Complaints Service Update – Overview and Scrutiny
February 2022

Wendy Griffiths
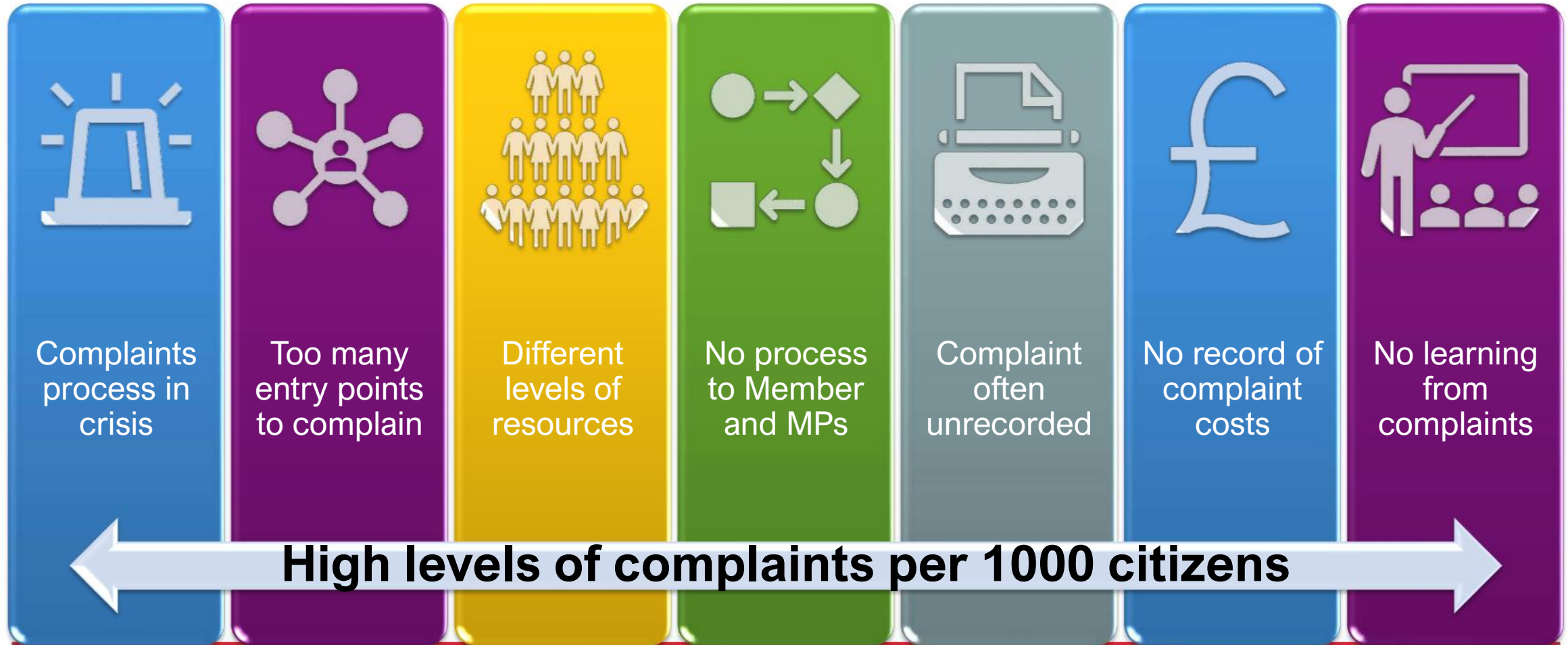
Assistant Director Customer Services, Business Support & Digital Mail

Birmingham City Council

Background

- In the November 2020 Overview and Scrutiny Report, 3 key areas of improving the experience of those using council services were identified and examined:

  - Understanding current performance for the call-centre and Cllr enquiries and identify areas for improvement.

  - Explore service delivery in 3 areas to look at root causes and identify areas for improvement

  - To investigate how member's enquiries are responded to; with a view to a new protocol.

  - Discussed progress and protocol with Overview & Scrutiny on 4 occasions since Nov 2020.

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The position before the new Complaints System

Complaints process in crisis	Too many entry points to complain	Different levels of resources	No process to Member and MPs	Complaint often unrecorded	No record of complaint costs	No learning from complaints

High levels of complaints per 1000 citizens

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We have achieved so far

1 System for complaints
1 Process that reduces access points

51% increase in the visibility of complaints as a result of the single entry system (Launch to December)

Reduced backlogs example from Housing Options from 863 to 101 (April 21 to Jan 21)

29 new dedicated complaint staff 15 months remaining

Service Improvement Plan for each Directorate

Developed **Quality Assurance** and learning from excellence

Improved Reporting Root cause analysis, outcomes, casework

47% Reduction in repeat complaints Sept 20 15%, Sept 21 8%

20% Reduction in the number of Ombudsman complaints Upheld (Quarter 1 to Quarter 2 2021)

63% Improved SLA Performance for Member Enquiries (April - Dec 21) Member Enquiries visible in the new system

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Corporate Headlines for Quarter 3 and December 2021

	Quarter 3	December
Total Complaints received made up of	**7214**	**2271**
Citizen Complaints received	6680	2139
Member Complaints received	534	132
Statutory Complaints received	**89**	**41**
Compliments received	168	57
Comments received	1067	294
Member Enquiries received	3196	907

Please note: There are statutory and legislative processes that receive complaints that follow a separate process which will not be incorporated within the complaints reporting, For full out of scope list, please see appendix 1.

