



**Glasgow City Council**

**Operational Performance and Delivery Scrutiny Committee**

**Report by Chief Officer, Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership**

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**Social Care Complaints Annual Report 2024/25**

**Purpose of Report:**

To report on complaints activity for social care complaints in Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership for the period 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025.

**Recommendations:**

The Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the content of the annual Social Care Complaints report.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐ consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

## 1 Summary of Main Findings

- 1.1 Appendix 1, accompanying this report covers complaints about social care services in the period April 2024 – March 2025 considered under the appropriate complaint procedure for Social Work Services. This consists of three stages of: Stage 1: 'Front-line resolution' (timescale 5 working days that may be extended to a maximum of 10 working days in certain circumstances); Stage 2: formal Investigation and written response (timescale 20 working days); Stage 3: Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (independent review that may lead to formal investigation, decision and recommendations or to a decision not to take matters further).
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to present and summarise the main features of that fuller analysis across all three stages of complaint. An annual report will also be presented to Glasgow City IJB Finance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2025 which covers Health and Social Care Complaints Activity.
- 1.3 Figures are given separately for Social Work (including Homelessness) and Care Services complaints (primarily home care) as these are processed within two different recording systems.
- 1.4 Development continues on an integrated complaints recording solution, and we are currently working to a 'go-live' date of 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025 and the introduction of the new complaints system in 2025 will have a significant impact in terms of improving management information around all complaints.
- 1.5 Volumes of Social Work complaint activities increased in 2024/25, rising by 14% from 676 in the previous year to 769. As it remains impossible to link Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints from data available, for clarity in this year's report Stage 1 and Stage 2 are identified as complaint activities, as opposed to complaint cases – once the new recording system is in place, reporting will be focussed on complaint cases. The full report for 2023-24 remains available for comparison at:  
<https://onlineservices.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/viewDoc.asp?c=P62AFQDN81UTDNNTT1>, and demographic information is available at:  
<https://glasgowcity.hscp.scot/performance-and-demographics>.
- 1.6 Care Services Stage 1 complaints decreased by 35% from 445 to 290.
- 1.7 There has been little change in the distribution of Social Work complaints proportionately between the localities, with the most notable increases in complaints activity relating to Subject Access Request delays and Homelessness issues. Almost all Care Services complaints focus on Home Care, with more in South locality than the other localities, in line with the greater population and scope of services in South area.
- 1.8 Performance against timescale for stage 2 investigations of complaints has improved very slightly in 2024/25, from 61% in the previous year to 62%. While not a significant increase in compliance, and below the target of 70%

compliance, current rate of compliance is attributed to the high volume of Stage 2 complaints, and also to the ongoing challenge of the volume of work unrelated to complaints handled by the team in relation to the Subject Access process. Significant additional resource has now been secured and introduced, however the focus of staff will remain on Subject Access Request processing until sufficient progress has been made in that regard, and so this additional resource is not projected to significantly impact on Stage 2 compliance in Qs 3 and 4 of 2025/26.

- 1.9 Timescales for Stage 1 complaints were not met for Social Work complaints in any area of the city, except North East. 57% of these were in time across GCHSCP, down slightly from 58% the year before. The target was, therefore, not met for complaints across both stages, with only 59% of all responses being within deadline, broadly consistent with the previous reporting year.
- 1.10 Section 3.3 of Appendix 1 summarises the particular client groups submitting complaints, with the majority of complaints relating to Children and Families involvement – this is typical and directly related to the general dissatisfaction that many complainants feel towards social work involvement in their family lives. Complaints from those in the Homelessness Client Group remain high.
- 1.11 The significant number of complainants in the ‘Not Known’ client group primarily relate to complaints regarding delays to Subject Access Request processing – these complainants may not be current service users, or even where they are, any current SWS involvement is not ordinarily relevant to the matter complained about, and therefore these complainants will not generally be logged as belonging to one of the recognised client groups.
- 1.12 Section 3.4 of Appendix 1 summarises the main issues raised by service users across social work complaints and across care services complaints.
- 1.13 For Care Services the top three issues were quality of service, failure to arrive and competency of staff, which is consistent with previous years. Complaints about failure to arrive have dropped noticeably from 112 in 2023/24 to 51. Complaints about staff competency have also decreased noticeably, from 64 to 33.
- 1.14 Care Services carried out over 4.2 million visits during 2024/25, so less than 0.01% of care visits generated any sort of complaint.
- 1.15 30% of Social Work complaints have been upheld or partially upheld in 2024/25, consistent with figures from the preceding year. Care Services complaints upheld or partially upheld have increased slightly, from 62% to 65%.
- 1.16 25 cases were considered by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) at stage 3 of the complaints process. Case summaries and outcomes are presented at section 3.6 of Appendix 1. None of the cases considered by the SPSO were upheld, although three await the final decision of the SPSO.

- 1.17 That each case that reached Stage 3 during 2024/25 and has been concluded was either not upheld, or not taken further by the SPSO following initial assessment, which equates to agreement with the stage 2 response issued to the complainant generally gives reassurance that the internal complaints process is functioning correctly, both in relation to the small percentage of complaints that reach the SPSO, and the small proportion of those that lead to any action by the SPSO.
- 1.18 One further case, first raised with the SPSO in 2021, was finally concluded during 2024/25 and details – appropriately anonymised – are included at the end of Section 3.7 of Appendix 1.
- 1.19 For social work complaints that were upheld at any stage, there is good evidence that actions were then taken to offer redress to complainers and/or to improve services or processes. These were largely confined to improvements at an individual case level, but were nevertheless important from the customer's perspective, often involving increased financial and other support, improved engagement or the expediting of services. Relevant actions are listed in full at section 3.8 of Appendix 1.
- 1.20 In addition to the detailed report on complaints performance, some additional context and information in relation to the development activity of the Complaints, FOI and Investigations team is summarised at Section 3.9 of Appendix 1.

## **2 Policy and Resource Implications**

### **Resource Implications:**

*Financial:* There are no new financial implications arising from this report.

*Legal:* This report raises no new legal issues.

*Personnel:* There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

*Procurement:* There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

**Council Strategic Plan:** As a long-standing reporting requirement, this report does not relate to a specific commitment under the Council's Strategic Plan, however in general terms the function of complaints handling relates directly to 'Grand Challenge 4: Enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities. In particular, the investigation of and learning from

complaints relate directly to the following Missions:

- Run an open, well governed council in partnership with all our communities
- Enable staff to deliver a sustainable and innovative council structure that delivers value for money

### **Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.*

There are no proposals in this report having any relevant potential equality impacts.

*What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?*

No significant impact

*Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.*

No significant impact

### **Climate Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:*

There are no proposals in this report having any relevant potential climate impacts.

*What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?*

No significant impact

*Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?*

No significant impact

### **Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:**

Are there any potential data protection impacts

There are no proposals in this report that have any relevant privacy and data protection impacts.

as a result of this report  
Y/N

### **3 Recommendations**

- 3.1 Operational Performance and Delivery Scrutiny Committee is asked to:
- a) Note the content of the annual Social Care Complaints report.