

Report Template

Signing-off Sheet

Title of Report:	Customer Feedback Team Annual Report		
Name of Meeting:	Audit and Risk Committee	Date of Meeting:	TBC
This Report is currently listed on the Forward Plan: (Yes / No)			

	Name of consultee:	Clearance given: (Yes / No)
Required Consultees on Draft Report (these must be consulted or an explanation given i.e. not relevant)		
Cabinet Member(s):	Cllr John Dulwich	
Ward Members (for Ward related issues)	N/A	
Departmental Finance (via financialimplication@lbbd.gov.uk)	N/A	
Corporate Risk (via christopher.martin@lbbd.gov.uk)	N/A	
Corporate Procurement (via ProcurementImplications@lbbd.gov.uk)	N/A	
HR (via hrcabinetclearance@lbbd.gov.uk)	N/A	
Legal Practice (via legalimplications@lbbd.gov.uk)	N/A	
Corporate Policy and Equality Impact (via Ce-Strategy@lbbd.gov.uk)	N/A	
Property/Asset Management (via paula.pulley@lbbd.gov.uk)	N/A	
Adults' and Children's Safeguarding (via christopher.bush@lbbd.gov.uk)	N/A	
Public Health and Community Safety (via matthew.cole@lbbd.gov.uk)	N/A	
Other Consultees (including external bodies): (To be completed as appropriate)	N/A	

Audit and Risk Committee

TBC

Title: Customer Feedback Team Annual Report	
Report of the Chief Operating Officer	
Open Report	For Information
Wards Affected: None	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Danielle Bridge Customer Feedback Team Manager	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8277 2111 E-mail: danielle.bridge@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Natalia Monvoisin, Head of Customer Contact	
Accountable Executive Team Director: Salauoddin Asghar, Director of Strategy	
Summary To meet our regulatory obligations, we compile an annual complaints report that reflects data collected throughout the financial year. This report offers a detailed summary of the Customer Feedback Team's activities, covering complaints, members' casework, Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, and Subject Access Requests (SAR). The report plays a key role in evaluating the council's performance against targets for complaints and members' casework. It also supports continuous improvement by identifying service gaps and outlining actions taken to enhance delivery and responsiveness. Additionally, legislation requires a separate annual report for Care and Support services. This ensures transparency and reinforces the council's commitment to accountability across all service areas.	
Recommendation(s) The Audit and Risk Committee is asked to note and comment on the contents of the report.	

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Customer Feedback Team is responsible for overseeing and managing all complaints, members' casework, Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, Subject Access Requests (SARs), and Data Protection queries. This report outlines overall performance across these areas, with a focus on individual service areas and any recurring issues that require attention.

- 1.2 We currently utilise a case management system, which has been in place since January 2016, which enables the team to log, monitor, and track all submitted casework efficiently.
- 1.3 The council operates several key information governance processes, all coordinated by the Customer Feedback Team. These include:

Complaints – The council encourages residents to raise concerns through our two stage corporate complaints process. Stage one aims for a response within 10 working days. If unresolved, a stage two review can be requested within 28 working days, with a target response time of 20 working days.

Further to this should the complainant be dissatisfied they can escalate the complaint to the relevant Ombudsman either the Housing Ombudsman or the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. Their annual report is attached.

Our target is to respond to 90% of complaints within these timeframes.

In addition to this process, there are certain services where there is a statutory complaints process that has to be followed and these are for complaints regarding Social Care, Schools, Councillors and Reports of Fraud.

Members' Casework – MPs and councillors can submit casework on behalf of residents. These are subject to a 10-working day response target, with a 90% performance benchmark.

Freedom of Information/Environmental Information Regulations – Under the FOI Act, the council must provide access to held information, subject to exemptions. The statutory response time is 20 working days, with a 95% compliance target set by the Information Commissioner's Office.

