

Title: Quarter 3 Performance and Complaints Report
 Officer: Dale Duffy – Policy, Performance & Complaints Manager –
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 Portfolio Holder: Ian Davison
 Wards of the District directly affected: All

Approvals required	Date	Name
Portfolio Holder	23/01/2026	Ian Davison Jess Melrose
Finance		N/A
Legal Services		N/A
Chief Executive	21/01/2026	Chris Elliott
Director of Climate Change		N/A
Head of Service(s)	21/01/2026	Graham Leach
Section 151 Officer	21/01/2026	Andrew Rollins
Monitoring Officer	21/01/2026	Graham Leach
Leadership Co-ordination Group		N/A
Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council?	Yes	
Contrary to Policy / Budget framework?	No	
Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?	Yes, Appendix 2 By Virtue of Paragraph 3 because this report contains information relating to existing negotiations.	
Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?	No	
Accessibility Checked?	Yes	

1. Summary Why Overview & Scrutiny Committee asked for the report

- 1.1 The report explains why the 2025/26 Quarter 3 (Q3) performance data for Warwick District Council is not being presented to committee on this occasion.
- 1.2 The report recommends that performance & complaints data is reported to Overview & Scrutiny committee on a half-yearly basis for 2026/27.
- 1.3 The report also contains an overview of complaints received during Q3 of 2025/26.

2. What the service is being delivered

- 2.1 The **Performance report** is a key tool in helping the Council demonstrate the services it is providing are performing. At present the performance report focuses on the measures within the SAPs and if they are achieving the expected level of performance. The commentary provided by officers against those measures which are below the expected level enables an understanding of the reasons for this and if there is a need for further investigation.
- 2.2 Due to the absence of two key staff members of the Policy, Performance & Complaints team it has not been possible to collate the Quarter 3 performance data to accompany this report.
- 2.3 Table 1 below sets out the reporting timeline for the performance report for the remainder of the 2025/26 SAPs.

Table 1

Stage	Q4 report
End of Quarter	31 Mar
Deadline for Service Areas to provide the data	7 Apr 2026
Date for the draft Report to SLT	10 Apr 2026
Date SLT to provide commentary	13 Apr 2026
Date to be considered at SLT	16 Apr 2026
Date to be considered informally by Cabinet	TBC
Date report will be shared with all Councillors	TBC
Date report will be published online	TBC
Date to be considered by O&S Cttee (next available Cttee date)	TBC

- 2.4 Also available, via the Business Intelligence Portal, are the major projects list, the significant risk register (which is reported to both Cabinet and Audit & Standards Committee) and procurement activity setting out current and

upcoming procurement activity. The links to which have been circulated separately to all Councillors.

- 2.5 The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and responsible Officers have begun the development of 2-year SAPs which will cover financial years 2026/27 and 2027/28. This will ensure the Council can focus on delivering statutory services and key projects before forming part of a Unitary Authority in April 2028 as part of the Local Government Reorganisation programme. The SAPs are due to be considered and agreed by Cabinet at their meeting on 18 March 2026.
- 2.6 The **Complaints report** contains analysis of complaint handling at Stage 1, Stage 2 of the Council’s complaints process and the current position of cases raised by tenants with the Housing Ombudsman. The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) do not have a portal where officers can view their open cases. The Council’s Link Officer receives notification emails when complaints are raised with the LGSCO – one email was received from the LGSCO in relation to a case in Q3. The decision was that the complainant had made a premature referral about a complaint that the Monitoring Officer (MO) and Chief Executive (CE) were in the process of handling. The LGSCO recommended that the MO and CE kept the complainant updated while the investigation is open. Negotiations for this case are ongoing.
- 2.7 Table 2 below sets out the volume of complaints received (including those refused or rejected) and upheld in the first three quarters of the 2025/26 financial year.

Table 2

	Stage 1	Upheld	Partially upheld	Stage 2	Upheld	Partially upheld
Q1	117	26	18	18	4	6
Q2	130	31	14	26	2	9
Q3	128	29	19	41	3	10

- 2.8 Sometimes the complaints process may not be the correct process to follow to efficiently resolve a request, in these cases complaints are refused. This is different from a complaint which is investigated and not upheld. Complaints can be refused for a variety of reasons and the Council’s complaints databases have been developed to begin accurately recording these reasons.
- 2.9 12 Stage 1 complaints were refused in Q3 for the following reasons:
- (3) Matters have previously been considered under the complaints process.
 - (3) An appeals procedure exists which applies to the matters of complaint
 - (1) There is a more appropriate individual or organisation to deal with a complaint such as a tribunal, ombudsman or court.
 - (4) A Service Request is appropriate.
 - (1) Key information not provided by complainant.
- 2.10 1 Stage 2 complaint was refused in Q3 for the following reason:
- (1) Policy and/or process has been followed and there is insufficient evidence to enable the finding of fault.
- 2.11 There have been no compensation awards of £5000 or more in Q3.

