate authority to the Director of Public Health to establish the governance arrangements

Reasons for decision

Nottingham was ranked as the 11th most deprived district in England in 2019. This deprivation has led to substantial differences in healthy life expectancy within the city,

with people in the poorest neighbourhoods experiencing poor health 17 years earlier than people in the wealthiest neighbourhoods do.

Reducing BAME health inequalities has been, and remains, a key priority in Nottingham. Ensuring a joined up and system wide approach will amplify the effectiveness of work to achieve a step change.

The six actions laid out in the report are for immediate work to start to make changes whilst consultation with communities takes place to develop an action plan to shape the work going forward.

Other options considered

The other option available is to do nothing and not to address the health inequalities facing BAME communities in Nottingham. This option was rejected, as the reduction of these inequalities is already a key priority for Nottingham City Council. The creation of a framework for building on joined up working will make it easier to identify gaps in services/provision that doing nothing would not.

25 Treasury Management 2019/20 Annual Report

This item does not contain any decisions that are subject to the call in.

The Board considered the annual report of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Growth and City Centre detailing Treasury Management activity for 2019/20. The report highlights the performance in respect of managing the Council's external debt and investments. The report is a statutory report and is written in accordance with the requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) code of practice.

The report summarises that external loan debt has risen, interest on debt has decreased and that PWLB rates reduced for new HRA loans.

Resolved to note the performance in relation to Treasury Management for 2019/20

Reasons for decision

The treasury management function is governed by provisions set out in legislation to ensure that the council has regard to the CIPFA code of practice which requires an annual report to be submitted to and considered by Councillors.

Other options considered

Other options for managing the Council's debt and investment portfolio are considered and reviewed on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

26 Council Financial Position - 2020/21 Budget Update

This item does not contain any decisions that are subject to the call in.

The Board considered the report of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Growth and City Centre updating them on the 2020/21 budget and the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Portfolio Holders reiterated their frustrations that the government funding of the Covid-19 pandemic has not covered the extensive costs incurred to ensure Nottingham citizens have been kept safe and called on the government to cover costs as was initially promised.

The following points were highlighted during discussion:

- (a) The forecast budget gap in 2020/21 is £76.085 million. This report proposes additional in year savings totalling £12.505 million, some of which are subject to public consultation;
- (b) Additional funding from the government has been announced bringing the total budget gap to £62.272 million reflecting the additional grant of £3.723 million and in year savings and efficiencies identified within the report of £12.505million;
- (c) Consultation around specific adult care centres will take place before decisions are made on specific services;
- (d) The Trams budget is managed in a robust way in order to deal with liabilities Reserves are maintained to deal with ongoing cost.

Resolved to

(1) Note:

- I. The latest 2020/21 budget gap of £62.272 million.**
- II. That the Section 151 Officer will keep the financial position under continuous review, this includes a new corporate approach to reserves with the S151 Officer or the Deputy S151 Officer approving all movements in reserves**
- III. An updated MTFS will be presented to Executive Board in September ahead of Council on 5 October 2020**
- IV. Weekly financial appraisal of the financial position of the Council to be undertaken by the S151 Officer and Finance Leadership Team**

- (2) Note, endorse and release for consultations the proposals as set out in in paragraph 2.3 and Table 2 of the report for formal, public, staff and Trade Union consultation noting that further details relating to the proposals are contained within the appendices to the published report.**

Reasons for decision

The budget position has been challenging for a number of years following government cuts to Local Authority funding. The current Medium Term Financial Plan approved on 9 March 2020 by Council included savings of £15.623m and pressures of £17.911m. Despite the budget being balanced the MTFP projected gasps in 2021/22 and 2022/23

Other options considered

Throughout the review period a number of cost reduction, income and investment options have been considered.

27 Procurement of Waste Reprocessing Contract -Key Decision

The Board considered the report of the Portfolio Holder for Energy, Environment and Democratic Services detailing the need for a contract for waste processing. The current contract is due to expire on 31 March 2021 and has no extension options.

Resolved to:

- (1) Commence a tender process for the processing of municipal waste collected by the Council for waste treatment; and**
- (2) Delegate the award of and signing of the contract(s) to the interim Chief Executive.**

Reasons for decision

The current contract for waste processing is due to expire and has no extension options. The Council is required to tender for the renewal of this provision

Other options considered

The option not to enter a tender process was rejected on the basis that the council would not be compliance with the Public Contract regulations

The other option considered and rejected was to extend the existing contract. This was rejected following legal and procurement colleague advice meaning that this option would not be compliant with Public Contract Regulations

28 4-6 Castle Boulevard, Nottingham NG7 1FB - Key Decision

The Board considered the report of the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Schools and Communications detailing the disposal of properties identified by the Asset rationalisation Programme as poorly performing investments. This disposal forms part of the regeneration work taking place around the area of the Castle.

Resolved to:

- (1) To declare 4-6 Castle Boulevard, Nottingham surplus to the needs of the Trading Account and from Operational property, and make the premises available to the Corporate Director of Development and Growth to sell, subject to no alternative operational, regeneration, community or other requirements being identified;**
- (2) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Development and Growth in conjunction with the Director of Strategic Assets and Property to agree the method and terms for the sale of the freehold of the property as set out in the exempt appendix; and**
- (3) Reinvest the capital receipt in the most effective way possible to support the financial position of the City Council.**

Reasons for decisions

Releasing the buildings for sale will help to support the Council Plan 2020-24 and the Local Plan Part 2 in delivering city centre regeneration projects

Revenue savings will be made in regard to void business rates and essential repairs which will help to relieve in year pressures on the Trading Account

Capital receipt from the transaction will be available to support the Council's financial position

Other options considered

The other option considered was to continue to let the property. This option was rejected because it requires significant investment to secure a future income stream.

29 Proposed extensions to the Public Spaces Protection Orders as respects alcohol in Nottingham City Council's administrative area

The Board considered the report of the Leader presented by the Portfolio Holder for Employment and Community Protection around extension of the eight Public Spaces Protection Orders that prohibit alcohol consumption in public spaces across Nottingham. In February 2020 a consultation process was started on these ordered, no response was received from the Police and Crime Commission nor from Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire Police, nor from the public or business of Nottingham.

During discussion, the following points were highlighted:

- (a) These orders do no change any existing licence for sale of alcohol. They are designed to target antisocial behaviour and extensions to orders already in place rather than new powers.

Resolved to:

- (1) To note the results of the consultation on the proposal to extend the Public Spaces Protection Orders referred to as Orders 1 – 8 (listed below) for a further three years from 19 October 2020:-**
 - i. Nottingham City Council (Alcohol Consumption in Public Places) Designation Order 2005 ('Order 1') (a copy of which is at Appendix 1)**
 - ii. Nottingham City Council (Hyson Green) Alcohol Consumption in Public Places) Designation Order 2006 ('Order 2') (a copy of which is at Appendix 2)**
 - iii. Nottingham City Council (Sneinton, Forest and Mapperley) Alcohol Consumption in Designated Public Places Order 2008 ('Order 3') (a copy of which is at Appendix 3)**
 - iv. Nottingham City Council Basford Designated Public Place Order 2011 ('Order 4') (a copy of which is at Appendix 4)**
 - v. Nottingham City Council St Ann's and Mapperley Designated Public Place Order 2011('Order 5') (a copy of which is at Appendix 5)**
 - vi. Nottingham City Council St Ann's and Sneinton Designated Public Place Order 2011 ('Order 6') (a copy of which is at Appendix 6)**

Evidence to date shows that the orders have been effective in deterring antisocial behaviour. The powers have been used over 12,000 times over the last 4 years and have been critical in supporting the Council's aim to deal effectively with alcohol related antisocial behaviour.

Without renewing these orders the powers would be lost and alcohol related antisocial behaviour could increase causing problems for residents, businesses and visitors to Nottingham.

Other options considered

The other option considered was not extending the orders. This was rejected losing the powers granted by these orders could lead to increase in problematic behaviour which would negatively impact on citizens, business and visitors to Nottingham.

30 Exclusion of the public

The Board decided to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of this/ the remaining agenda item(s) in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, as defined in Paragraph(s) **3 and 5** of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

31 Development of Beckhampton Road, Bestwood for new Council housing - Key Decision

Resolved to approve the recommendations as set out in the report.

32 Exempt Minutes

The Board confirmed the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2020 as a true record and they were signed by the Chair

33 4-6 Castle Boulevard, Nottingham NG7 1FB - Exempt Appendix

The Board noted the exempt appendix

34 Development of Beckhampton Road, Bestwood for new Council housing - Exempt Appendix

The Board noted the exempt appendix

35 Finance, HR and Payroll System (FFTF) – Programme Implementation Date – Key Decision

Resolved to approve the recommendations as set out in the report.

Subject:	Ofsted Focussed Visit and Children’s Services Improvement Programme
Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Cheryl Barnard, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People
Report author and contact details:	Michelle Roe, Executive Officer Michelle.roe@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
Other colleagues who have provided input:	
Subject to call-in:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Criteria for Key Decision:	
(a) <input type="checkbox"/> Expenditure <input type="checkbox"/> Income <input type="checkbox"/> Savings of £1,000,000 or more taking account of the overall impact of the decision	
and/or	
(b) Significant impact on communities living or working in two or more wards in the City <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Type of expenditure:	<input type="checkbox"/> Revenue <input type="checkbox"/> Capital
Total value of the decision:	Nil
Wards affected:	All
Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s):	
Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:	
Nottingham People	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Living in Nottingham	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Growing Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Respect for Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Serving Nottingham Better	<input type="checkbox"/>
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):	
This report provides an update on the outcome of the Ofsted Focussed Visit in February 2020 and outlines the Improvement Programme undertaken since this Inspection.	
Exempt information:	
None.	
Recommendation(s):	
1 To note and comment on the outcome of the Ofsted Focussed Visit.	
2 To note and support the actions being undertaken to address the two Priority Actions.	
3 Councillors note their Corporate Parenting responsibilities.	

1 Reasons for recommendations

- 1.1 The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) is responsible for inspecting and regulating children’s services. It is important that we meet our statutory requirements to provide services for children and young people in Nottingham. A significant amount of work has been undertaken since the Ofsted Focussed Visit in February 2020.

2 Background (including outcomes of consultation)

- 2.1 In February 2020 Ofsted undertook a Focussed Visit to look at our children subject to child in need and child protection planning and in particular:
- The quality of planning and review
 - The response to children at risk of sustained neglect
 - The quality of management oversight and supervision to progress plans.
- 2.2 There is no inspection rating given during a Focussed Visit, but Inspectors highlighted:
- Nottingham children's services were last inspected by Ofsted in November 2018 and were judged to require improvement to be good. At this focused visit, inspectors found that the experience of children in need of help and protection has deteriorated since the last inspection.*
- Over the last 12 months, there have been significant shortfalls in capacity, with insufficient social workers and managers to cope with the volume of work. In addition, systemic weaknesses in social work practice across the service have led to risks to children not being understood or responded to. As a result, children have been exposed to significant risk of harm from abuse and not adequately protected.*
- 2.3 Given the level of concern in the service areas they looked at, Ofsted issued two Priority Actions:
1. "Address the systemic failures in social work practice to ensure that planning and intervention for children improve their experiences, and that new and emerging risks are identified and responded to.
 2. Stabilise the workforce and address the significant shortfall in capacity to enable social workers and first line managers to respond effectively to children in need of help and protection."
- 2.4 Appendix A and B detail the wider context, action undertaken since the Ofsted Focussed Visit and next steps.