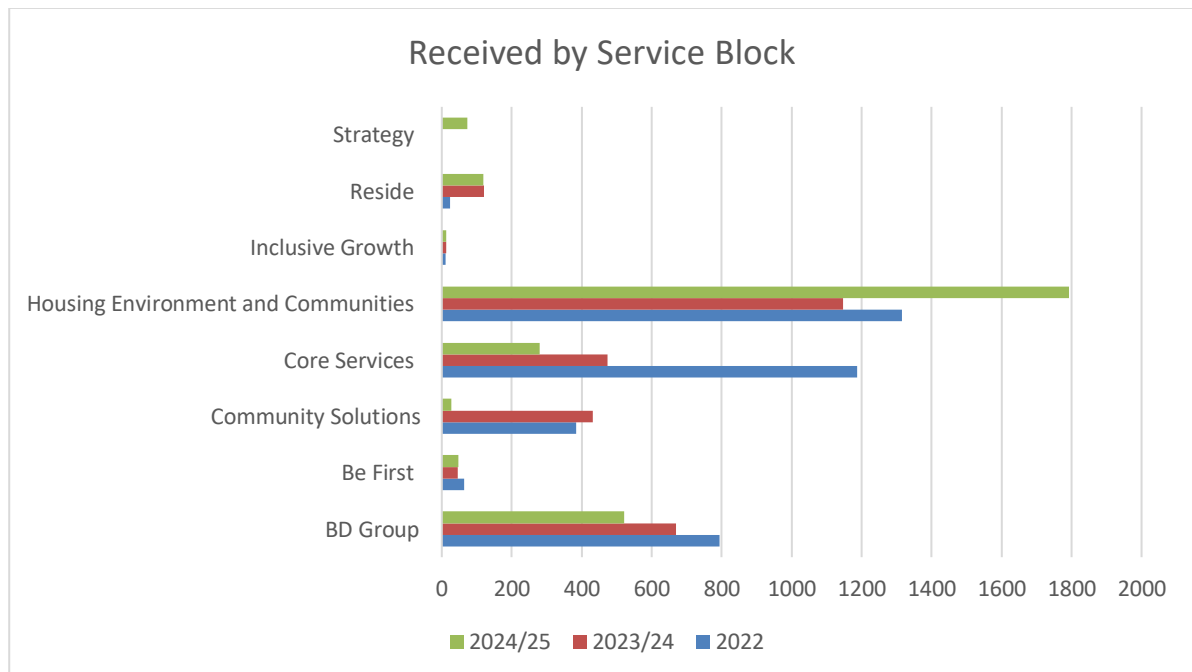
Subject Access Requests – In line with GDPR, individuals can request access to personal data held by the council. The council must respond within one calendar month, with a 90% performance target.

2. Corporate Complaints

- 2.1 When reviewing the data presented in this report, it is important to consider the wide range of services the council delivers to residents and to view the volume of complaints in that broader context.
- 2.2 The following data outlines the number of complaints received by each service area. Please note that this does not include People and Resilience services as we are required under legislation to produce separate reports for these areas which are contained as an appendix.
- 2.3 In 2024/25, the total number of complaints fell by 3% compared to 2023/24. This is a positive indicator that the council continues to learn from feedback and are taking steps to resolve issues that affect residents. Continued efforts are needed to reduce this figure year on year, reinforcing our commitment to service improvement.

- 2.4 70% of complaints were responded to within the target timeframe, this falls short of the corporate set target of 90%, highlighting an area for focused improvement. Comparing our performance year on year we remain within the same range +/- 5%.

Complaints Received			
	2022	2023/24	2024/25
BD Group	793	670	521
Be First	64	46	48
Community Solutions	384	432	28
Core Services	1,188	473	280
Housing Environment and Communities	1,316	1,147	1,792
Inclusive Growth	11	12	12
Reside	23	121	118
Strategy	N/A	N/A	73
Total	3,756	2,901	2,872



- 2.5 The tables below identify the outcome for complaints resolved in this period alongside how each service block performed in this area. Upheld complaints continue to provide a good basis for the council to consider how we can improve our services offered. You will note that the figures below differ from our overall complaints total. This is due to at the time of reporting a number of complaints remaining open therefore no outcome can be provided.