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Corporate Complaints Volume & Performance Report

Directorate	This month DEC 2021	Last Month NOV 2021	Month Trend	Year to date	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Qtr Trend
Corporate Volume	**2271**	**2535**	⬇	**18587**	**4769**	**6604**	**7214**	**-**	⬆
Adult Social Care (corporate)	**5**	2	⬆	**14**	2	5	**7**		⬆
City Housing	**571**	716	⬇	**6138**	1993	2191	**1954**		⬇
City Operations	**1170**	1203	⬇	**7777**	1593	2797	**3387**		⬆
Commonwealth Games	**1**	1	➡	**3**	0	1	**2**		⬆
Digital and Customer Services	**145**	187	⬇	**1598**	449	640	**509**		⬇
Education and Skills	**78**	109	⬇	**669**	196	199	**274**		⬆
Finance and Governance	**3**	5	⬇	**33**	13	8	**12**		⬆
Human Resources	**0**	3	⬇	**6**	1	2	**3**		⬆
Inclusive Growth	**293**	309	⬇	**2320**	510	750	**1060**		⬆
Partnerships Insight and Prevention	**0**	0	➡	**18**	7	10	**1**		⬇
(blank)	**5**	0	➡	**11**	5	1	**5**		⬆

Corporate Performance Citizen and Member Complaints

	This month DEC 2021	Last Month NOV 2021	Month Trend	Year to date	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Qtr Trend
Stage 1 % closed within SLA (15 days)	**82%**	82%	➡	**75%**	80%	64%	**77%**	-	⬆
Stage 2 % closed within SLA (20 days)	n/a	**76%**	➡	**57%**	61%	61%	**n/a**	-	➡

December 2021 and Q3

Complaint Volume and Performance

Complaints: April 1327, May 1469, June 1973, July 1988, August 2049, September 2567, October 2408, November 2535, December 2271

Legend: Complaints | Stage 1 SLA (%) | Stage 2: SLA (%)

Please note
Stage 2 SLA reporting not available at the point of distribution

Year on Year Comparison

DEC 2020	DEC 2021	Volume Trend	NOV 21 Compared to DEC 21	Q3 2020	Q3 2021	Trend
1135	**2266**	⬆	-269	3585	7214	⬆

DEC 21 Highest Volume Directorate	DEC 21 Biggest month on month variation
City Operations @1170	City Operations -145

	This month DEC 2021	Last Month NOV 2021	Month Trend	Year to date	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Qtr Trend
Comments	**297**	**373**	↓	3053	1050	933	**1070**	-	↑
Compliments	**75**	**86**	↓	669	222	206	**241**	-	↑
Member Enquiries	**877**	**1071**	↓	8621	1833	3697	**3091**	-	↓
Members Complaints	**131**	**218**	↓	1403	292	578	**533**	-	↓
Member Enquiries and Complaints Performance									
Enquiries % closed within SLA (10 days)	**72%**	**67%**	↑	49%	48%	40%	**62%**		↑
Stage 1 member complaints % closed within SLA (15d)	**68%**	**60%**	↑	47%	47%	35%	**60%**		↑
Stage 2 complaints % closed within SLA (20 days)	**n/a**	**60%**	↓	74%	57%	78%	**n/a**		
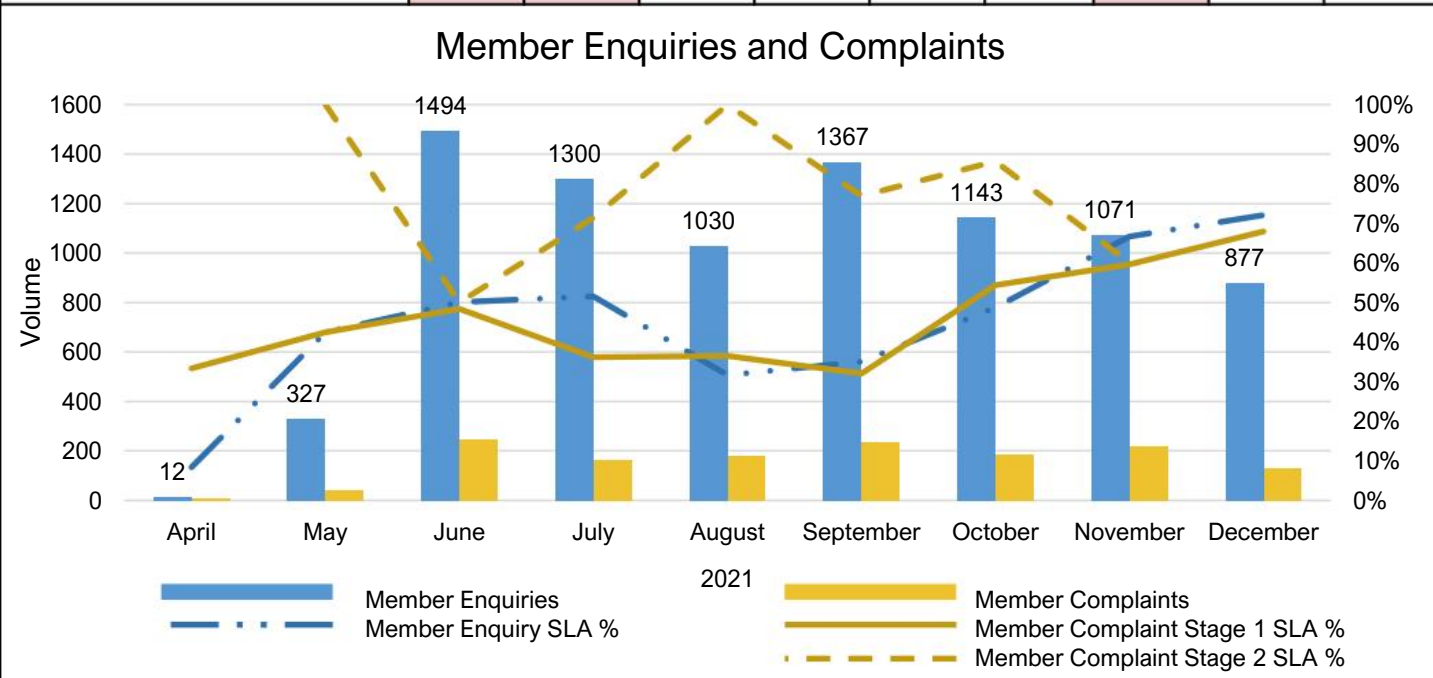
COMMENTS AND COMPLIMENTS

Member Enquiries and Complaints

Commentary:

Compliments: There were 75 compliments received in December 2021. This is a slight decrease compared to November 2021. Quarter 3 has seen an increase in the number of Comments received, back up to Q1 levels.