3 Other options considered in making recommendations

- 3.1 There are no alternative options.

4 Finance colleague comments (including implications and value for money/VAT)

- 4.1 The Children at the Heart Plan aims to address the findings identified from the Ofsted focussed visit in February 2020.
- 4.2 The plan has two overarching key priorities, Social Work Practice and Workforce Capacity. The total cost for the plan is £1.576m and predominately relates to additional staffing.
- 4.3 The costs are in addition to the budget allocated included in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).
- 4.4 £1.4m of the additional expenditure will impact on the organisation's 2020/21 MTFP. The residual costs are funded from external contributions.

- 4.5 The above costs will form part of the Children's Integrated Services department. Spend is recorded, monitored and reported as part of the monthly monitoring process.
- 4.6 The total costs are based on a limited period. Any recurrent expenditure required to sustain improvement is not included in the above costs.
- 4.7 Further approval is required if costs over and above this decision are identified.
- 4.8 Failure to address the shortfalls identified in the Improvement Plan could result in material risks for the organisation.

Christine Green, Strategic Finance Partner, Children's & Education

5 Legal and Procurement colleague comments (including risk management issues, and legal, Crime and Disorder Act and procurement implications)

5.1 N/A

6 Strategic Assets & Property colleague comments (for decisions relating to all property assets and associated infrastructure)

6.1 N/A

7 Social value considerations

7.1 N/A

8 Regard to the NHS Constitution

8.1 N/A

9 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

9.1 N/A

10 List of background papers relied upon in writing this report (not including published documents or confidential or exempt information)

10.1 None.

11 Published documents referred to in this report

11.1 [Ofsted Focussed Visit Report \(February 2020\)](#)

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Appendix A

Report to Executive Board

Children’s Integrated Services Ofsted Focussed Visit and Improvement Programme

September 2020

The Wider Context

The experience and outcomes of the most vulnerable children in our city are of paramount importance. The Focused Visit specifically looked at the arrangements put in place by Nottingham City Council. We know that achieving outcomes for children who need help and protection takes place in partnership and we will also be working with partners both within the council and in partner organisations to secure the improvements needed.

The requirement for these improvements is set in the context of the high and increasing levels of deprivation and need experienced by our families in Nottingham and the impact of national government budget cuts to the local authority.

Action Undertaken - Immediate

In response to the two priority actions (and wider recommendations made around the practice improvements) we have developed an action plan which was submitted to Ofsted in March. The improvement programme has been led by the Director of Children’s Services and the Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services.

The key headline actions are:

Priority Area for Action 1 – Social Work Practice	
<i>Address the systemic failures in social work practice to ensure that planning and intervention for children improve their experiences, and that new and emerging risk are identified and responded to.</i>	
1.	Ensure that there is sufficient capacity for strong leadership of immediate and ongoing practice improvement.
2.	Ensure that Nottingham City Council has an operating model which enables good practice and workforce capacity
3.	Ensure that all staff and managers are clear about Nottingham’s social work practice models and ‘what good looks like’
4.	Ensure that assessments and plans are of good quality and accurately evaluate risk and address the needs of children
5.	Assertive practice ensures that children’s needs are understood and appropriate action/intervention is put in place to improve outcomes for children, including those experiencing neglect.
6.	Ensure that all managers are clear about the expectations of their oversight on casework, to ensure children’s needs are understood and effectively addressed
7.	Develop an effective audit framework which provides an accurate appraisal of the experience of children and drives systematic improvements in practice.
8.	Ensure that senior managers and leaders have an accurate understanding of the experience of children
9.	Ensure effective IRO service which ensures effective plans and progress for

	children in care and children in need of protection
Priority Area for Action 2 – Workforce Capacity	
<i>Stabilise the workforce and address the significant shortfall in capacity to enable social worker sand fine line managers to respond effectively to children in need of help and protection.</i>	
10	Stabilise the social work workforce increase capacity in the short-term.
11	Develop a sustainable plan to ensure the sufficiency of social workers in the long-term.

An Improvement Fund of £1.4m one-off funding has been identified to support short-term work force capacity and the improvement plan.

Action Undertaken – Follow up

Nottingham has been clear in its determination and commitment to provide good services for children and families and has acted on Ofsted’s findings with purpose and pace. This has been crucial to create the assurance of us taking appropriate action, but also to drive the changes which we need to make.

Appendix B sets out the key actions which have been completed against the improvement plan.

Highlights in summary:

1. The Children at the Heart Improvement Board is now well-established and provides monthly oversight of the improvement actions. Police, health and education partners are represented on the board. This provides a forum for support and challenge, including the engagement of partners’ commitment to support improvement.
2. A major training programme has been rolled out via Microsoft Teams during June and July, designed to ensure that all practitioners are clear about the Nottingham practice model. Further training is being provided to address specific practice elements, including holding risk. Essex Partners in Practice colleagues have led an online practice conference attended by over 100 of our practitioners. Training has been focused on application into practice and has been very well received.
3. New mechanisms have been put in place for engaging front-line practitioners and managers in the improvement of practice, including a Practice Leadership MS Teams group and a Practitioners Forum. These groups are making a strong contribution, including developing materials to support best practice. We are seeing practitioners stepping up as champions of good practice and embracing the challenge to improve practice.
4. Detailed diagnostic work (including case note reviews, observation, interviews) has been undertaken with our Partners in Practice from Essex County Council in order to give us an external view on our improvement requirements. This has reinforced the need for comprehensive practice improvement and for wider cultural change to underpin good practice and good quality services. There is a series of actions against these themes which we are building into our improvement action plan.
5. Alongside practice improvement, workforce capacity is vital. We have been able to engage agency staff to close staffing gaps, but clearly what we are seeking is stability

in our own workforce. It is vital because a) children need consistency in their workers and b) we need consistency in practice which can only be secured by developing and retaining our staff. The consequences of that lack of stable workforce were visible in the Focused Visit. Training did not keep up with the turnover of new staff, so our workforce was no longer working consistently to a clear Nottingham model. In addition, the lack of workforce capacity meant that caseloads have been excessive and that colleagues were pushed into monitoring and ticking the boxes, rather than doing productive, relationship-based work with children and families. We are now seeing the benefit of having staffing gaps filled with agency staffing: caseloads are reducing to a more manageable level allowing improvements in timescales and in the quality of practice and recording. To have a stable workforce we have to make this sustainable.

6. A new social work pay and progression structure is in place and work is now focusing on improving recruitment as part of the wider workforce strategy.
7. We are reviewing other elements of our Learning Improvement Framework, particularly to strengthen our audit process, to ensure that audits reflect a consistent and accurate appraisal of the quality of practice and that effective learning is secured both by individual practitioners and by the wider service in response to audit findings. The reflective case file audit programme restarted in June 2020, with moderation panels to ensure consistency in relation to what good looks like.

We continue to actively engage with the Association of Directors of Children's Services Regional Improvement and Innovation Alliance, Local Government Association and the Department for Education to support improvement. We are also maintaining ongoing dialogue with Ofsted around our progress and our response to covid-19.

We are also working closely with our partners through our Improvement Board, Safeguarding Partnership, Small Steps Big Changes Board and the Integrated Care Partnership.

The Impact of Covid-19

As a result of the Covid-19 crisis, Children's Services were forced to rethink how they continued to operate and provide services for children most in need. The improvement action plan was developed shortly before the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic and although strong progress has been made, delivery has nonetheless been impacted. This is being monitored by the Improvement Board

On lockdown, Children's Services needed to immediately prioritise activity. A risk assessment was undertaken on each child to establish how to plan for their safety and support. Visits and work with children and families have used virtual means of contact where possible, doorstep visits and home visits where necessary. Service delivery had to be adjusted to reflect public health guidance – building-based and group-based activities were largely stood down. Staff capacity was prioritised, for example redeploying colleagues to our residential children's homes. There has been an important additional focus on the education offer to vulnerable children, recognising the importance of learning and the protective benefit of school attendance in the protection and wellbeing of children. Colleagues have worked with flexibility and creativity to ensure children are safe and families are supported.

On 23 April 2020, the Department for Education (DfE) introduced a series of temporary regulatory flexibilities for local authorities and children's social care providers. The Regulations are due to expire on 25th September. The DfE are monitoring the use of the Regulations. Similarly other authorities, the Children Integrated Services Directorate have enacted a small number of easements.

This work had to be urgently prioritised ahead of delivering the improvement plan. In addition, Covid-19 lockdown some delay in being able to put in place improvement support and training programmes.

Covid-19 has had an impact on demand in Children's Services. Child protection plan admissions were high in February and March. The resultant number of children with a child protection plan in place has increased by 25% compared with the previous year. This increase is likely to be explained by high profile cases and an Ofsted inspection as opposed to the resultant impact of Covid-19. Higher child protection numbers often translate in to more children coming in to care too as with intervention and scrutiny more risks are often identified. The number of children in care has increased very significantly, during the period of lockdown and is receiving focused attention.

In addition, we know that Covid-19 has disproportionate impact and sadly, that our disadvantaged families will experience greater impact. Nottingham is the 6th most deprived city for children to grow up in according to measures of income deprivation (IDACI 2019). We will need to understand, as best as we are able to, how we best support our children and families as a wider council and partnership and what this means for service demands.

Risk

Our programme of improvement is not a quick fix, reflecting the scale of changes we are making. (Essex are clear that their journey from 'inadequate' to 'outstanding' took 10 years). The biggest risk for us is failing to improve and we are acting strongly to mitigate this. However, we also need to ensure the improvement that we undertake is sustainable in challenging times.

The improvement fund has allowed the service to fill gaps in staffing and that is giving visible benefits in terms of caseloads, improved performance against key statutory requirements and the opportunity to implement practice changes. However, this is temporary funding and we need carefully to understand how we maintain improvements and the resourcing of priorities.

We need our practitioners and managers to be able to devote their attention wholeheartedly to the practice and improvement in a very short space of time. The core children's services have been excluded from the current voluntary redundancy process, but colleagues will still be concerned at the organisation's budgetary position and we are seeking to reassure them to avoid an impact on retention.

Many of the factors which support families and help ensure children are safeguarded and are visible have not been available as usual during lockdown, such as school, health services and informal support. There is major concern about the hidden harm which may emerge especially when schools come back in September. Nationally, a surge is expected in demand for children's services and we expect this to be experienced in Nottingham. Any increased demand will be a challenge for the service,

but this may sit alongside not only the demands of our improvement activity, but also the return of Ofsted for their assurance visit. This is a huge demand on the department.

Ofsted have recently announced their new regime of autumn assurance visits, given the pause in their usual inspection regime due to the pandemic. They will be visiting chosen local authorities to review how they have ensured outcomes for children under Covid-19. Their focus will include authorities with Priority Actions, like ourselves. This is a challenge for us as it is a broader scope than the follow-up Focused Visit we would normally have received. The team will also include an education inspector who will focus on the education experience of vulnerable children during Covid-19.

We have had a relatively short time to deliver tangible improvement and confidence in our ability as an authority to deliver improvement. Achieving fast and demonstrable improvement has been a challenge. Although the assurance visit will not provide a rating, it will determine how soon inspectors will return for a full inspection. Clearly we need to demonstrate safe services and improving outcomes for children and our aim is to create the confidence to allow us longer before our full inspection.

As set out in the previous report, the implications of an inadequate inspection outcome are that we would be failing to serve Nottingham's children. However, in addition it would also bring major external scrutiny with ministerial oversight and potential intervention. In addition, very substantial additional cost would be incurred.