Complaint Outcomes		
Upheld	832	30%
Not Upheld	1,113	40%
Partly Upheld	668	24%
Resolved at first point of contact	56	2%
Withdrawn	117	4%

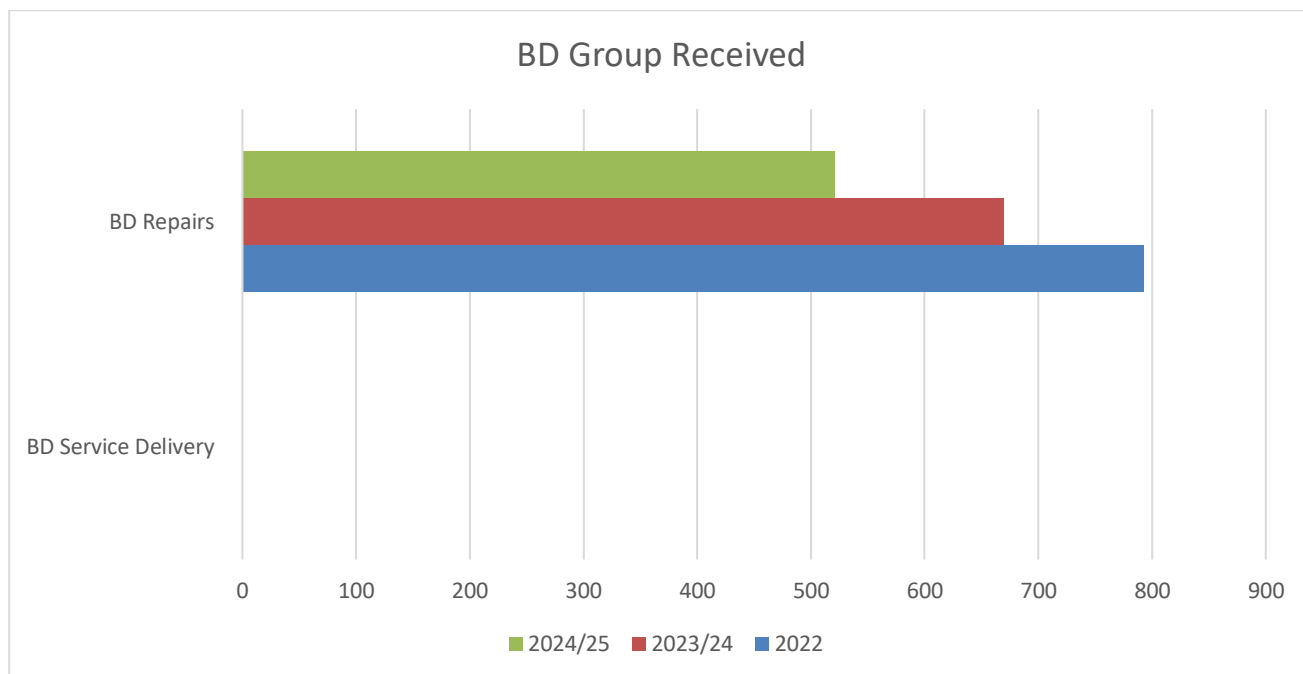
Total	2,786
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	% In Time	Upheld	Not Upheld	Partly Upheld	Resolved	Withdrawn
BD Group	61%	38%	27%	29%	2%	2%
Be First	44%	13%	58%	18%	0%	7%
Community Solutions	68%	39%	36%	7%	4%	14%
Core Services	90%	27%	42%	24%	3%	2%
Inclusive Growth	29%	21%	36%	14%	0%	21%
HEC	70%	28%	42%	23%	2%	5%
Reside	53%	24%	39%	26%	3%	7%
Strategy	80%	30%	39%	24%	0%	7%

- 2.6 In 2024/25, 30% of complaints were upheld – an increase from 28% in 2023/24 – this remains below the 50% mark. While the rise is modest, it still reflects that in many cases, investigations do not uncover evidence of service failure.
- 2.7 The council remains committed to using feedback from complaints to drive service improvements. We have implemented a Customer Focus Board which is placing a magnifying glass on how we are delivering our services and how we can improve to further reduce the number of complaints made. The Customer Feedback Team are also directly working with service areas to assist in identifying areas of improvement and how these can be rectified. Later in this report, we will explore the specific lessons learned across each service.

3. BD Group

Stage 1 Complaints Received BD Group			
	2022	2023/24	2024/25
BD Service Delivery	0	0	0
BDMS	793	670	521
Total	793	670	521



3.1 BD Group offers both paid services to our schools in Borough including catering and cleaning as well as repairs and maintenance. BD Group are responsible for the repairs within the council's housing stock.