Comments: In December we received 297 comments relating to services we provide, which is lower than the number received in November. Quarter 3, as with Compliments, has seen an increase back to a similar level as Q1.

Members Enquiries: There were 877 Members enquiries recorded for December 2021 which is a decrease of 194 compared to November 2021, The SLA for Members Enquiries being completed within 10 days was 72%, up from November.

Although there were fewer Members Enquiries in Q3 (-606), the teams have been able to increase the SLA compliance, meaning that Q3 is +22% on Q2.

Member Complaints: Member Complaints decreased to 131 in December compared to 218 in November (-87), (Members complaint volumes are included within the corporate complaint volumes.)

The SLA for Members Complaints for stage 1 (15 working days) complaint increased by 8% to 68% for December and the Stage 2 member complaints were 60% for November (20 working days), which is down on the October result.

The Stage 1 Quarterly performance shows an increased level of compliance to the SLAs compared to the previous Quarter.

Complaint Volumes and Performance 2019/20 to 2021/22
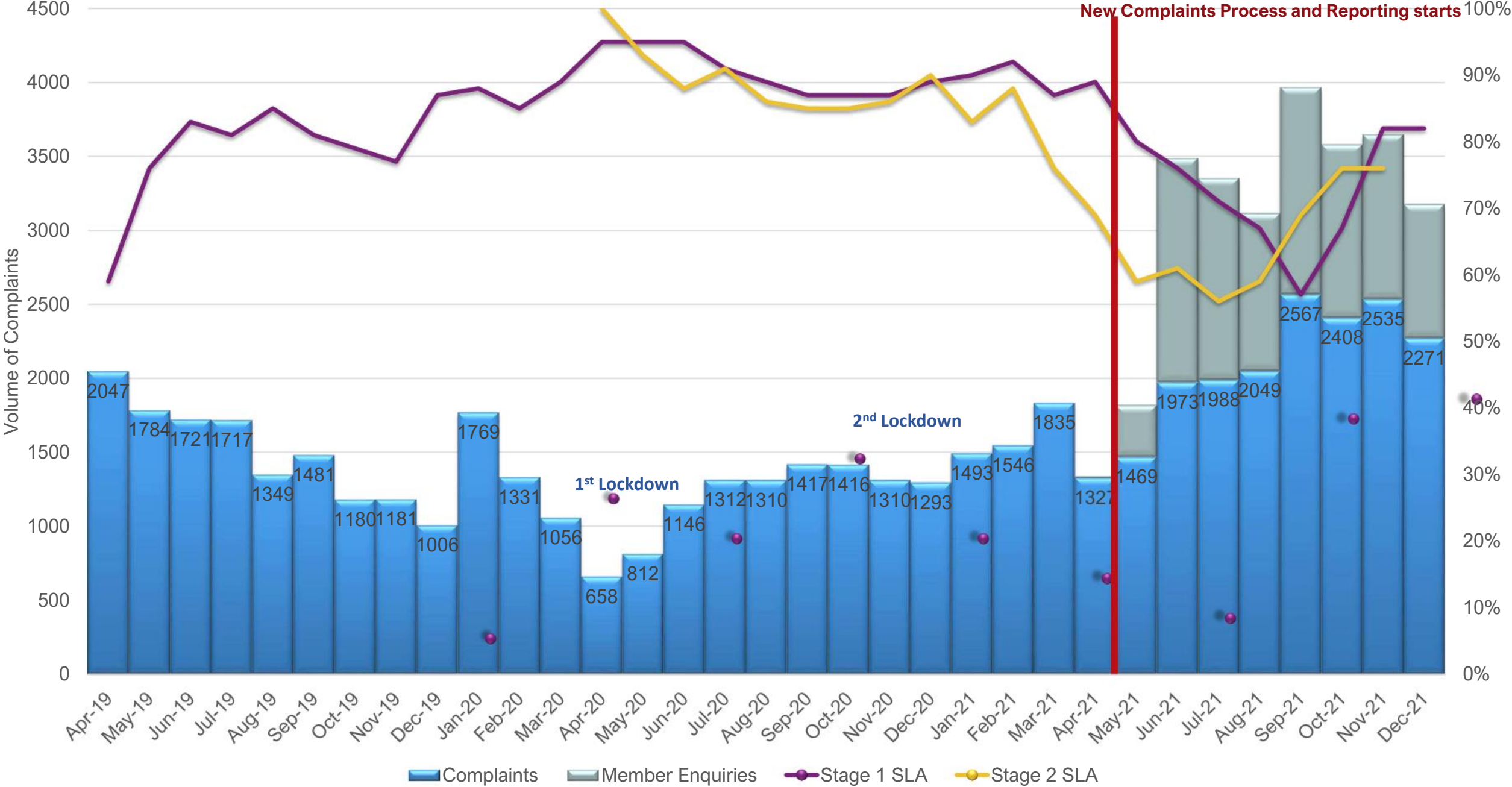
Example of Members reporting

Directorate
- [ ] Adult Social Care
- [ ] Children and Young People
- [ ] City Housing
- [ ] City Operations
- [ ] Commonwealth Games
- [ ] Digital and Customer Services
- [ ] Education and Skills
- [ ] Finance and Governance
- [ ] Human Resources
- [ ] Inclusive Growth
- [ ] Other
- [ ] Partnerships Insight and Prevention