The Role of the Corporate Parent

As well as striving to meet the needs of children in the City, as Corporate Parents, we have a specific responsibility for our looked after children. We are and must remain committed to delivering better outcomes for children in our care, ensuring that our responsibilities as corporate parents are reflected in all aspects of the work of Nottingham City Council. Although this has not been explicitly part of our action plan, we are undertaking work to develop the opportunities we create as corporate parents of the children in our care. We have had an initial conversation with Executive Panel about reflecting on our existing commitments as corporate parents.

Next Steps

We are now developing phase 2 of our action plan, based on the work we have been undertaking with our Partners in Practice. This will reflect, not just responding to the findings of the Focused Visit, but also developing the wider continuous improvement and culture change which we recognise is so essential for us to achieve our ambition for Nottingham's children's services to be recognised as good or better.

We recognise that securing good outcomes for children and young people in Nottingham is not just our children's services, but is about all the opportunities we can create for young people growing up in our vibrant, creative and diverse city. The Council is planning to work in partnership with Small Steps, Big Changes for Nottingham to become formally recognised as a Child Friendly City, under the UNICEF scheme. We are currently scoping this exciting initiative and will bring forward a detailed paper.

We will continue preparation for the Ofsted assurance visit and actions to address and further analyse demand in the service.

The improvement is closely monitored by the Children at the Heart Improvement Board to ensure delivery of the improvement plan, but most importantly the impact on the outcomes and the experience of children.

Catherine Underwood
Corporate Director for People

Helen Blackman
Director – Children’s Integrated Services

Contact Officer – Michelle Roe

Ofsted Improvement Action Plan: progress update September 2020

PRIORITY AREA 1 – SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

1. There is sufficient capacity for strong leadership of immediate and ongoing practice improvement.

- Partner in Practice – Phase 1 diagnostic complete. Phase 2 Support Plan approved by the Department for Education has commenced.
- Practice Improvement Director Recruited – Helen Watson has been recruited to work with the service and external partners to improve practice.
- A Communications Plan has been developed – to support workforce engagement.
- Principal Social Worker role – A revised role and job description has been developed to support recruitment to the role. Currently out to advert.
- A Review of Children’s Services Projects –has been undertaken to agree a realistic and prioritised programme, whilst postponing any activity that will detract from the immediate improvement journey.

2. Nottingham City Council has an operating model which enables good practice and workforce capacity.

No actions due until September 2020 onwards

3. All staff and managers are clear about Nottingham’s social work practice model and ‘what good looks like’.

- Review of Practice Model and Standards – 2 day training programme has now been delivered to all social work teams. Practice tools were launched in the Neglect Practice Guidance in June 2020 and work is ongoing to strengthen the tools available.
- Wider review and refresh of the workforce development offer – Partnership in Practice diagnostic feedback, engagement with the Practice Forum and feedback through engagement and training sessions will help to shape the future training offer.
- Re-joined Research in Practice to support evidence-based practice improvement.

4. Assessments and plans are of good quality and accurately evaluate risk and address the needs of children

- Coaching and support for Managers scoped into Essex Partner in Practice work. Engagement sessions are also being undertaken to explore how we can support social work to flourish.
- Escalation Policy has been relaunched, with reminders through the Safeguarding Children’s Partnership and internal communication channels.

5. Assertive practice ensures that children’s needs are understood and appropriate action/intervention is put in place to improve outcomes for children, including those experiencing neglect.

- As an immediate action, scrutiny of current Children in Need cases was undertaken to ensure that there was robust management oversight, decision-making was

appropriate and that timely action had been taken to address any drift or delay identities.

- Developed and launched Neglect Practice Guidance and Toolkit.
- Pathways of Support and intervention have been included within the Neglect Practice Guidance.
- A Partnership Neglect Strategy has been scoped in consultation with partners.

6. All managers are clear about the expectations of their oversight on casework, to ensure children's needs are understood and effectively addressed.

- Revised and re-launched Supervision Policy.
- Re-launched guidance for Managers in relation to management of allocation and oversight and review of any unallocated work.
- Covid-19 audits have been undertaken, using a regionally agreed audit tool. Supervision and Management Oversight is included in the audit tool to ensure that this is considered.

7. An effective audit framework provides an accurate appraisal of the experience of children and drives systematic improvements in practice.

- Reviewed and re-shaped the audit programme.
- Moderation Panels have been undertaken, which include practitioners, managers and auditors for a more reflective dialogue. A Learning Bulletin is currently being developed.
- Further work is ongoing with the Partners in Practice to review the audit framework to identify further improvements.

8. Senior managers and leaders have an accurate understanding of the experience of children.

- Children at the Heart Improvement Board has been established and meets monthly, chaired by the Chief Executive.
- Children at the Heart Practice Forum established and meets fortnightly.
- Refreshed our performance and quality assurance framework to ensure leadership oversight and assurance of Children's Services.
- Performance and Quality meetings streamlined to ensure timely consideration of performance information by senior leaders.
- Mind of my Own Focus Group established to support delivery of pilot relaunch in Children in Care North teams and Targeted Family Support service.
- Refreshed framework for hearing and acting on the voice of the child.
- The DCS has held an engagement session with representatives from the Youth Cabinet and CiC Council to inform future involvement of young people in informing / supporting ongoing improvement.

9. Ensure effective Independent Reviewing Officer service which ensures effective plans and progress for children in care and children in need of protection.

- Undertaken an options appraisal for creating capacity in the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) service – reviewing volumes of complex strategy meetings/recruitment of additional IROs and minute-takers.
- Additional capacity has been added to the service. This has had a very positive impact in relation to the timeliness of reviews and Initial Child Protection Conferences.

PRIORITY AREA 2 – WORKFORCE CAPACITY

10. The social work workforce is stabilised and capacity is increased in the short-term.

- Refreshed our advert and offer for agency Social Workers.
- A temporary agency social work team has been sourced and holding cases.
- Contact workers have been recruited but contact arrangements for children affected by Covid lockdown restrictions
- 3 Frontline hubs are on track to commence September 2020, which will bring an additional 12 social work trainees funded nationally until they start in their Assessed and Supported Year of Employment in 12 months.

11. There is a sustainable plan to ensure the sufficiency of social workers in the long-term.

- We have introduced new Social Work progression and pay structure.
- Rolling recruitment is in place for permanent Social Workers.
- A revised Workforce Strategy has been developed.

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Subject:	Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse Report Recommendations Update
Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Cheryl Barnard, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People
Report author and contact details:	Michelle Roe, Executive Officer Michelle.roe@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
Other colleagues who have provided input:	
Subject to call-in:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Criteria for Key Decision:	
(a) <input type="checkbox"/> Expenditure <input type="checkbox"/> Income <input type="checkbox"/> Savings of £1,000,000 or more taking account of the overall impact of the decision	
and/or	
(b) Significant impact on communities living or working in two or more wards in the City <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Type of expenditure:	<input type="checkbox"/> Revenue <input type="checkbox"/> Capital
Total value of the decision:	
Wards affected: All	
Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s): 01/09/2020	
Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:	
Nottingham People	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Living in Nottingham	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Growing Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Respect for Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Serving Nottingham Better	<input type="checkbox"/>
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):	
<p>On 31 July 2019, IICSA published its findings into the extent of any institutional failures to protect children in the care of Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Councils from sexual abuse.</p> <p>This report provides an update on action undertaken since the publication of this report.</p>	
Exempt information:	
None	
Recommendation(s):	
1 To note progress undertaken since publication of the report.	

1 Reasons for recommendations

- 1.1 On 31 July 2019, IICSA published its findings into the extent of any institutional failures to protect children in the care of Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Councils from sexual abuse. There were two recommendations for Nottingham City Council. Work has been undertaken to address these recommendations and further learning from the Inquiry.

2 Background (including outcomes of consultation)

- 2.1 The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) was established as a statutory inquiry on 12 March 2015 to consider the growing evidence of historical institutional failures to protect children from child sexual abuse, and to make recommendations to ensure the best possible protection for children in future. The inquiry launched 13 investigations into a broad range of institutions identified on the basis of the Panel's criteria for selection of investigations.
- 2.2 In November 2015, Justice Goddard (the then chair of the Inquiry) announced that the independent investigation into child sexual exploitation would look into the historical failure to protect children in the care of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Councils.
- 2.3 Following requests for information and a Public Inquiry, on 31 July 2019, IICSA published its findings into the extent of any institutional failures to protect children in the care of Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Councils from sexual abuse. There were two recommendations for Nottingham City Council:
- Nottingham City Council should assess the potential risk posed by current and former foster carers directly provided by the council in relation to the sexual abuse of children. They should also ensure that current and former foster carers provided by external agencies are assessed by those agencies. Any concerns which arise should be referred to the appropriate body or process, including the Disclosure and Barring Service, the local authority designated officer (LADO) or equivalent, the fostering panel and the police.
 - Nottingham City Council and its child protection partners should commission an independent, external evaluation of their practice concerning harmful sexual behaviour, including responses, prevention, assessment, intervention and workforce development. An action plan should be set up to ensure that any recommendations are responded to in a timely manner and progress should be reported to City's Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- 2.4 The Council created a detailed action plan in response to the formal recommendations from the Inquiry. The plan also committed to address wider learning which emerged throughout the course of the Inquiry. An important area of focus has been a strengthened approach to supporting survivors, including commissioning with partners of new support arrangements for survivors of sexual abuse. The action plan was shared with survivors, wider partners and with the Inquiry. A detailed report of the actions taken is provided at Appendix B.

3 Other options considered in making recommendations

3.1 N/A

4 Finance colleague comments (including implications and value for money/VAT)

- 4.1 A contingency request was approved in January 2019 for £0.620m to support the resources required in relation to the above.
- 4.2 Ongoing impacts for care including survivor support and external independent scrutiny is captured in Childrens and Adults forecasting.

5 Legal and Procurement colleague comments (including risk management issues, and legal, Crime and Disorder Act and procurement implications)

N/A

6 Strategic Assets & Property colleague comments (for decisions relating to all property assets and associated infrastructure)

N/A

7 Social value considerations

N/A

8 Regard to the NHS Constitution

N/A

9 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

N/A

10 List of background papers relied upon in writing this report (not including published documents or confidential or exempt information)

10.1 None.

11 Published documents referred to in this report

11.1 Children in the care of the Nottinghamshire Councils: A report of the Inquiry Panel - Independent Inquiry Child Sexual Abuse July 2019

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Appendix A

Report to Executive Board Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse

September 2020

The Scope of the Inquiry

The scope of the Inquiry was set as follows:

- Institutional responses to disclosures of allegations of sexual abuse in relation to Beechwood since 1967 to the present and the barriers to disclosure of such allegations.
- A case study into the institutional responses to disclosure of allegations of child sexual abuse in foster care and the barriers to disclosure of such allegations.
- A case study into the institutional responses to disclosures of allegations of sexual abuse carried out by children against other children in the care of the Councils, and the barriers to disclosure of such allegations.

The Public Hearing

The Public Hearing ran from 01–26 October (with a one week break).

Publication of Findings

On 31 July 2019, IICSA published its findings into the extent of any institutional failures to protect children in the care of Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Councils from sexual abuse.

There were two recommendations for the City Council,

- Nottingham City Council should assess the potential risk posed by current and former foster carers directly provided by the council in relation to the sexual abuse of children. They should also ensure that current and former foster carers provided by external agencies are assessed by those agencies. Any concerns which arise should be referred to the appropriate body or process, including the Disclosure and Barring Service, the local authority designated officer (LADO) or equivalent, the fostering panel and the police.
- Nottingham City Council and its child protection partners should commission an independent, external evaluation of their practice concerning harmful sexual behaviour, including responses, prevention, assessment, intervention and workforce development. An action plan should be set up to ensure that any recommendations are responded to in a timely manner and progress should be reported to City's Safeguarding Children Partnership.