3.2 A review of the complaints in this area reveals patterns consistent with previous years, though there has been a noticeable decline in volume. It's common for service areas to experience recurring themes, which provides valuable opportunities for learning and improvement. Key issues identified include delays in scheduling follow on works, slow initial appointment times, dissatisfaction with how repairs are managed, and reports of damp and mould being raised through the complaints process.

We are working closely with colleagues in BD Group to analyse submitted complaints and extract actionable insights that can help enhance service delivery. This collaborative approach has contributed to a 23% reduction in complaints during 2024/25 demonstrating the positive impact of targeted efforts.

Our partnership with BD Group remains ongoing with a shared focus on identifying lessons learned and implementing changes that reduce the volume of complaint and improve the overall experience for residents.

3.3 BD Group has implemented several service improvements aimed at enhancing the resident experience and reducing the likelihood of complaints. One key initiative is the integration of customer surveys with the Voice of the Customer service, which captures real-time feedback on completed jobs. This data is actively monitored to identify and resolve issues promptly often before a formal complaint is raised.

Contractors are now held to stricter accountability standards, with a requirement to report back to BD Group on the outcome of every job. This includes confirming whether appointments were kept or missed, ensuring greater transparency and follow-through.

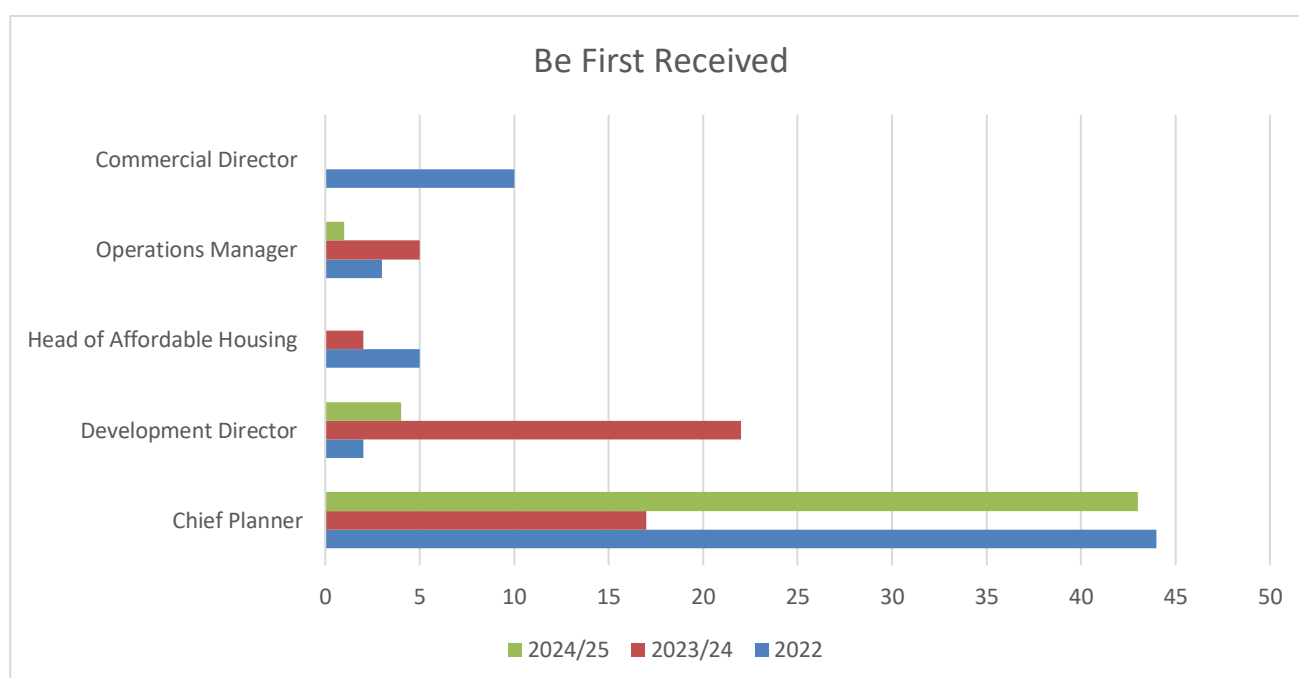
In addition, BD Group is currently exploring the use of new technologies to further improve service delivery. These innovations are being considered as part of a

broader strategy to streamline communication, enhance responsiveness, and ultimately deliver a more seamless experience for residents.