Complaints & enquiries by directorate

Year
- [ ] (Blank)
- [ ] 2021

Day
| 1 | 31 |

Month

January	April	July	October
February	May	August	November
March	June	September	December

Cases by type

Total cases

24.89K

Count of Case id

- Complaint — 15.2K
- Member enquiry — 8.3K
- Members comp... — 1.3K

Case type

Division

| Wellbeing Service |
| Waste Management Service team |
| Waste Management Service |
| Transportation & Connectivity |
| Sport Client Services |
| Skills and Employability |
| Revenues team |
| Revenues |
| Resources |
| Rents |
| Regulation and Enforcement |
| Recruitment |
| Public Health |
| Private Rented Service |
| Planning and Development |
| Place Finance |
| Parks and Nature Cons team |
| Parks and Nature Cons |

Within stage 1 SLA
- No — 10.05K (40.39%)
- Yes — 14.84K (59.61%)

Within Stage 2 SLA
- Yes — 487 (41.59%)
- No — 684 (58.41%)

Closed cases

21.04K

Open cases

3854

Complaints by Service

Service	Count of Case id
Missed Collection - Refuse	1832
Flytipping Removal	1032
Missed Collection - Recycling	1026
Wates East	929
Fortem	910
Council Tax	881
Penalty Charge Notice - Service Complaint	801

Example of Members reporting – Heat Map

Month

January	April	July	October
February	May	August	November
March	June	September	

1   31

Service	Count of Case id
Antisocial Behaviour	510
Behaviour potentially to Domestic Abuse	2
Bereavement Service	5
Brandwood End Cemetery	3
Community Safety	21
Equalities	6
Erdington Customer Service Centre	1
Handsworth Cemetery	5
Kings Norton Cemetery	2
Lodge Hill Cemetery and Crematorium	6
Major Events	3
Museums	3
Neighbourhood Development and Support Unit	4
Northfield Customer Service Centre	1
Quinton Cemetery	8
Registrars	73
Sparkbrook Neighbourhood Office	1
Sutton Coldfield Cemetery and Crematorium	5
Sutton New Hall Cemetery	7
Witton Cemetery	2
Total	**676**

Portfolio dashboard report

676

Postcode

Example of Members reporting

Directorate
- [ ] Partnerships Insight and Prevention
- [ ] Other
- [ ] Inclusive Growth
- [ ] Human Resources
- [ ] Finance and Governance
- [ ] Education and Skills
- [ ] Digital and Customer Services
- [ ] Commonwealth Games
- [ ] City Operations
- [ ] City Housing

Division

- Benefits
- Bereavement Services
- Birmingham Property Services
- Business & Customer Support
- Commissioning
- Commonwealth Games
- Community Services
- Community Support and Development
- Corporate Communications
- **Total**

Service

- Abandoned Vehicle
- Access to Education
- Accounts Payable-Resources
- Accounts Receivable-Resources
- Acocks Green Library
- Adult Education
- Adults Blue Badge
- Adults Client Financial Services
- Adults Commissioning - External Providers
- **Total**

Root cause analysis

Year
- [ ] (Blank)
- [ ] 2021

Total number of problems

22.04K

Complaint	Member enquiry	Members complaint

1	31

○──────────────○

Month

January	April	July	October
February	May	August	November
March	June	September	December

Cases by problem

	Count of Case id
Efficiency of service	4.3K
Failure to do something	2.6K
Not to the quality or standard expected	2.2K
Delay in doing something	2.2K
Failure to deliver a service	1.6K
Disagree with policy or procedure	1.0K
Other policy and procedure cause	0.6K
Disagree with charge received	0.6K
Other service quality cause	0.5K
Other communication cause	0.5K

Cases by problem category

0.52K (2.36%)
1.51K (6.83%)
2.08K (9.39%)
2.13K (9.6%)
2.13K (9.63%)
12.09K (54.61%)

Problem category
- ● Service quality
- ● Policy and procedu...
- ● Housing Repairs
- ● Service failure
- ● Communication
- ● Payments or disput...
- ● Staff conduct cause
- ● Other
- ● Legal and regulatory
- ● (Blank)

Case id
- 23535490
- 23535495
- 23552186
- 23552588
- 23552589
- 23552888
- 23552889
- 23553982
- 23553984
- 23554183
- 23554381
- 23554781

Good News Stories

Adult Social Care – Urgent MP enquiry – Failure to do something (Resolved at first action)

Constituent's family had raised concerns about the Service User not receiving any care given that he is partially blind, suffers from mental health issues and is also an alcoholic.

Complaints team contacted the relevant Social Work Team who contacted the Service Users family via telephone the same day to discuss the case in more details. Following on from this call the Social Work team have now arranged for Occupational Therapy to provide Aids to support the Service User within his home, a key safe has also been installed and a care package arranged for four calls daily. A referral has also been made to the Community Network support Officer with the request that they engage with the Service User to build up his network of support due to the fact that the Service User will sometimes refuses engage with Adult Social Care which presents difficulties when attempts are made to provide the support required. The Service Users family were happy with the support now being offered to the Service User and the prompt action taken.

City Housing and CFLT Member's enquiry - Failure to do something (Anti-Social Behaviour)

Complainant and Councillor were unhappy with no update from the anti-social behaviour team regarding behaviour on their road over the last 6 months.

Complaints team called the service concerned for an update which was fed back to the Councillor and the complainant directly and a further meeting was scheduled with the complainant and other residents within the area to listen to the residents' concerns. Feedback from the meeting was that it went well and an action plan in partnership with the local police force was created.

City Housing – Urgent Complaint – Delay in doing something (Resolved at first action)

Citizen in Temporary Accommodation with children and ex-partner residing in property which was causing significant issues. Complaint was received from Citizens UK who act as support aid advocates. Citizens UK were requesting the citizens housing application to be urgently reassessed.