As part of the wider cross-cutting learning from the 14 strands of the Inquiry, the Inquiry committed to return to a number of issues that have emerged during this investigation, including but not limited to:

- Harmful sexual behaviour.
- The barriers to disclosure of sexual abuse by children, including those in care, and proactive steps to reduce those barriers.
- The approach to civil litigation, including the role of insurers.

The Council was required to publish its response within six months of the publication of the report and this was done November 2019.

Progress against our action plan is detailed within Appendix B.

Next steps and continuous improvement

In response to the Inquiry, there has been significant work undertaken to improve practice and ensure that children in care are kept safe. We have responded to the specific recommendations, but the Inquiry provided further insights into practice that we have sought to incorporate into local practice.

However, we must remain constantly vigilant to the potential harm that children in our care can be exposed to and can never be complacent. Learning tells us that it is vital that we have a transparent and self-challenging system and of the importance of culture.

The key principles that underpin our approach are:

- **Listening to the voice of children both individually, and collectively** – the voice of the child is at the heart of our practice and we have a range of ways to ensure children and young people's experiences and voices can be heard.
- **Raising awareness** – through training and on-going communication with social workers, residential staff, foster carers and partner agencies.
- **Accountability and visibility** – through reporting on allegations using both the Significant Incident Briefing process and the other routes set out elsewhere in this report. These reports will help us to identify at an early stage patterns and trends and take action to address these.
- **Professional curiosity** – it is our responsibility to explore and understand what is happening, to challenge ourselves and our systems and not to make assumptions.

Nottingham Children's Services continuous improvement programme, building on our Ofsted Focused Visit action plan, has a strong focus on developing our best practice and our culture which sees children's voices and experiences at the heart.

Alongside the actions we take within our own services, we work with our safeguarding partners to strengthen our shared system. We continue to work in partnership with Nottinghamshire Police to actively support the ongoing criminal investigations, to help to

identify perpetrators and whenever possible, to bring them to justice. We also work in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council to progress Civil Claims and with Nottinghamshire CCG to help victims access the support they need.

Our work with Survivors of abuse has been a very important area of focus and of learning for us and our partners. We continue to meet regularly with survivors, both individually and as a group, although group meetings have not been possible during Covid-19. A consequence of this has been the shared commitment to commissioning a new model of survivor support services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. This has been absolutely founded on the feedback from survivors. The new service will come into place in January.

The safety and wellbeing of children and young people in the care of the City is and always will be our highest priority.

Catherine Underwood
Corporate Director for People

Contact Officer – Michelle Roe

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Report to Executive Board Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse

September 2020

An action plan was developed in response to the findings of the report. This was shared with the Inquiry, Victims/Survivors and partners.

Action 1: *To continue to work with victims and survivors to ensure that they have access to the right support both to services provided by the Council and to those not provided by the Council.*

- Nottingham City Council developed a leaflet detailing all services available to survivors. A copy of this can be found [here](#).
- The Corporate Director regularly attends the Survivor Support Group.
- During Covid, the Corporate Director has written to the Survivors Support Group to provide them with updates on behalf of commissioning partners
- Survivors can access our services through our 'front door' within either Adults or Children's Services. Our staff are then able to signpost them to appropriate services e.g. Benefits and Housing Advice, or support them to access more specialist advice through Health and other partners.
- Discussions have been held at our Safeguarding Partnership and our Strategic Safeguarding Lead meets with survivors on behalf of the partnership.
- Our Adults Safeguarding Board have dedicated actions around support to survivors within their Safeguarding Board Action Plan.
- The Council has escalated support needs to the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to ensure that survivors have access to appropriate support (e.g. personalised budgets).

Action 2: *Access to records for those formerly in care has not been well handled.*

- We have employed a dedicated Information Officer within the Information Compliance Team who is available to help support individuals with the process if requested.
- A letter is sent to victims/survivors of non-recent abuse, introducing our Information Officer as a named contact and offering support with the process.
- If there are no records available for an individual, the Information Officer would work with the individual to try and locate their records elsewhere (usually with another Local Authority).
- Feedback from victims and survivors has highlighted that they find the process helpful and more accessible. It helps for them to have a named point of contact.
- Information Compliance do not currently record statistics relating to historical sexual abuse requests as such, as they come under the wider heading of 'personal information requests'. However, over the last twelve months Information Compliance have dealt with 83 cases for Children and Adults.

Action 3: *To complement our wider strategic work with survivors and their representatives, we will continue to offer to meet with individual victims and survivors (accompanied by their representatives if required) to offer an apology in person and in writing.*

Improvements have been made to the way that non-recent abuse claims are handled following the Inquiry including:

- A written apology letter is offered on settlement of every claim with the offer of a face to face meeting.
- A more empathetic handling of abuse claims, acknowledging that the handling of these cases demands a different approach to a standard public liability claim.

- Closer working relationship built with the County Council to improve joint working on claims which span both periods of cover i.e. claims jointly managed by City and County (an Information Sharing Agreement has been introduced)
- Regular claim review meetings with County and our legal provider.
- A system has been set up to ensure that the Corporate Director receives monthly updates on civil claims (new claims received and claims settled) which will ensure no apologies are overlooked.

Action 4: To consider with safeguarding partners the outcome of the needs assessment being undertaken by Lime Culture and use their conclusions to inform future commissioning of services to support victims of violence and sexual abuse.

- The Needs Assessment for Sexual Violence and Abuse Survivors in Nottinghamshire was published in October 2019.
- The *Support for Nottinghamshire Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Task and Finish Group* have proposed that Sexual Violence and Abuse commissioning be mainstreamed into existing Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse governance structures. This will be reviewed in September.
- The recommendations from the Lime Culture Sexual Violence Needs Assessment have been reviewed and are being managed and implemented by the joint *Support for Nottinghamshire Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Task and Finish Group*. The group have proposed to feed all key updates into the Crime & Drugs Partnership Board and Health & Wellbeing Board.
- The *Sexual Violence Action Network (SVAN)* have drafted an action plan on how they will contribute and implement the needs assessment recommendations.
- In June 2020 the Nottinghamshire Office of the Police Crime Commissioner, Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Bassetlaw Clinical Commissioning Group published an Invitation to Tender for a provider to deliver an *Adult Sexual Violence Hub and Therapy Support Service* in Nottinghamshire. The Service will be available for survivors living in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire aged 18 and over and will include:
 - The Sexual Violence Hub
 - The Therapy Support Service
 - The Sexual Violence Engagement Manager

The contract will be awarded by the end of September. After this time there will be a 3 month mobilisation period and the new contract will begin to deliver from 1st January 2021

Action 5: In partnership with Police and Crime Commissioners Office and Nottinghamshire County Council colleagues, Nottingham City Council will implement the outcome of the evaluation of the jointly funded Support for Survivors Service.

- Note actions detailed above within Action 4.
- The City Council, County Council, CCG and OPCC have confirmed their joint funding of the *Support for Survivors Service* and for the sexual violence hub as recommended in the needs assessment.
- The *Support for Nottinghamshire Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Task and Finish Group* will recommission the sexual violence support services for the City and County.

Action 6: Using the risk-based methodology developed to review the HR cases, NCC will assess the risks posed by current and former foster carers, including those from independent fostering agencies.

- In partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council, we have written to all agencies who we have placed a child with (since 2013) and those on the East Midlands Commissioning Framework. A seminar was held to provide further detail. This work was scheduled to be completed by April 2020 however as a consequence of the impact of Covid 19 the timescale for completion has been put back to the end of July 2020.

- Internally, more robust measures have been developed. The Head of Service now reviews and provides comment on all Schedule 6 notifications that relate to harm to a child.
- We have engaged an external consultant to undertake external assurance to ensure that we have undertaken the necessary actions around this work.

Action 7a: Nottingham City Council and our Safeguarding Partnership will commission an independent external evaluation of our practice using the Harmful Sexual Behaviour

- This evaluation was launched at a partnership event by the NSPCC in November 2019.

7b - NCC and our Safeguarding Partnership will consider the recommendations and practice improvements required from the evaluation of practice against the Harmful Sexual Behaviour Framework.

- Individual agencies responded to the review requirements. These were considered by the NSPCC who were due to facilitate a feedback event in Nottingham on March 30th 2020. Unfortunately due to Covid-19 this meeting could not proceed.
- A video conference was held with the NSPCC on 23rd June to discuss findings and agree how best to disseminate learning and recommendations to the safeguarding partnership. The findings of the audit were broadly positive about local practice.

7c - Commence implementation of the recommendations of the above review and report back to the Safeguarding Partnership.

The HSB audit dissemination event with the NSPCC took place on July 17th via Microsoft Teams and was well attended by safeguarding partners from Nottingham City. The NSPCC lead has provided us with amalgamated feedback from the session and is supplying a draft action plan based on this for a meeting with key stakeholders on the 14th September. This will then set the recommendations and actions to be signed off by the NCSCP.

Action 8a: To ensure that the scale of sexual abuse of children in care by individuals in a position of trust or any peer that they were placed with, is understood by senior managers and elected members, we will provide a quarterly update on any such allegations to the Safeguarding Partnership.

- This return includes any children abused in care by people within a position of trust or their peers. The return forms part of the performance framework, which goes to the Safeguarding Business Management Group and then the Safeguarding Partnership.
- This update is scheduled quarterly at these meetings.

Subsequent action: to set a protocol at regional LADO network and send a letter nationally (As there is a risk that our children are considered by other LA LADO's)

- We have written to the National LADO Network recommending that when an allegation of "sexual abuse of children in care by individuals in a position of trust or any peer" is made that the LADO in the area where the allegation is made also notifies the LADO for the Local Authority who hold responsibility for that child, this applies to both victim and perpetrator.

Action 8b: We will also introduce a sub section within the Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) Annual Report that separately identifies allegations of sexual abuse of children in care by individuals in a position of trust or any peer that they were placed with.

- The IRO annual report is being written and will be complete by October 2020. This report will brought back to this Committee.

Action 9: Ensure that learning from all relevant sources, including complaints, and regulatory and inspection activity is regularly reviewed to continually improve our services.

- Our Children's Integrated Service has recently refreshed its quality assurance framework. The new framework contains specific measures relating to reports of concern regarding foster carers and significant information notifications relating to children's homes. This

information is shared with senior managers and the Portfolio Holder, and is led by our Head of Children's Strategy and Improvement. The quality assurance framework is complemented by other sources of learning, including the Complaints Service Annual Report and Independent Reviewing Officer's Annual Report. These reports are presented to the Corporate Parenting Board, as is the Annual Children in Care survey, which enables young people to contribute their views about the care that they receive. Learning is shared in a variety of ways, including the departmental learning and development programme, for example:

- Every Colleague Matters training was held in February 2020 ('learning from reviews' and 'learning from IICSA' session).
- Our Head of Children in Care has worked with survivors to develop training for foster carers, specifically drawing on learning from the Inquiry.
- Our Nottingham Practice Standards include the Voice of the Child.
- Within the Safeguarding Partnership we are asking for assurance from partners with regards to a number of different learning issues. There will be a self-assessment audit from the Partnership.

