

Learning from Complaints 2021/22

Quarter 1 – 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021

	No. of Stage 1 complaint's
No. of Stage 1 complaints received	6
No. escalated to Stage 2	1
Stage 1 – response in 5 working days	5 (83%)
Average no. of working days to respond	3 working days
Stage 1 - Extended to 10 working days	1 (17%)
Average no. of working days to respond	9 working days
All stage 1 complaints – Average no. of working days for response	4 working days
Outcome at Stage 1 -resolved/upheld/partially upheld/not upheld	4 resolved/1 upheld/1 not upheld

	No. of Stage 2 complaint's
Stage 2 – no. escalated from Stage 1	1
Stage 2 – response in 20 working days	1 (100%)
Average no. of working days to respond	20 working days
Stage 2 – no. started at Stage 2	2
Stage 2 - response in 20 working days	2 (100%)
Average no. of working days to respond	19.5 working days
Total number of Stage 2 complaints	3
Outcome -resolved/upheld/partially upheld/not upheld	1 resolved/2 not upheld

Total Complaints submitted: 9

No. of Stage 1 complaints as a % of all complaints: 6 (67%)

No. of Stage 2 complaints as a % of all complaints: 3 (1 escalated from Stage 1 and 2 started at Stage 2) (33%)

Complaints resolved as a % of all complaints: 5 (56%)

Complaints upheld as a % of all complaints: 1 (11%)

Complaints partially upheld as a % of all complaints: 0

Complaints not upheld as a % of all complaints: 3 - 1 escalated from stage 1 (33%)

No reviews by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

Outcome of Stage 1 Complaints:

Electoral Registration: There were 2 complaints related to electoral registration. The first complaint related to a stakeholder who thought their application to vote by post had not been received in time for the Scottish Parliament election. Their application had been received and was processed in time this was resolved at Stage 1 – Frontline Resolution. The second complaint related to an elector who had made an application to vote by emergency proxy. The application was received in time and was valid, but no communication was made with the elector or their proxy to confirm this. We apologised to the elector. The complaint was upheld and the procedure involving the receipt of emergency proxy applications will be reviewed so that this issue does not occur at any future elections or referendums.

Council Tax: There were 4 complaints relating to Council Tax. Three of our complaints concerned the length of time to provide a service. All staff remain extremely busy and with limited resources, prioritisation of work has been necessary. With very strict statutory deadlines on certain aspects of our work it was inevitable that certain areas of our service delivery will fall behind. We accept that all stakeholders have high expectations of our service delivery, but the reality is that not all functions can be delivered when resources are limited, and work pressures are extreme. Two of the complaints were resolved at stage 1 with one complaint being escalated to Stage 2 as the stakeholder was not satisfied with the response at Stage 1 as the complaint was not upheld. The other complaint was regarding a proposal against the banding of the stakeholder's property and that they were advised the proposal was Out of Time. This was an error as the proposal was made within the statutory timeframe. We apologised to the Council Taxpayer and resolved the issue at Stage 1. We will look to improve on the checks made prior to issuing correspondence to ensure the accuracy and quality of the information.

Outcome of Stage 2 Complaints:

One complaint was escalated from Stage 1 when the stakeholder asked for an investigation as they were displeased with the stage 1 response. The Complaint's Officer investigating the Stage 2 complaint found that the Stage 1 complaint had been handled correctly and fairly and was not upheld. Two complaints were started as stage 2, the first complaint was relating to legislation surrounding Self Catering Accommodation and the conclusion of recent discussions. The complaint was resolved at Stage 2. The second complaint was at the stakeholder's request for a formal complaint. The complaint was relating to further information that had come to light after the stakeholder had been through the appeal process for Council Tax, where the appeal was not upheld. The Complaint's Officer provided guidance to advise the stakeholder that the Council Tax legislation did not allow for any further considerations regarding the matter.

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