- 3.4 The council does not record complaints which relate to the other services provided by BD Group.

4. Be First

Stage 1 Complaints Received Be First			
	2022	2023/24	2024/25
Chief Planner	44	17	43
Development Director	2	22	4
Head of Affordable Housing	5	2	0
Operations Manager	3	5	1
Commercial Director	10	0	0
Total	64	46	48

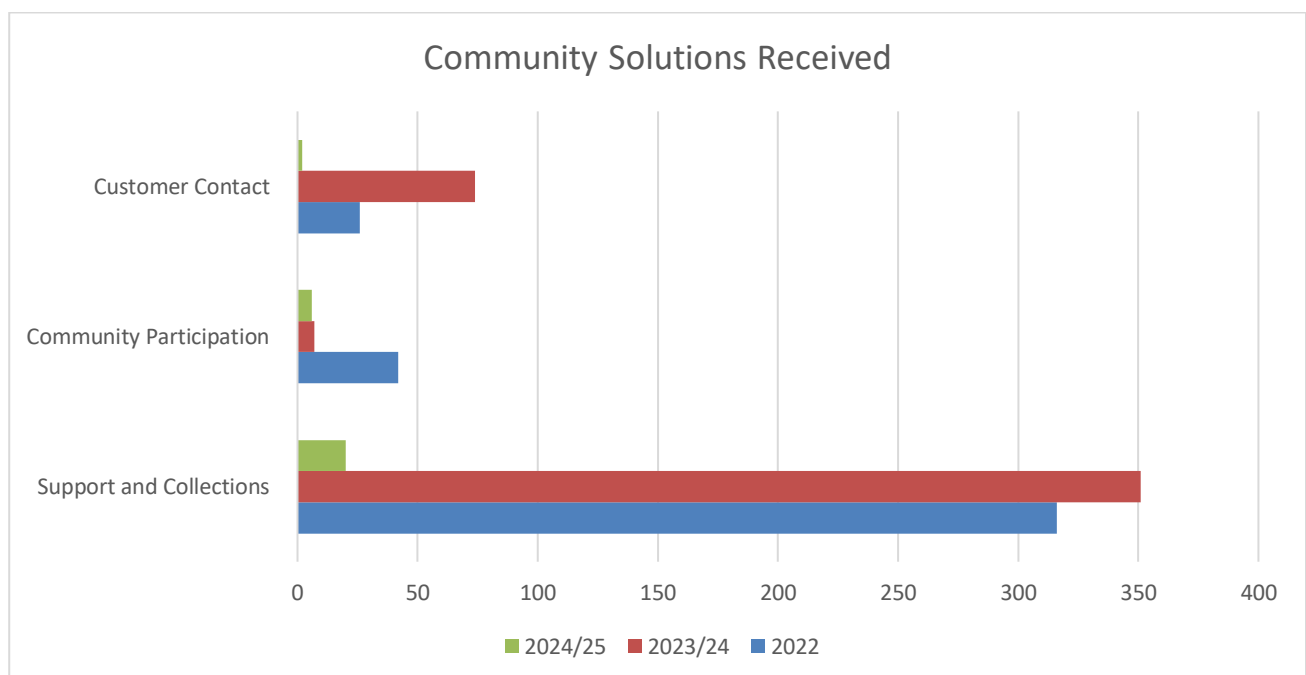


- 4.1 Be First delivers a range of services including Building Control, Planning Applications and the regeneration of both council owned stock and the wider local area. The most frequently reported issues related to how objections to planning applications are handled and delays in the provision of building certificates. In addition, this year has seen an increase in complaints concerning the implementation and management of School Street Zones which has contributed to the rise of casework under Chief Planner.
- 4.2 The Chief Planner service continues to generate the highest volume of complaints within Be First. This is largely due to its direct engagement with residents on matters such as planning submissions and objections, as well as the growing concerns around School Street Zones.
- 4.3 We recognise the need for significant process improvements in how post-warranty defects are managed. Ensuring timely resolution of these issues is essential to minimise disruption and dissatisfaction among residents.

- 4.4 Despite low levels of complaints Be First have struggled to maintain performance through the year. We continue working with the service finding sustainable improvements to raise the performance noted.