NEW - Action 10: *Review the approach to responding to allegations of historical abuse (and in particular the role of the LADO).*

- A meeting took place with Nottinghamshire County Council in March 2020 to review practice to ensure that there is consistency with regards to the response to historical abuse and the role of the LADO across both councils.
- Quarterly meetings between the City and County with regards to these matters take place and joint procedures are in place. These have been published on the joint City/County website.

Catherine Underwood
Corporate Director for People

Subject:	Nottingham City Council to support Stonewall campaign: coming out for trans equality
Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Richard Henderson Director of HR and Customer Hugh White, Corporate Director for COVID response and Recovery
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark, Portfolio Holder for Health, HR and Equalities
Report author and contact details:	Saema Mohammad, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Lead Saema.mohammad@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
Other colleagues who have provided input:	None
Subject to call-in:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Criteria for Key Decision:	
(a)	<input type="checkbox"/> Expenditure <input type="checkbox"/> Income <input type="checkbox"/> Savings of £1,000,000 or more taking account of the overall impact of the decision
and/or	
(b)	Significant impact on communities living or working in two or more wards in the City <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Type of expenditure:	<input type="checkbox"/> Revenue <input type="checkbox"/> Capital
Total value of the decision:	Nil Value
Wards affected:	All
Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s):	Statement was endorsed at Equality Board 7.9.20, Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark is the Chair of the Equality Board.
Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:	
Nottingham People	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Living in Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Growing Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Respect for Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Serving Nottingham Better	<input type="checkbox"/>
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):	<p>Stonewall have invited Nottingham City Council to make a statement of support for trans equality.</p> <p>The context of this campaign is the anticipated Government legislation to reform the Gender Recognition Act. Reforms could make daily life easier for trans people, for example by making it less complicated to amend a birth certificate to reflect their gender. However, there are also considerable concerns that the Act could make a retrograde step, if, for example, it restricts trans people's rights to access single sex spaces.</p> <p>In response to this, Stonewall, Mermaids, Intermedia and Trans in the City brought together over 40 organisations to sign private and public letters to the Government to voice their concerns and their support for trans equality.</p>
Exempt information:	None
Recommendation(s):	<p>1 To endorse the following statement given/proposed (whichever is best/appropriate) at the Equality Board on 7 September 2020: “Nottingham City Council values trans people as our employees, colleagues and customers and supports trans rights as human rights” and to submit it to Stonewall along with the Nottingham City Council logo</p>

1 Reasons for recommendations

1.1 Nottingham City Council is a forward thinking authority that puts its citizens and employees first. The Authority is committed to improving the lives of people living and working in Nottingham and is working hard to ensure that everyone has fair and equitable access to both opportunities and services.

2 Background (including outcomes of consultation)

2.1 Nottingham City Council strives to be an inclusive organisation, enabling all of our employees and service users to be treated with dignity and respect regardless of their protected characteristics. By endorsing this statement we will be demonstrating our commitment to the trans community.

3 Other options considered in making recommendations

3.1 To not participate in this campaign. If we decide not to participate, it will mean we will not be part of the Stonewall campaign championing trans equality. As an organisation striving to become inclusive of the LGBT community, it is important for us to act in a responsive way to campaigning activities co-ordinated by Stonewall and this is why this option was rejected.

4 Finance colleague comments (including implications and value for money/VAT)

4.1 There is no cost associated with this decision.

5 Legal and Procurement colleague comments (including risk management issues, and legal, Crime and Disorder Act and procurement implications)

5.1 There is no anticipated legal implications of endorsing this statement.

6 Strategic Assets & Property colleague comments (for decisions relating to all property assets and associated infrastructure)

6.1 n/a

7 Social value considerations

7.1 n/a

8 Regard to the NHS Constitution

8.1 n/a

9 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

9.1 Has the equality impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No X

There is no significant change or impact on policy/ service delivery associated with this decision.

10 List of background papers relied upon in writing this report (not including published documents or confidential or exempt information)

10.1 None

11 Published documents referred to in this report

11.1 None

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Stonewall campaign: coming out for trans equality

Introduction

Stonewall have contacted the Council, inviting it to make a statement of support for trans equality. Originally planned for 1 September, the campaign is now due to be launched on 14 September. Submissions of support need to be received by **noon on Friday 11 September**.

Context

The context of this campaign is the anticipated Government legislation to reform the Gender Recognition Act. Reforms could make daily life easier for trans people, for example by making it less complicated to amend a birth certificate to reflect their gender. However, there are also considerable concerns that the Act could mark a retrograde step, if, for example, it restricts trans people's rights to access single sex spaces.

In response to this, Stonewall, Mermaids, Intermedia and Trans in the City brought together over 40 organisations to sign private and public letters to the Government to voice their concerns and their support for trans equality. (Appendix 1a and 1b – example letters)

Current campaign

Now, Stonewall are inviting a wider range of organisations, including Nottingham City Council, to sign up to the following statement:

Trans rights are human rights: we value trans people as our employees, colleagues and customers.

Names and logos of signatory organisations will be shared on a webpage, via social media, in the press and on public landmarks including potentially Piccadilly Circus.

Further information is included in Appendix 2 – Trans rights are human rights: support pack. This also includes links to campaign materials which can be shared through social media after the launch.

Beyond the campaign

Within the overarching context of the LGBT+ work environment action plan, there is a need to go beyond words of support and to ensure that Nottingham City Council is a welcoming and supportive organisation for trans people in all that it does. It is intended that this should include a review of areas for improvement, led by trans staff.

Recommendation

- That Equalities Board notes its support for this campaign and asks that the following statement of support, together with a copy of the Nottingham City Council logo, should be emailed to memberships@stonewall.org.uk (cc Jaipreet.deo@stonewall.org.uk) by **noon on Friday 11 September**:
“Nottingham City Council supports Stonewall’s message that **trans rights are human rights** and as an organisation **we value trans people as our employees, colleagues and customers.**”

Inferred changes to UK trans people's rights

Dear Prime Minister,

We represent a wide range of businesses operating in Britain and across the world. We value trans people as employees, friends, family, and customers.

As employers we understand the value to business of diversity and we understand the significant benefits, both in performance and innovation, that the inclusion of a diverse workforce brings to us.

Recent press cycles [infer a reduction in trans people's rights](#). We would not support reductions in trans people's rights. These inferred changes would detrimentally impact both the safety and career progression of trans employees across the UK.

We pride ourselves on being welcoming to all. We strongly urge you to ensure all trans people are protected and supported with a legal and policy framework that enables them to live with dignity, privacy and respect, free from fear, isolation, and discrimination.

We would welcome a shared dialogue to build a framework of trans inclusion in our workplaces and across society

<signees redacted>

Appendix 1b

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing St, Westminster,
London, SW1A 2AA



Friday 10 July 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

We, as a collective of organisations from the media and entertainment industry, are writing to express our support of the trans community.

As it stands, the UK is a global leader in LGBTQ+ equality – and the government has been right to work closely with businesses to advance equality on the world stage. We all strive to be trans-inclusive organisations and believe that a diverse workforce, including trans employees, offers greater business success. With this in mind, we would be opposed to any policy or legislation changes that impact the trans community negatively.

Trans people have always been able to use single-sex facilities that match their gender, and the Equality Act 2010 codified this. Additionally, it has been widely reported that the 2018 public consultation on GRA reform shows up to 70% of respondents agreed that it was appropriate to remove additional barriers to trans people being able to identify and live authentically.

Failing to honour the government’s commitment to implement the consultation findings, and even increasing restrictions on trans people’s ability to live authentically, benefits no one. It would mean changes to working environments that would make it hard for trans and non-binary people to focus on their work, preventing them from being able to travel safely, and inhibiting them from operating in society.

We hope that we can continue to be part of discussion about the future of trans equality in the UK, working together to make progress for the trans community and ensure our businesses maintain the diverse perspectives that help make us successful.

Most respectfully,



TRANS

RIGHTS

ARE

HUMAN

RIGHTS

**SUPPORT
PACK**

What are we doing and why?

- We are a growing group of leading businesses who are coming together to support trans equality.
- On 14 September we will be launching a public show of support for trans equality. We plan to unite our organisations behind a simple message: **Trans Rights Are Human Rights.**
- **On this day we will launch a new website (www.transrightsarehumanrights.co.uk) featuring our companies' logos, and we will show our support on social media.** The team are aiming to secure advertising that will focus on the key message and linking people to the website.
- Following on from this we hope to encourage more organisations to add their support to the website and to show their support in further ways, including by signing open and private letters to the Prime Minister outlining their support. We plan to secure more advertising to highlight our message of support.

How can you support?

- Agree to join the campaign and add your logo to the website. Please email Naomi.reid@nbcuni.com with your logo.
- Show your support on social media on the day of launch. Read on for more information.
- Donate ad space to share the campaign logo and website with the widest possible audience.

More ways you can support

1

Add your organisation's name to open and private letters from business to the Prime Minister. [Review the letters](#) and confirm your signature [by email](#) if you haven't already signed up.

2

Highlight your existing work to support trans equality with your workforce, offer trans voices a platform and representation in materials, and ensure your policy is trans inclusive.

3

Be ready to sign further private and open letters to highlight companies' support for trans equality.

4

Send a video of support for The Sarah O'Connell Show, who are producing a video of business CEOs expressing their support for trans equality. [Email Sarah](#) for more information.

Social Media Support

- On the day of launch, please use these social media graphics to post your support. Finalised versions will be available [in this drive](#) on 7 September.
- Please use the hashtag **#TransRightsAreHumanRights** while sharing your support, and consider mentioning why trans equality matters to your company.

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We value trans people as our employees,
customers and colleagues



We value trans people
as our employees,
customers and colleagues

What response can my company expect to receive and how should we respond?

The vast majority of the British public support trans equality, but many don't feel confident showing their support. By stepping forward you are making it easier for the silent majority to speak up. As with every other social justice issue there are fringe voices who may respond negatively to your positive posts. Rather than engaging with specific arguments it is most effective to not engage, or simply to re-emphasise your support for trans equality and why it matters to you.

My company is cautious about engaging in political issues – can we still take part?

To say trans rights are human rights is not political – you are showing your support for a marginalised community, and demonstrating to the world that you value the diversity of your employees, customers and clients. None of the messages that you are signing up to are focused on policy or specific political events. By adding your organisation's support to this initiative, you are helping to show the breadth of support in society for trans equality.

I'm worried that my company isn't doing enough to support trans colleagues and customers to join this initiative – what should I do?