Complaints team called lead advocate and a had detailed discussion over phone. The advocate had intention to run support sessions so he and other lead community advocates could be more up to date with Housing Allocation Policy and the current plight of social housing. Complaint team member discussed the current housing options pack with him around availability of types of property and how to best tactically bid. Also arranged for the Registration team to urgently assess the application. Case was assessed the following morning; whilst the outcome was that the applicant remained in current banding a detailed discussion was had with the advocate and the outcome fully explained.

Good News Stories

City Operations – Street Scene – Service Failure

Due to a lack of LGV driver availability across the UK, impacting resources, rounds were being dropped. This increasing the level of complaints received into the service. In collaboration with Business Support and Waste Management a new inhouse training package together with the recruitment of a coordinator has been secured increase training in this key area. Business Support are now supporting the service with the LGV programme roll out with current workforce to build resilience in drivers from within the service.

City Operations – Street Scene– Failure to do something

The complaints team identified through the reporting that dropped lists were not being used effectively which meant that the action to remove the waste was before the response was investigated. The team embedded complaint staff within the Depots and repurposed the dropped work data to enable a quicker and more collaborative response. The outcome has been working together the complaints team and Depots are able to identify and resolve dropped work more efficiently therefore reduce the service level agreement timescale.

Next steps

Reporting

Member reporting –(Seek feedback on the Members Reporting for distribution)

Portfolio reports for Cabinet Members

Service Improvement

Continue to embed the improvement model throughout all Directorates.

Process

Promote the one system approach to ensure full details are automatically generated avoiding omissions of details within acknowledgements and responses

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Waste Management – Complaints

Darren Share

Assistant Director Street Scene, City Operations

Complaints data
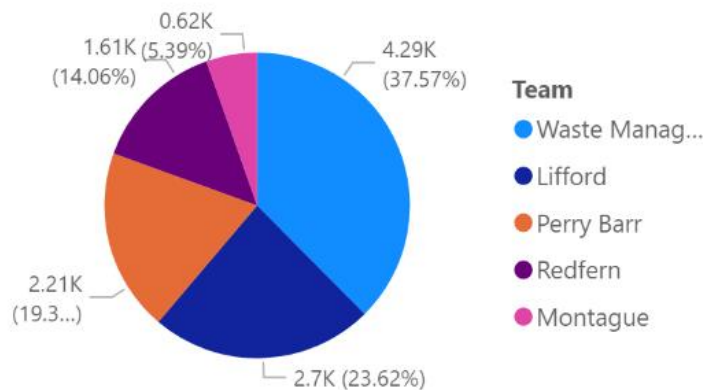
Waste Management

11418

2021 Total cases

Complaint had the highest total Cases at 8,525, followed by Member enquiry at 2686 and Members complaint at 207.
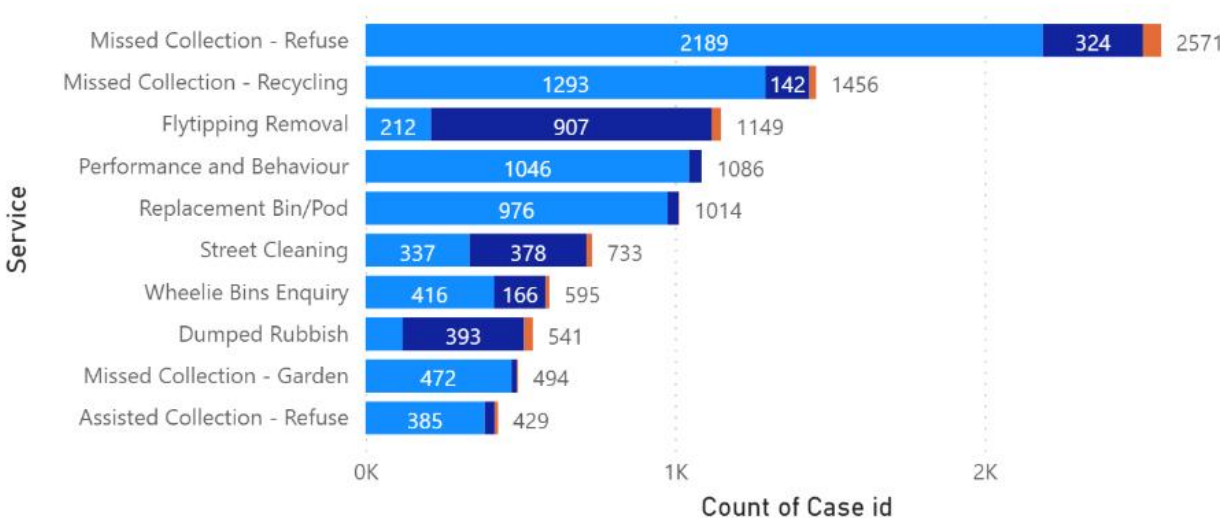
Complaint had the highest average Cases at 710.42, followed by Member enquiry at 335.75 and Members complaint at 25.88.

Cases by Team

- 0.62K
- 1.61K (5.39%) (14.06%)
- 4.29K (37.57%)
- 2.21K (19.3...)
- 2.7K (23.62%)

Team
- Waste Manag...
- Lifford
- Perry Barr
- Redfern
- Montague

Top 10 Service Areas

Case type ● Complaint ● Member enquiry ● Members complaint

Service	Complaint	Member enquiry	Total
Missed Collection - Refuse	2189	324	2571
Missed Collection - Recycling	1293	142	1456
Flytipping Removal	212	907	1149
Performance and Behaviour	1046		1086
Replacement Bin/Pod	976		1014
Street Cleaning	337	378	733
Wheelie Bins Enquiry	416	166	595
Dumped Rubbish	393		541
Missed Collection - Garden	472		494
Assisted Collection - Refuse	385		429