5. Community Solutions

Stage 1 Complaints Received by Community Solutions			
	2022	2023/24	2024/25
Support and Collections	316	351	20
Community Participation	42	7	6
Customer Contact	26	74	2
Total	384	432	28

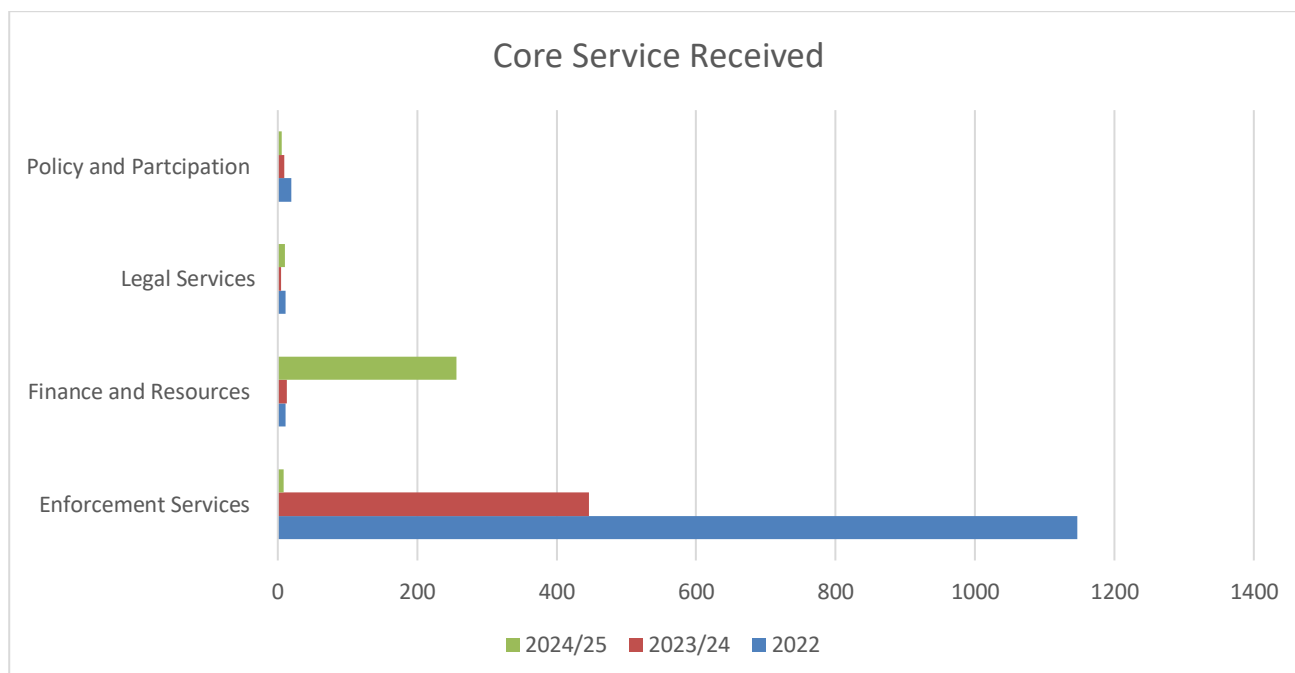


- 5.1 Community Solutions, as a standalone service, has now been dissolved. However, the work previously carried out by this team has not ceased. Instead, all functions and responsibilities have been redistributed across other relevant service areas to ensure continuity of support for our residents.
- 5.2 As a result of this transition, the number of complaints recorded under Community Solutions has significantly decreased during this reporting period. This is expected, as the service is no longer operating under its original structure.
- 5.3 From the next reporting year, Community Solutions will no longer appear as a separate service area in this report. Any improvements or learning previously attributed to Community Solutions will now be reflected within the relevant new service blocks where the work continues to be delivered.