Wherever you are on your journey to becoming a trans inclusive organisation, there is always scope to improve. Showing your support for initiatives like this can be a catalyst for change. Make sure you are working with key internal stakeholders and partner organisations like Stonewall, Mermaids, Trans in the City or Gendered Intelligence to ensure you are developing tangible plans that will make a meaningful difference for trans colleagues and customers.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about showing your support, please contact info@transinthecity.co.uk

Organisation names supporting this letter:

1. The Walt Disney Company, EMEA
2. Warner Media
3. NBCUniversal
4. Sky
5. Endemol Shine
6. ViacomCBS
7. AMC Networks International UK
8. Financial Times
9. Discovery
10. Gay Star News
11. Diva Media Group
12. Sports Media LGBT+
13. Film + TV Charity
14. GEEYOU.
15. The Sarah O'Connell Show

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Subject:	Have Your Say Complaints Annual Assurance Report – Including Local Government Ombudsman Annual Letter 2019-20
Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Richard Henderson
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Sally Longford, Portfolio Holder for Energy, Environment and Democratic Services
Report author and contact details:	Vanessa Jenkins – Customer Experience Lead Vanessa.jenkins@nottinghamcity.gov.uk Ext 61527
Other colleagues who have provided input:	Dominic O'Melia – Customer Experience Manager Patrick Skeete – Social Care Complaints and Representations Manager Dave Halstead – Director of Neighbourhood Services
Subject to call-in:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Criteria for Key Decision:	
(a) <input type="checkbox"/> Expenditure <input type="checkbox"/> Income <input type="checkbox"/> Savings of £1,000,000 or more taking account of the overall impact of the decision	
and/or	
(b) Significant impact on communities living or working in two or more wards in the City <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Type of expenditure: <input type="checkbox"/> Revenue <input type="checkbox"/> Capital	
Total value of the decision: Nil	
Wards affected: All Wards	
Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s):	
Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:	
Nottingham People	<input type="checkbox"/>
Living in Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Growing Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Respect for Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Serving Nottingham Better	<input type="checkbox"/>
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users): Report reflecting on Annual Local Government Ombudsman Review 2019-20 and Complaints	
Exempt information: None	
Recommendation(s):	
1 To note the contents of this report	

1. Reasons for Report and Recommendations

1.1 This report provides a reflection on the complaints received

- under the Have Your Say (HYS) process
- under the statutory Social Care complaints process
- about the School Admissions appeals process

and the decisions made on these complaints about Nottingham City Council by

- Nottingham City Council (NCC)
- the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO or LGO)

for the period of 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020. The information is taken from NCC records and the LGO Annual Letter, which is issued to all Councils and is published on the Ombudsman's website.

- 1.2 Capturing customer experience and learning from complaints is important, it enables the Council to reflect on feedback about its services and facilitate service improvements and innovation. An outcome of an upheld complaint could be identifying a recommendation for a service or process improvement, which is welcomed as another source of reflection and learning for the organisation. The Council's Customer Charter promises that we will use customer feedback to improve our services, and the Have Your Say feedback plays a vital role in achieving this.
- 1.3 Whilst it is important to capture customer experience, we also need to be mindful that each complaint represents time which the officer investigating and responding could have used on other activities. This is particularly relevant as the Council's resources are shrinking. The Customer Experience team therefore aim to support colleagues to achieve lower complaint rates, by acting on insight and increase productivity, to help services get things right the first time and in keeping with the Council's Customer Charter. This report helps to identify the level of success in achieving this aim within Council services.
- 1.4 We also note that a citizen's opinion of Council services in general can be affected by their experiences with an individual service, so by providing a satisfactory service (and in some cases by effective communication of a well-organised, complete, and timely complaint investigation), colleagues can improve the Council's reputation and future contact with citizens.
- 1.5 We continue to maintain a good working relationship with the LGO Assessment and Investigation teams. The Customer Experience Lead acts as a Link Officer between the LGO and NCC to liaise with Council services and ensure deadlines are met.

2. Background

- 2.1 To enable Nottingham City Council to deliver high quality services it is important that we record and listen to feedback from people using Council services. Through the Have Your Say (HYS) process, we aim to handle comments, complaints and compliments in a fair and consistent way, maintaining openness and transparency. Complaints can help us identify any trends in service failures and make improvements by learning from root cause analysis.
- 2.2 There are currently two complaints teams within Nottingham City Council. One team handles the statutory complaints in relation to Children and Adults Social Care Services, and the HYS team handles the complaints and feedback for all other Council services. There are some areas that cannot be dealt with by the HYS complaints process as they are covered by another process or legal procedure. These exemptions include:

- Appeals against refusal of planning permission or against conditions placed on a grant of planning permission
- A complaint about social care services (children and adults)
- A school admission or exclusion appeal
- A complaint about a school
- A complaint from a City Council employee about an employment matter
- An appeal against the issue of a penalty charge notice by the parking enforcement team and the recovery process which follows
- Dispute a fixed penalty for environmental crimes (including dog-fouling)
- Dispute a penalty charge notice for Bus Lane Contravention
- Any appeal against the exercise of a police power
- A complaint about the refusal of disabled badges for parking exemption

- A complaint about the independent Rent Officer
- A complaint about Anti-Social Behaviour
- A complaint about Nottingham City Homes
- Appeals regarding Resident Permits/Dispensation Access Permits

2.3 The LGO oversee some but not all of the HYS exemptions. This includes Social Care complaints and School Admissions appeals. They do not oversee the exemptions where there is a right to appeal or take legal action, such as Housing Benefit tribunals.

2.4 Refreshed in 2016, the HYS service operates a two-stage complaints handling process. At Stage 1, the customer's feedback is triaged to the appropriate service for investigation and response/remedy. If the customer remains dissatisfied once the complaint has completed the first stage of the process, they can request a review of the complaint handling at Stage 2, which is carried out by the Customer Experience Lead. Prior to 2016, there was a lengthier 4 stage complaints handling process, which was reviewed and replaced with the current 2 stage model, which enables the Council to act on customer insight and improve the outcomes for citizens through analysing feedback.

2.5 The following analysis is reported by volume of complaints so that Councillors can understand better the experience of customers.

3. The Local Government Annual Review

3.1 On July 29th 2020 the LGO launched their annual review of local government and social care complaints for 2019-20. Following from last year they have provided data to show how they are helping to improve local services. They are now showing data for compliance with recommendations they have made, and the number of cases where each authority has provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the LGO. This section looks at the overall LGO data compiled in these years Annual Review Letter, and further sections give further context of how overall, this data is a very small percentage of the actual complaint handling dealt with by Nottingham City Council.

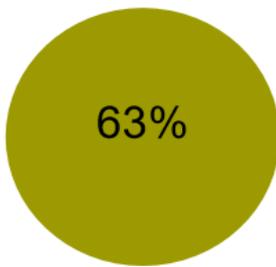
3.2 Nationally the LGO received 17,019 complaints and enquiries about councils in England (it does not cover Scotland or Wales). Of those complaints 4,217 had detailed investigations and 61% were upheld. This compares to 16,899 complaints and enquires received in 2018-19, of which 4,232 had detailed investigations and 58% were upheld.

3.3 This year's LGO Annual Review statistics tells us that over a third of the complaints and enquiries they received were about Education and Children's Services. The highest proportion of complaints they investigated relate to Adult Social Care and the fewest complaints investigated were about Benefits and Tax.

3.4 The LGO publishes the information for the Annual Review on an interactive map, which is called 'Your Council's Performance.' This tool, which was implemented in 2019, gives a snapshot of the service improvement recommendations and highlights the key statistics and how they compare to similar authorities.

3.5 The link to the council performance interactive map is as follows:
<https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance/nottingham-city-council/statistics>

3.6 The snapshot data published on the interactive map for NCC is shown as:



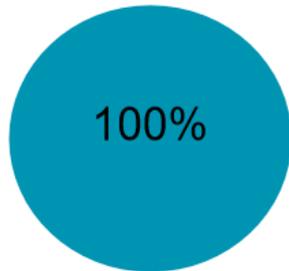
63% of complaints we investigated were upheld.

This compares to an average of 56% in similar authorities.

12 upheld decisions

Statistics are based on a total of 19 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

This is an improvement to last year where there were a higher number of detailed investigations of 26 cases, and 69% of these were upheld.

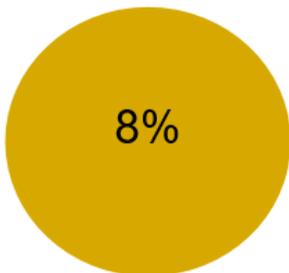


In 100% of cases we were satisfied the authority had successfully implemented our recommendations.

This compares to an average of 99% in similar authorities.

Statistics are based on a total of 11 compliance outcomes for the period between 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

Nottingham City Council also achieved 100% satisfactory compliance outcomes last year.



In 8% of upheld cases we found the authority had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman.

This compares to an average of 11% in similar authorities.

1 satisfactory remedy decision

Statistics are based on a total of 19 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

This is an improvement on last year in which Nottingham City Council had provided a satisfactory remedy in 6% of cases before the complaint had reached the LGO.

3.7 The following key facts and figures will provide an in-depth analysis of the LGO's data published for NCC so that Councillors can identify areas that are performing well and areas for improvement considerations as well as see the root causes for these trends.

4. LGO Review Letter – Key Facts and Figures

4.1 The LGO Annual Review Letter shows that they received 75 complaints and enquiries about NCC for the 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020 period and 86 were assessed and issued with decisions (this number is higher due to decisions issued to any cases pre-dating the 2019-20 financial year period). 29 were treated as premature, 2 were requests for advice, 3 were either incomplete or invalid and 33 were closed after initial enquiries. 19 complaints involved detailed investigations by the LGO and 12 of these were upheld.

4.2 This data shows a decrease in upheld complaints from last year. The table below outlines the results of the LGO Annual Review for 2020 in comparison to the previous three years:

Annual Letter	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Received	100	103	104	75
Decided	98	98	98	86
Upheld	8	4	18	12
Not Upheld	15	11	8	7
Closed	75	83	72	67
Uphold Rate	35%	27%	69%	67%

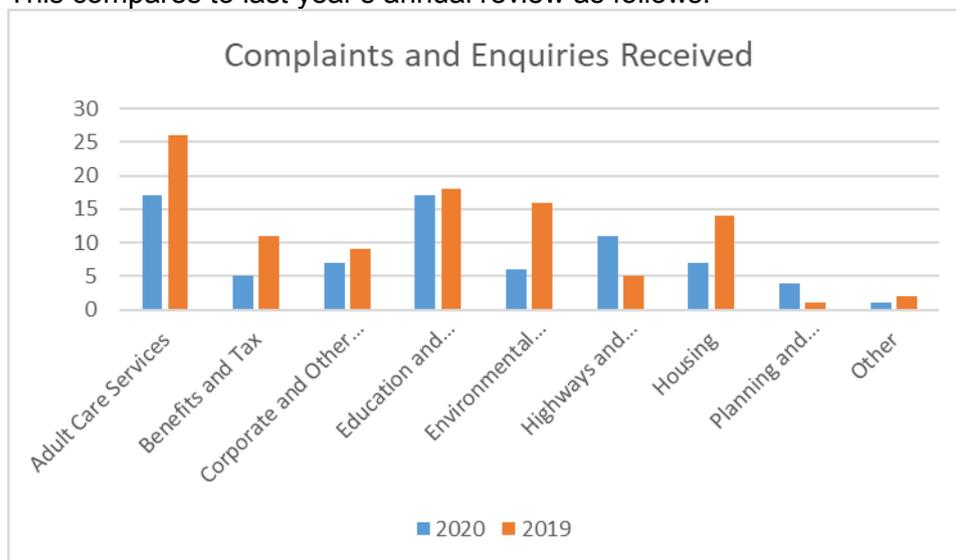
4.3 We recognise that the 19 cases investigated is a very small sample of all complaints dealt with by NCC and that statistically it may not be representative of our complaints process. However we have attempted to identify any learning applicable.

4.4 Looking at the figures above, we can see that the upheld decisions in 2019 and 2020 were higher than previous years. These upheld decisions were predominantly in Social Care cases, 8 out of 12 in 2020, and which will be reflected on in their section of this report.