Count of Case id

Cases by Month and Case type

Case type ● Complaint ● Member enquiry ● Members complaint

Month	Complaint	Member enquiry	Total
January	545		545
February	568		568
March	653		653
April	554		554
May	346		387
June	442	382	864
July	632	417	1064
August	784	343	1167
September	945	536	1508
October	902	346	1264
November	1087	339	1455
December	1067	286	1389

Waste Management service areas

Service	Count of Case id
Missed Collection - Refuse	2571
Missed Collection - Recycling	1456
Flytipping Removal	1149
Performance and Behaviour	1086
Replacement Bin/Pod	1014
Street Cleaning	733
Wheelie Bins Enquiry	595
Dumped Rubbish	541
Missed Collection - Garden	494
Assisted Collection - Refuse	429
Bulky Waste Collection	300
Garden Waste Service	281
Early Start	159
Assisted Collection - Recycling	135
Litter Bin Issue	113
Assisted Collection - Garden	64
Complaint	54
Household Recycling Centre	47
Graffiti Removal	42
Commercial Waste Missed Collection	31
Collection Schedule	24
Asbestos Collection	21
Bulky Waste Assisted Collection	16
Commercial Waste Containers	16
Clinical Waste Missed Collection - Box	15
Flyposting Removal	10
Commercial Waste Contract	7
Clinical Waste Delivery	6
Hazardous Waste Collection	3
Public Toilets	3
Clinical Waste Missed Collection - Sack	1

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Waste Complaint Volumes and Performance 2019/20 to 2021/22

Street Scene transformation projects

Independent Waste Review

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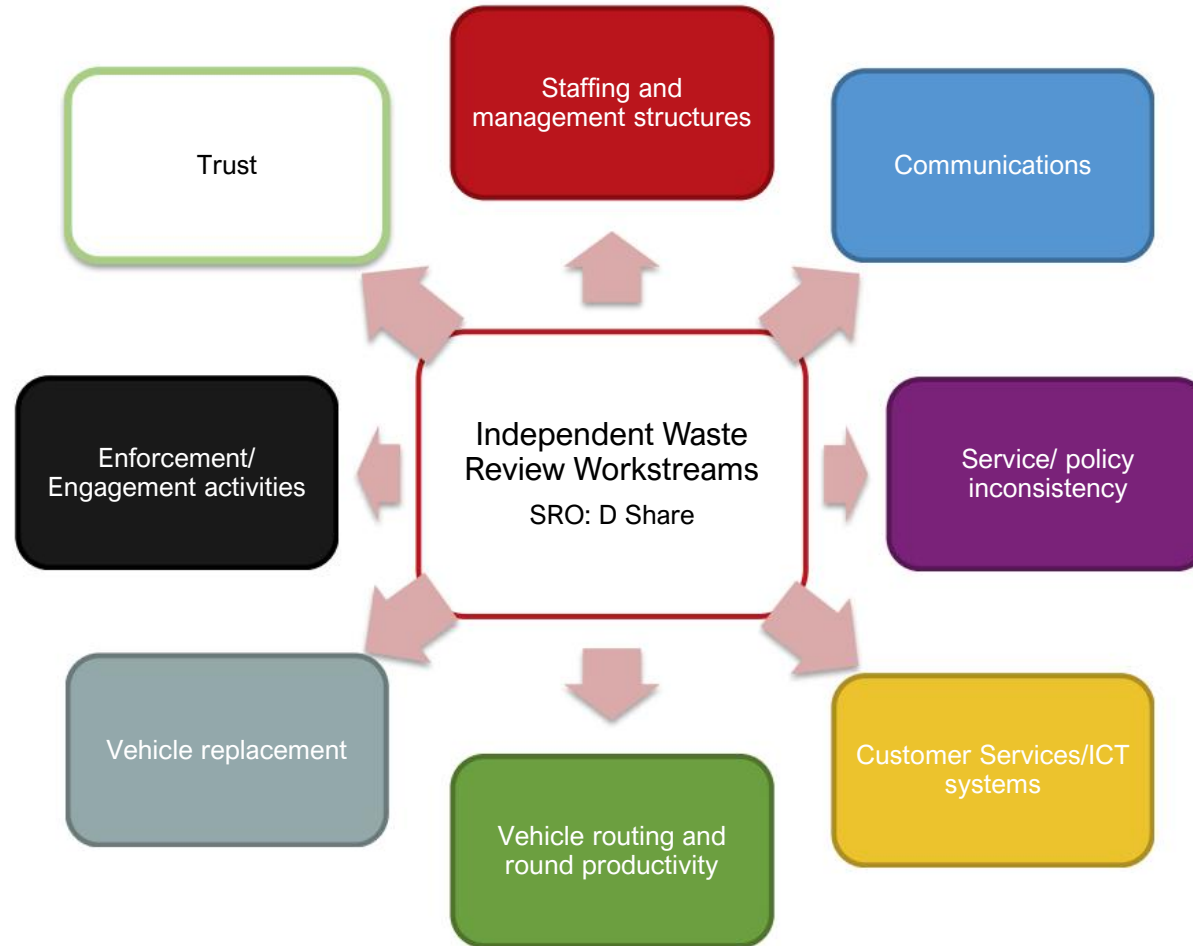
Completed

Grounds Maintenance

- Vehicle replacement
- Machinery procurement
- In-sourcing

Refuse Collection

- Recruitment
- Move from 4 to 5 days of collection

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Live

Depots
- Tyseley essential works
- Perry Barr depot build
- Atlas Road depot build

Recruitment
- Grounds Maintenance
- Street Cleansing

Technical
- Route optimisation
- Slab in the Cab

Procurement
- Waste Disposal
- Vehicle replacement – Refuse collection

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Live

Initiatives
- Keep Britain Tidy
- Street Cleansing
- Love Your Streets

Legislative and reviews
- Wood Review
- Post-2034 disposal options
- Environmental Bill
- Future Parks Accelerator