- 2.12 The Housing Service Area received the highest proportion of Stage 1 complaints in Q3 (111 out of 128, 87%) and over half of these (63 out of 111, 57%) related to Repairs. Despite receiving a similar number of complaints in the current and previous quarters, there was a reduction in those relating to Housing Advice and Allocations (22 out of 111, 19%) this represents a 4% reduction.
- 2.13 These trends continue through Stage 2 complaints with Housing receiving the highest percentage (34 out of 41, 84%) of Stage 2 complaints. Place, Arts & Economy received a smaller number of Stage 1 complaints (6 out of 128, 4.6%) but saw an increase in the number of those where requests to escalate to Stage 2 were received (4 out of 6, 66%).
- 2.14 In Stage 2 Housing complaints, Repairs was still the most common cause for complaint (11 out of 34, 32%) followed by Landlord Operations (8 out of 34, 24%) and Housing Advice & Allocations (5 out of 34, 15%).
- 2.15 Officers recognise the importance of understanding the reasons why complainants make requests to escalate their complaints to Stage 2. The Policy, Performance and Complaints team currently has insufficient resource (one Officer left before Christmas, another is absent for health reasons) to carry out this work but it is anticipated that the data for complaints relating to Housing will be prepared in time to present to Housing Scrutiny Committee on 31 March 2026.
- 2.16 There are currently 10 Warwick District Council complaint cases open in the Housing Ombudsman's online portal. There is one evidence request in progress which is due to be completed by Tuesday 27 January 2026.
- 2.17 1 case has been closed in the Housing Ombudsman's online portal in Q3.

3. The key risks to the service and how they are being managed

- 3.1 The primary risks around performance monitoring reports are ensuring that the data provided in the service area plans report is accurate and provides commentary on the rationale for the level of performance. This helps the Council to identify at an early stage where performance is below the expected standard and investigate/challenge as appropriate.
- 3.2 A Corporate Governance audit is scheduled for completion by the end of February 2026, the purpose of the audit is: "To ensure that the calculations behind the current performance measures are sound and facilitate the production of high-quality data." The audit will review the performance measures in 8 out of the 9 SAPs. SAP Housing will be excluded due to the current scrutiny arrangements and amount of work underway to ensure the quality and reliability of the reporting data produced.
- 3.3 Another risk is the over-reliance on manual processes to collate the data from the SAPs into the report presented to Committee. This is highlighted by the absence of two key staff members of the Policy, Performance & Complaints team without whom the required resource has not been available to collate the Quarter 3 performance data to accompany this report.
- 3.4 Interim measures have been introduced to support with the increased demand, with two officers in Governance Services completing Stage 2 complaint investigations in addition to the Policy, Performance & Complaints Manager. However, the overall increase in demand on team has had led to some absence and during this period the Council receiving the first Complaints Handling

Failure Order (CHFO) of 2025/26 from the Housing Ombudsman for not replying to a request for information within a prescribed deadline.

- 3.5 The Service Review business case setting out a preferred option to provide permanent resource has been completed and adverts published to fill vacancies for new Policy, Performance & Complaints Officer posts. There is one permanent and one two-year fixed term/secondment position.
- 3.6 There appears to be a trend of misinformation appearing within some complaints the Council receives, this increases the amount of time Officers spend understanding the challenges the complainant is facing. Communications are also becoming more litigious and refer to different legislation that governs Council services.

4. What is working well and what is not working so well

- 4.1 The interim measures to provide support for Stage 2 complaint investigations have seen an improvement in response times. During quarter 1, the average response time for a Stage 2 complaint was 40.4 working days. The average response time reduced to 32.75 working days in quarter 2, despite an increase of complaints received during this period. The downward trend of improving response times continue in quarter 3, dropping to 22.4 working days for the 21 Stage 2 complaints responded to.
- 4.2 One of the Officers who was providing supplementary support left the Council before Christmas and there has been unprecedented demand for Stage 2 complaints since November 2025. It is likely that the Council will see an increase in Stage 2 response times and missed deadlines which may result in more escalations to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman Service.

5. One Change to improve performance

- 5.1 The business case and project plan for implementing the complaints process into the Council's Customer Relationship Management system is to be approved by the project board with the first meeting scheduled for 30 January 2026 and by SLT on 5 February 2026. The project will be reviewed at the next meeting of the Change Board on 16 February 2026.
- 5.2 From November 2025 monthly meetings have taken place in Housing to review lessons learned, recommendations and actions from complaints reports. The meetings are attended by Service Area Managers, the Customer Services Team Leader and the Policy, Performance & Complaints Manager. Tasks are created in the Council's line of business system for Housing ActiveH and assigned to relevant officers to track and resolve.

Background papers:

Nil

Supporting documents:

Item 03 - Appendix 1 - 2025-26 Quarter 3 Complaints Analysis.pptx

Item 03 - Appendix 2 - Confidential - Contractor complaints data 25-26.docx