4.5 The LGO categorise the complaints they receive. Looking at the 2020 data in more detail, a breakdown of the information published in by the LGO in their given categories is shown as follows:

Service Category	Received	Decided	Upheld	Not Upheld	Premature/Closed/Incomplete/Invalid
Adult Care Services	17	20	6	1	13
Benefits and Tax	5	7	2	1	4
Corporate and Other Services	7	10	0	1	9
Education and Children's Services	17	17	2	3	12
Environmental Services and Public Protection and Regulation	6	8	2	0	6
Highways and Transport	11	12	0	1	11
Housing	7	8	0	0	8
Planning and Development	4	3	0	0	3
Other	1	1	0	0	1
Total	75	86	12	7	67

4.5 This compares to last year's annual review as follows:



4.6 It is important to note that the categories defined in the LGO review data do not accurately reflect the department and service area that the complaint would relate to within NCC. For example, 2 cases that was categorised by the LGO as 'Highways and Transport' actually related to complaints submitted about the Community Protection and Insurance and Risk Services.

4.7 To better understand the areas for focus from the LGO statistics, it is important to look at the complaints decision statements and public reports in more detail in order to define the service area that it falls within at NCC.

4.8 In some cases the LGO will not publish the decision statement for an investigation. We also do not have all data on complaints to the LGO that were incomplete/invalid or premature so this report will reflect in more detail on the data for the 52 decisions that were published.

4.9 After reviewing each individual case's decision statement summaries, the complaints have been identified as follows:

NCC Service	Decision Statement	Public Report	Upheld	Not Upheld	Closed after initial enquiries
Adult Social Care	14	0	6	1	7
Children's Integrated Service	7	0	1	3	3
Commercial Infrastructure & Energy Services	2	0	0	0	2
Community Protection	4	0	1	1	2
Education Strategy	4	0	1	0	3
Housing Aid	3	0	0	0	3
HR & Customer	2	0	0	1	1
Legal & Governance	3	0	0	0	3
NCH	1	0	0	0	1
Neighbourhood Services	3	0	0	0	3
Planning	2	0	1	0	1
Revenue & Benefits	5	0	2	1	2
Sports, Culture & Parks	1	0	0	0	1
Traffic & Transport	1	0	0	0	1
Total	52	0	12	7	33

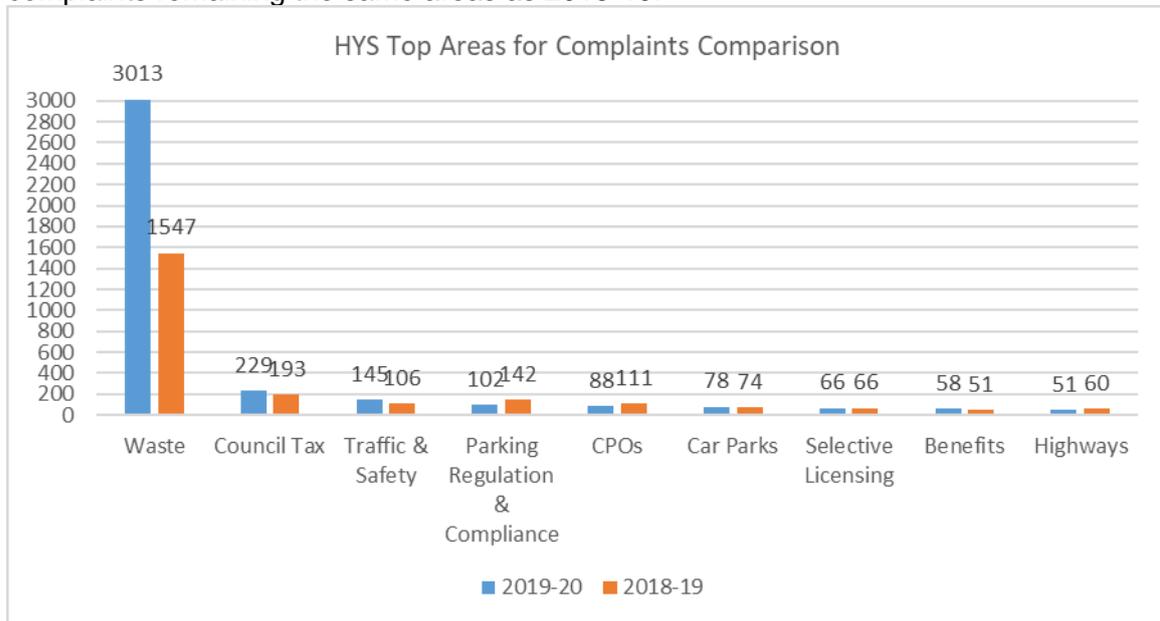
- 4.10 This breakdown of the data gives a clearer picture about which Council service the LGO complaints and outcomes relate to, and allow us to accurately identify service failures and improvements by carrying out root cause analysis.
- 4.11 Reflecting on the information breakdown and the 52 cases issued with a decision statement, we can identify that the services with the most upheld cases are within Adult Social Care, with an 86% uphold rate. The number of upheld complaints has decreased from last year, which is an improvement, but remains higher than the three years prior to that. From this analysis of the data, the increase in upheld complaints are within Adult Social Care and School Admissions which are not areas currently covered by the HYS Complaints Process. The HYS process covered 26 of the cases with a 15% uphold rate.
- 4.12 Since April 2018, it is reported the Council has agreed to make improvements to services following an investigation from the LGO on 9 cases. This includes 5 for Social Care, 3 for School Admissions and 1 for Safer Housing. These are highlighted on the Council's performance page on the LGO website here:
<https://www.lgo.org.uk/your-councils-performance/nottingham-city-council/serviceimprovements>
- 4.13 In the last five years the LGO have published 1 Public Interest Report against Nottingham City Council. This related to a complaint investigation concerning a Schools Admissions Appeal. The full report can be viewed here:
<https://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/news/2018/jul/city-council-told-to-reconsider-school-admission-appeal-after-ombudsman-investigation>
- 4.14 A closer look at the complaints data held by NCC will help us to understand the complaints trends and address where things have gone wrong. This will be broken into the HYS complaints, Social Care complaints and School Admissions complaints.

5. HYS Complaints – Key Facts and Figures

- 5.1 Here at Nottingham City Council we work very hard to deliver a huge range of services to high standards, but inevitably in a city of 300,000 residents, we won't always get it right or meet everyone's expectations.
- 5.2 The Have Your Say complaints process focuses on early resolution and as such the vast majority of issues are resolved in this way. We have helped to minimise the number of cases being referred to and upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman by also offering people who remain unsatisfied an independent review to resolve things, before involving the Ombudsman.
- 5.3 The latest figures of upheld complaints from the Ombudsman represent just 0.2% of the complaints received by NCC and this demonstrates our commitment to working positively with citizens and is one of the lowest rates amongst core cities
- 5.4 From April 1st 2019 to 31st March 2020 the HYS service have processed 5163 Stage 1 complaints and 99 Stage 2 complaint reviews.
- 5.5 The top ten areas for complaints dealt with by HYS were:
- Waste 3013
 - Council Tax 229
 - Traffic and Safety 145
 - Parking Regulation & Compliance 102
 - CPO's 88
 - Car Parks (Pay+Display/Barriers/Contracts) 78

- Selective Licensing 66
- Benefits 58
- Events 54
- Highways 51

5.6 This is comparable to the previous year's reporting, with nine of the top ten areas for complaints remaining the same areas as 2018-19.



5.7 Comparing to last year's figures, we can see there has been a significant increase in the volume of complaints dealt with by HYS from 3328 Stage 1's in 2018-19 to 5163 in 2019-20. And 69 Stage 2 Complaint Reviews in 2018-19 to 99 in 2019-20.

5.8 Looking at the top areas for complaints we can see that the level of complaints have remained on par with last year in most areas, and the increase has been in the number of complaints relating to the Waste service.

5.9 The high volume of HYS complaints for waste are primarily residents complaining about issues with their bin collection. It is important to note that these are not missed bin reports (which are logged as a service request not as complaints) but are complaints about frequently missed collections, the Assisted Pull Out service and replacement bins. The highest volume of complaints were in relation to missed recycling and garden bin collections.

5.10 This area of complaints is currently being reviewed by the Neighbourhood Services Senior Management team who have since established a weekly Task and Finish group with Customer Services to look at Waste complaints. They have provided observations for this report to reflect on the complaints data, focussing on the areas that saw the highest increases as follows:

5.11 Replacement bin complaints up from 226 to 380

This year, NCC introduced a charge for replacement bins which customers have raised objections to. A further issue is that with this charge, customers feel the service they receive around the timeliness of receipt of new bins is not acceptable. This has largely been caused by stock control issues.

5.12 Missed Bin Failures complaints up from 138 to 330

Staff absences have impacted missed bin collections and a resourcing review and monitoring will be a priority for the service once the Covid-19 pandemic allows.

5.13 Missed domestic bins complaints up from 157 from 393

The Waste Service are working with Customer Services to analyse reports and complaints using management information and data to understand issues and use this insight to further improve services to citizens. For context there are almost 9.5m kerbside collections every year, with 99.6% success.

5.14 Missed recycling and garden bins complaints up from 234 to 590

Complaints around non collection of contaminated recycling bins is the main factor in this category and significant work is underway to improve understanding amongst customers around recycling and to further analyse hotspots such as student and HMO areas. Changes to garden waste collections for Oct/Nov 2019 also created confusion with customers and it takes time to embed new collection regimes.

5.15 We can identify from the HYS data that the primary reason for complaints over the last three years continues to be around service delivery by Neighbourhood Services. However as there were no detailed investigations by the LGO for complaints within this service area, it is evident that the complaints were resolved at stage 1 or stage 2 within the HYS process.

5.16 The Have Your Say team provides monthly reports to Heads of Services regarding customer feedback statistics, to highlight any trends in complaints and assist with root cause analysis.

5.17 Of the 5163 Stage 1 complaints handled through the HYS process, 99 were reviewed by the Customer Experience Lead at Stage 2. With only 2% of the total complaints progressing to Stage 2, this demonstrates that overwhelming majority of complaints were resolved at the early stages and that the HYS quality assurance of complaint responses is an effective process.

5.18 There were 4 upheld decisions for LGO complaints that were covered by the HYS process. This is a good indicator that the HYS two-stage complaint handling process ensures most complaints are remedied at the early stages. Only a very small percentage (0.5%) of the total complaints dealt with have been investigated and upheld by the LGO.

6. Social Care Complaints – Key Facts And Figures

6.1 The Social Care Complaints Service manages the statutory social care complaints procedure for both Children and Adult services. The statutory processes are different for both service areas.

Children's integrated Services

6.2 In 2019/2020 a total of **240** new complaints were received and considered about Children's Integrated Services. This is a slight increase compared with the previous reporting period when 232 complaints were received.

6.3 The children's statutory social care procedure has three distinct stages; local resolution, investigation and independent review.

6.4 At the first stage, (local resolution) the Social Care Complaints Service refers complaints onto operational managers in order for them to consider and respond to the complaint. The Social Care Complaints Service records and monitors these responses. As with previous years, over 90% of complaints were resolved at this stage.

6.5 At stage 2 the Social Care Complaints Service allocates an independent investigator to look into the complaint. There were 8 stage 2 investigation requests received

during the last reporting period, compared with 11 in the previous year. Following a gradual improvement over the last few years, this year, for the fourth year in succession, 100% of the investigations were completed within the statutory timescale, which marks a significant improvement made over the last few years, and one which we hope will be sustained.

- 6.6 The final stage is an Independent Complaints Review Panel comprising of three Independent People. There were only 2 stage 3 panels during the last reporting period. The panels agreed with the Independent Investigators' findings and recommendations, and made no further recommendations.

Resolutions offered

- 6.7 **Stage 1:** Stage one complaints received a written explanation and where a complaint was upheld or partly upheld an apology was also provided. New or review assessments were undertaken in some instances.

Stage 2: Of the 5 stage two investigations where an element of the complaint was partly upheld, all were offered an apology.