Projects
- COVID memorials
- Queens Green canopy
- CWG cleansing
- CWG florals

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Live

Future service planning
- Service restructure
- Trade Review
- Developing a Graffiti policy

Citizen improvement
- Community offer
- Communications plan

Other
- Avium flu

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Opportunities

Transforming our Complaints into Service Improvements

Proposed by Jonathan Antill, Head of Service

Business Improvement & Support

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Purpose of the session

Opportunity to use our complaints data to help inform service delivery improvements

Listen to the priceless feedback from our citizens and customers

Concentrate on a specific aspect of service delivery to enable a quick-win approach

Reinforce the operational experience and combine with complaint insight

Make recommendations aimed at increasing customer satisfaction and reducing future complaints

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Approach

This slide-deck will formulise our collaborative approach to improvements and tell the story of all future sessions

Data will be used from 2021 to set the scene only

These sessions are a collective opportunity to apply root-cause learning into change. Solving individual complaints is not the purpose

Each individual session will have a single service area focus and use the most recent data available

Completion of tasks will be monitored through the Teams group entitled: Complaints Opportunities – Waste Management and Business Support

Actions

All contributors should come to the session prepared

Teams may wish to schedule a pre-meeting to populate the Task matrix in advance

Documentation can be used and should be attached into the Task matrix. For example, a screenshot of the information already provided on the internet can be linked

Every task will have a completion date and owner before the session ends

All actions must be fully aligned with existing Waste Management programmes

Example Session 1 – Assisted Collections

Year
- ☐ (Blank)
- ☐ 2018
- ☐ 2019
- ☐ 2020

Division
- ☐ (Blank)
- ☐ Arts Event and C...
- ☐ Bereavement Se...
- ☐ Community Sup...
- ☐ Cultural Develop...
- ☐ Customer Services
- ☐ Events
- ☐ Highways - Stre...
- ☐ Highways-PFI
- ☐ Housing
- ☐ Housing Repairs
- ☐ Neighbourhood ...
- ☐ Neighbourhood ...
- ☐ Neighbourhood ...
- ☐ Neighbourhood ...
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Parks and Natur...
- ☐ Parks and Natur...
- ☐ Private Rented S...
- ☐ Private Rented S...
- ☐ Regulation & En...
- ☐ Regulation and ...
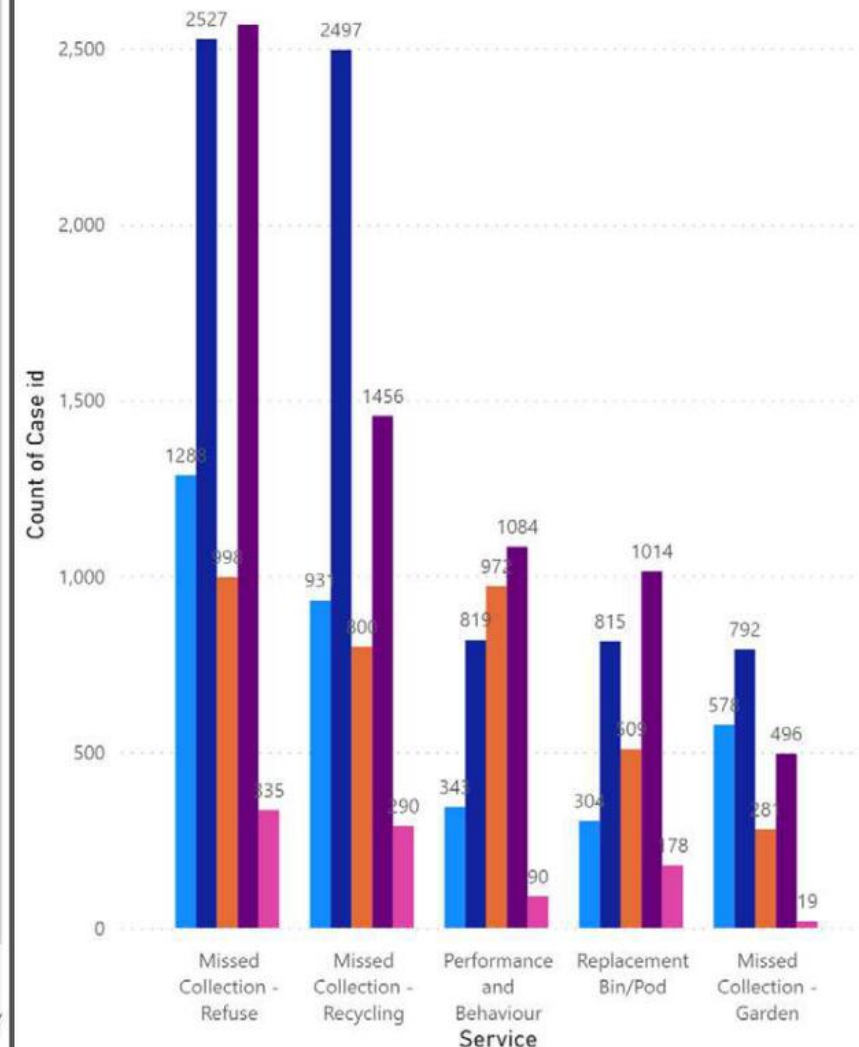- ☐ Sport
- ☐ Sport Client Serv...
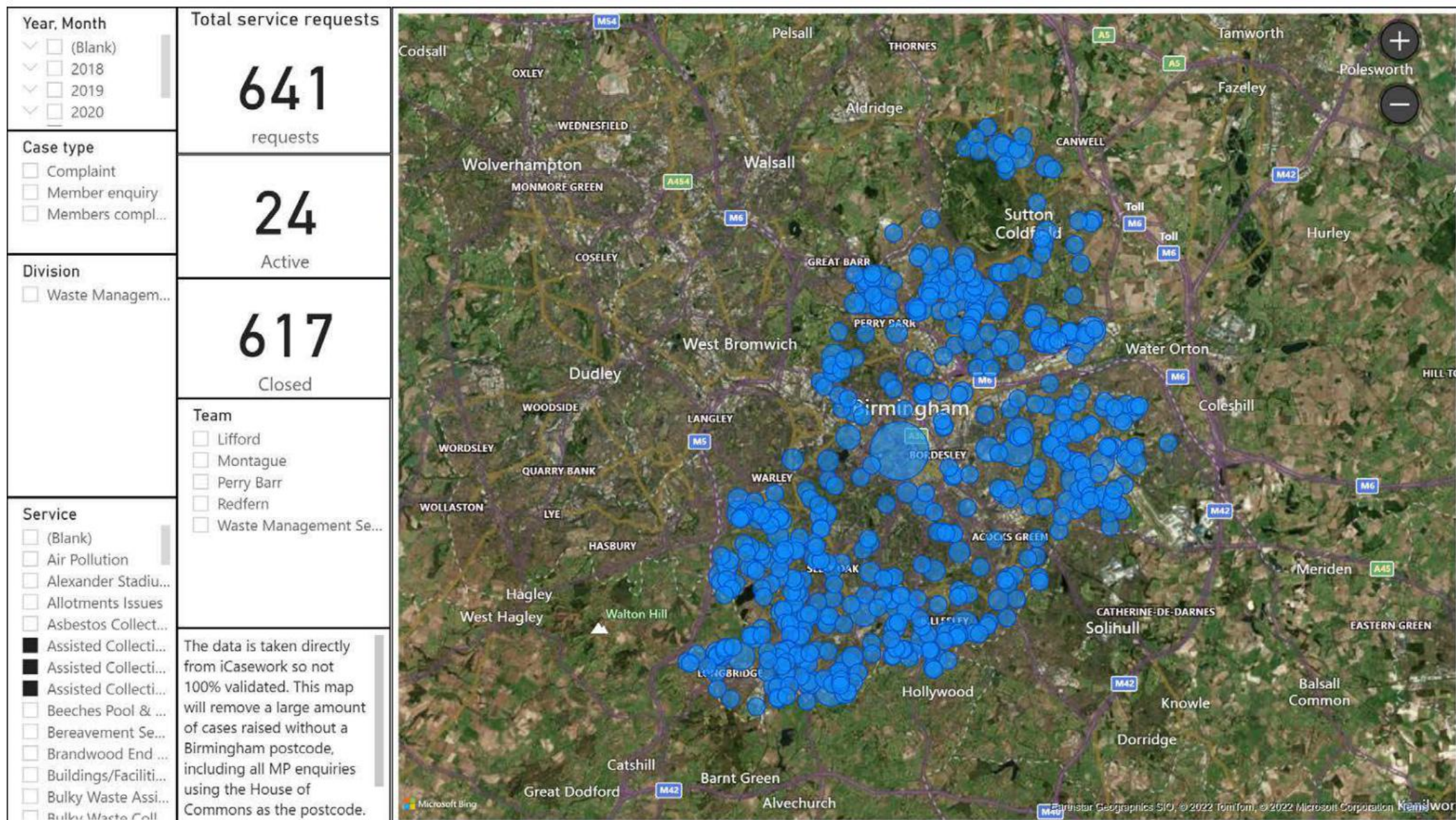- ■ Waste Manage...