Stage 3: the 2 panels accepted the investigators' findings, and made no additional recommendations.

Local Government Ombudsman investigations

- 6.8 Complainants can make a complaint to the Ombudsman at any time but the Ombudsman will usually ask complainants to complete the local authority complaints process before considering complaints himself.
- 6.9 The Ombudsman considered six new complaints. There was no finding of fault against the council in any of the new complaints reviewed by the Ombudsman. The one upheld complaint that is referred to on page 5 of this report relates to an investigation undertaken in the previous year but where the decision was issued during this reporting period.
- 6.10 The Ombudsman's consideration of one further complaint has been delayed by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

Adult Services

- 6.11 In 2019/2020 a total of **213** complaints were considered about adult social care services, which is a reduction from 278 in the previous year.
- 6.12 This is the second year the figure has exceeded 200, but it still represents a marked reduction on the previous reporting period.
- 6.13 The Adult procedure has a one-stage process, which allows flexibility within the management of a complaint. The Complaints Team usually refers complaints in the first instance to operational managers or commissioned services for their consideration and response. Where the complaint has potentially serious implications for either an individual or the Department or it is complex, it may be necessary to undertake/commission an investigation.

Category Of Complaint	Number
Unwelcome or disputed decision	74 (151)
Concern about the quality or appropriateness of the service	55 (67)
Delay in Decision Making	8 (4)
Delivery or non-delivery of services including complaints procedures	7 (11)
Quantity, frequency, change or cost of a service	2 (1)
Attitude or behaviour of staff	27 (22)
Application of eligibility and assessment criteria	0 (0)
Impact on an individual of a local authority policy and Assessment, care management and review	1 (4)
Not Recorded	39 (18)

Note: Previous reporting period's figures in brackets

- 6.14 Complaints about unwelcome decisions and the quality and/or appropriateness of a service continue to be the most common complaints.
- 6.15 The breakdown of complaints was broadly similar to that of the previous reporting period. Where the category of complaint was “not recorded” it is because these were mostly out of jurisdiction complaints, including complaints made by professionals; complaints about other agencies e.g. the NHS or another council; complaints where a citizen’s consent was not forthcoming; and complaints made by those who lacked the sufficiency of interest to be able to make a complaint on someone else’s behalf etc.
- 6.16 24% of complaints about Adult Social Care were either fully or mostly upheld, which is similar to previous years.
- 6.17 Complaints are often resolved by way of a written response, investigation or mediation, with the exception of 16 that were considered by the Ombudsman, which is a slight decrease from 19 considered by the Ombudsman during the previous year. The six upheld complaints referred to on page 5 include a number of decisions issued in respect of complaints investigated by the Ombudsman in the previous year 2018/2019. Of the new complaints made to the Ombudsman during 2019/2020 the majority were not upheld.

7. School Admissions – Public Interest Report 2018

- 7.1 School Admissions appeals are covered by a separate process not covered by HYS or Social Care complaints. However, it is mentioned within this report due to the volume of complaints about this appeals process investigated by the LGO.
- 7.2 On 5th July 2018 the LGO published a Public Report dated 17th May 2018 further to a complaint investigation about a schools admissions appeal. (See paragraph 4.12).
- 7.3 Further to this report, and other LGO investigations about this service area, the School Admissions team have reviewed their Appeals process and made changes which reflect the recommendations set out by the LGO. The report was also brought before Audit Committee and discussed in closed session in July 2018.

7.4 The LGO have been provided with the evidence that the remedies have been carried out which is reflected in NCC's 100% compliance with LGO recommendations.

8. National Comparisons

8.1 Although there are many differences in how local authorities across England will deliver their services, and in the varying demographic of customers they serve, it is still important to consider how we compare to other city councils.

8.2 Comparisons for complaints as whole are currently available. We will continue to seek to source this data.

8.3 Nottingham is 1 of 10 core cities in the UK (8 in England). Due to the low numbers of complaints investigated for each core city, the variation year on year in upheld rate can be significant and a city can go from best to worst performing on this statistic or vice versa in successive years, without the underlying performance of the systems concerned being responsible. The table below shows a comparison of Nottingham City Council's LGO statistics against the other core city authorities of Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield and Newcastle:

	Nottingham City Council	Birmingham City Council	Bristol City Council	Manchester City Council	Leeds City Council	Sheffield City Council	Newcastle upon Tyne City Council	Liverpool City Council
Total LGO Investigations	19	153	33	29	49	38	18	25
Total Upheld Decisions	12	119	20	17	31	34	12	22
% Upheld	67%	78%	61%	59%	63%	89%	67%	88%
Total Satisfactory Remedies	1	5	2	2	4	5	3	4
% Remedied	8%	4%	10%	12%	13%	15%	25%	18%
Total Compliance Outcomes	11	114	7	18	24	15	9	17
% Compliance	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

8.4 As reflected in the Annual LGO Letter and Council Performance Map, Nottingham City Council has performed on par with authorities deemed similar, with there being an overall average of 99% compliance outcomes, 56% upheld decisions and 11% satisfactory resolutions.

9. Summary and Action

9.1 The information compiled in this report aims to provide a clearer understanding of the published LGO statistics for Nottingham City Council in 2019/20. It is important to remember, when looking at the figures, that the Annual Review should form the start of the conversation about measuring corporate health, and low/high volumes do not solely indicate good or bad performance.

9.2 On reflection of the key facts and figures, it is clear that actually NCC resolve the vast majority of the complaints it receives at the early stages. Although the LGO statistics show a complaint as upheld it may have already been resolved by the Council. The

Customer Experience Lead previously raised this with the LGO who provided comment in 2019:

‘A complaint is upheld where there is evidence of maladministration, this is normally following a detailed investigation. However, there are cases where an authority will have already accepted fault and without needing to carry out a detailed investigation we decide the authority has done all it can to put things right. We still mark these cases as upheld, because fault has been identified in a complaint that has come to us. The decision statement, your annual statistics and our interactive map all reflect these cases in a positive light. While the complaint was upheld, the authority provided a satisfactory remedy before the complainant reached the Ombudsman. If an authority has 10 upheld complaints, but has satisfactorily remedied 8, we see that as a positive message where the authority is putting things right early. By then using the learning from upheld complaints, the authority can continue to improve its local services to prevent the same thing happening again.’

- 9.3 The Customer Charter commits to Citizens that we will listen to them and use their feedback to improve services across the Council, work together as one Council, and aim to get it right first time. It is important we utilise the Have Your Say data to effectively deliver those commitments and continuously improve Council services. Looking at the areas of high complaints, such as those in Waste, Customer Service is actively engaging with Service Heads to identify complaint trends and root causes to improve the customer experience and reduce complaint figures for the next reporting period.
- 9.4 The Customer Experience Lead has attended the LGO open course on Effective Complaint Handling and has worked to develop a complaint handling training course for Nottingham City Council. This will aim to increase colleague understanding of the HYS process and to develop a more consistent approach to complaint handling across all council services. The e-learning course on the Council's complaint handling and HYS process went live in July 2020 and is available on the intranet for all Council employees. The Customer Services Management team also helped develop and deliver a new and improved face to face Customer Service training session to both new starters and current employees across all service areas. Support and Information is available on the Intranet to all colleagues and the Have Your Say team continues to support services with complaint handling processes.
- 9.5 Customer Services are in the process of reviewing how HYS captures data about the comments, compliments and complaints in order to develop more efficient methods to analyse and identify trends.

10. Published Documents

- 10.1 The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Annual Review Letter 2020
Published 29th July 2020
- 10.2 The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Review of Local Government Complaints 2019-20
Published 29th July 2020

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Local Government Ombudsman Annual Assurance Report

2020 – Briefing Paper

- ❖ The attached report provides a reflection on the complaints received
 - under the Have Your Say (HYS) process
 - under the statutory Social Care complaints process
 - about the School Admissions appeals process
 - by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO or LGO)

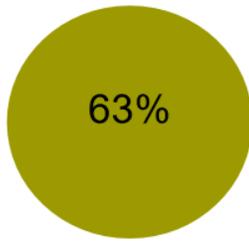
for the period of 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020. The information is taken from NCC records and the LGO Annual Letter, which is issued to all Councils and is published on the Ombudsman’s website.

- ❖ To enable Nottingham City Council to deliver high quality services it is important that we record and listen to feedback from people using Council services.
- ❖ There are currently two complaints teams within Nottingham City Council. One team handles the statutory complaints in relation to Children and Adults Social Care Services, and the HYS team handles the complaints and feedback for all other Council services.
- ❖ There are some areas that cannot be dealt with by the HYS complaints process as they are covered by another process or legal procedure. The LGO oversee some but not all of the HYS exemptions. This includes Social Care complaints and School Admissions appeals. They do not oversee the exemptions where there is a right to appeal or take legal action.
- ❖ Overall the breakdown of complaints investigated by the LGO for each Complaints area is as follows:

NCC Process	Cases	LGO Investigations	Not Upheld	Upheld	% Upheld	Resolved Pre LGO	Error Rate
Corporate Complaints (Have Your Say)	5163	7	3	4	57%	25%	0.1%
Childrens Social Care Complaints	240	1	0	1	100%	0%	0.4%
Adults Social Care Complaints	213	10	4	6	60%	0%	2.8%
School Admission Appeals	435	0	0	0	0%	0%	0.0%
School Transport Appeals	25	1	0	1	100%	0%	4.0%

❖ **Local Government Ombudsman Annual Letter**

On July 29th 2020 the LGO launched their annual review of local government and social care complaints for 2019-20.



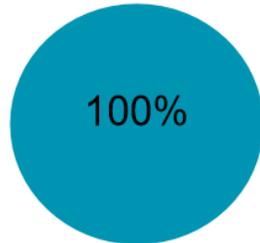
63% of complaints we investigated were upheld.

This compares to an average of 56% in similar authorities.

12 upheld decisions

Statistics are based on a total of 19 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

This is an improvement to last year where there were a higher number of detailed investigations of 26 cases, and 69% of these were upheld.

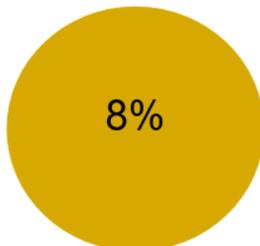


In 100% of cases we were satisfied the authority had successfully implemented our recommendations.

This compares to an average of 99% in similar authorities.

Statistics are based on a total of 11 compliance outcomes for the period between 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

Nottingham City Council also achieved 100% satisfactory compliance outcomes last year.



In 8% of upheld cases we found the authority had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman.

This compares to an average of 11% in similar authorities.

1 satisfactory remedy decision

Statistics are based on a total of 19 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

This is an improvement on last year in which Nottingham City Council had provided a satisfactory remedy in 6% of cases before the complaint had reached the LGO.

- ❖ The LGO Annual Review Letter shows that they received 75 complaints and enquiries about NCC for the 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020 period and 86 were assessed and issued with decisions. 29 were treated as premature, 2 were requests for advice, 3 were either incomplete or invalid and 33 were closed after initial enquiries. 19 complaints involved detailed investigations by the LGO and 12 of these were upheld.
- ❖ Since April 2018, it is reported the Council has agreed to make improvements to services following an investigation from the LGO on 9 cases. This includes 5 for Social Care, 3 for School Admissions and 1 for Safer Housing.
- ❖ The latest figures of upheld complaints from the Ombudsman represent just 0.2% of the complaints received by NCC and this demonstrates our commitment to working positively with citizens and is one of the lowest rates amongst core cities.

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