Case type
- ☐ Complaint
- ☐ Member enquiry
- ☐ Members compl...

Service	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Missed Collection - Refuse	1288	2527	998	2568	335	7716
Missed Collection - Recycling	931	2497	800	1456	290	5974
Performance and Behaviour	343	819	972	1084	90	3308
Replacement Bin/Pod	304	815	509	1014	178	2820
Missed Collection - Garden	578	792	281	496	19	2166
Street Cleaning	154	295	285	733	97	1564
Flytipping Removal	50	99	89	1150	146	1534
Garden Waste Service	87	552	544	281	18	1482
Wheelie Bins Enquiry	163	347	274	595	58	1437
Assisted Collection - Refuse	185	299	259	428	33	1204
Bulky Waste Collection	189	243	183	300	15	930
Dumped Rubbish		43	116	542	55	756
Assisted Collection - Recycling	95	158	132	136	9	530
Early Start	22	26	100	159	6	313
Assisted Collection - Garden	66	68	68	65	1	268
Litter Bin Issue	26	37	25	113	6	207
Household Recycling Centre	4	15	89	47	2	157
Clinical Waste Missed Collection - Box	12	55	37	15	1	120
Complaint	1		1	49	32	83
Collection Schedule	9	21	20	24	4	78
Graffiti Removal	2	9	3	42	11	67
Asbestos Collection	8	11	13	21	2	55
Commercial Waste Missed Collection	5	9	4	31	2	51
Clinical Waste Delivery	7	11	24	6		48
Bulky Waste Assisted Collection	4	9	7	16	1	37
Commercial Waste Containers	7	6	3	16		32
Commercial Waste Contract	5	7	5	7	3	27
Flyposting Removal	1	1	1	9	1	13
Hazardous Waste Collection	3	1	1	3		8
Hypodermic Needle Collection	2	1	2	1	1	7
Public Toilets	1		1	3		5
Clinical Waste Missed Collection - Sack		1		1	2	4
Total	**4552**	**9775**	**5848**	**11412**	**1418**	**33005**

Top 5 Service Areas

Year ● 2018 ● 2019 ● 2020 ● 2021 ● 2022

Bar chart of Count of Case id by Service for the top 5 service areas (Missed Collection - Refuse, Missed Collection - Recycling, Performance and Behaviour, Replacement Bin/Pod, Missed Collection - Garden) across years 2018–2022.

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Policy stance: What constitutes a complaint?	Operational view: How does the problem present for residents?	Complaints view: How does the problem present for residents?	Information available: For citizens of Birmingham	Communications: Internal/external

Tasks for service improvement

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