6. Core Services

Stage 1 Complaints Received Core Services

	2022	2023/24	2024/25
Enforcement Services	1147	446	8
Finance and Resources	11	13	256
Legal Services	11	5	10
Policy and Participation	19	9	6
Total	1,188	473	280



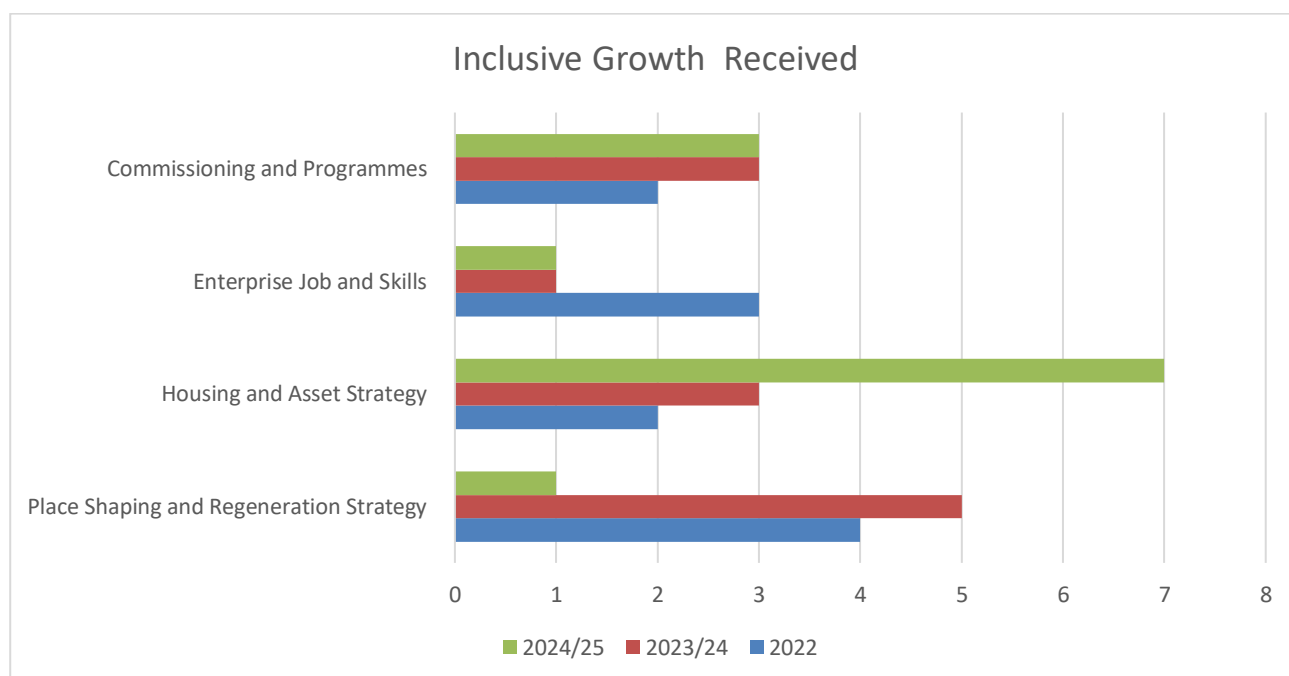
- 6.1 The Core Services directorate has undergone significant restructuring during the reporting period. This included the transfer of some functions to the Housing, Environment and Communities directorate, while simultaneously absorbing the Welfare and Debt service from Community Solutions. These structural changes have had a direct impact on the volume and nature of complaints received, which is reflected in the figures presented in this report
- 6.2 Welfare and Debt has emerged as the largest generator of complaints within Core Services. This is expected given the service's direct interface with all residents and businesses in the borough. The majority of complaints in this area relate to disputes over council tax charges, including disagreements about liability, eligibility for discounts or exemptions, and dissatisfaction with decisions not to award reductions.
- 6.3 A notable contributor to the volume of complaints this year was the Council's decision to revise the level of Council Tax Support. While necessary from a financial planning perspective, this change prompted a number of complaints from residents who felt their individual circumstances were not adequately considered. Many expressed concern that the policy shift lacked sufficient consultation or communication, leading to perceptions of unfairness.
- 6.4 Despite the high volume of complaints, the Welfare and Debt team has maintained a robust and well-established process for managing and responding to cases. However, it is important to acknowledge that many of the complaints received are rooted in legislative frameworks that limit the Council's discretion. Council Tax is governed by national legislation, and while residents have the right to appeal

decisions through the Valuation Tribunal Service, the Council's ability to alter outcomes is often constrained

As such, while the service continues to explore ways to improve communication and customer experience, the scope for substantive change in response to these complaints remains limited. The focus going forward will be on ensuring clarity, transparency, and consistency in decision-making and resident engagement.

7. Inclusive Growth

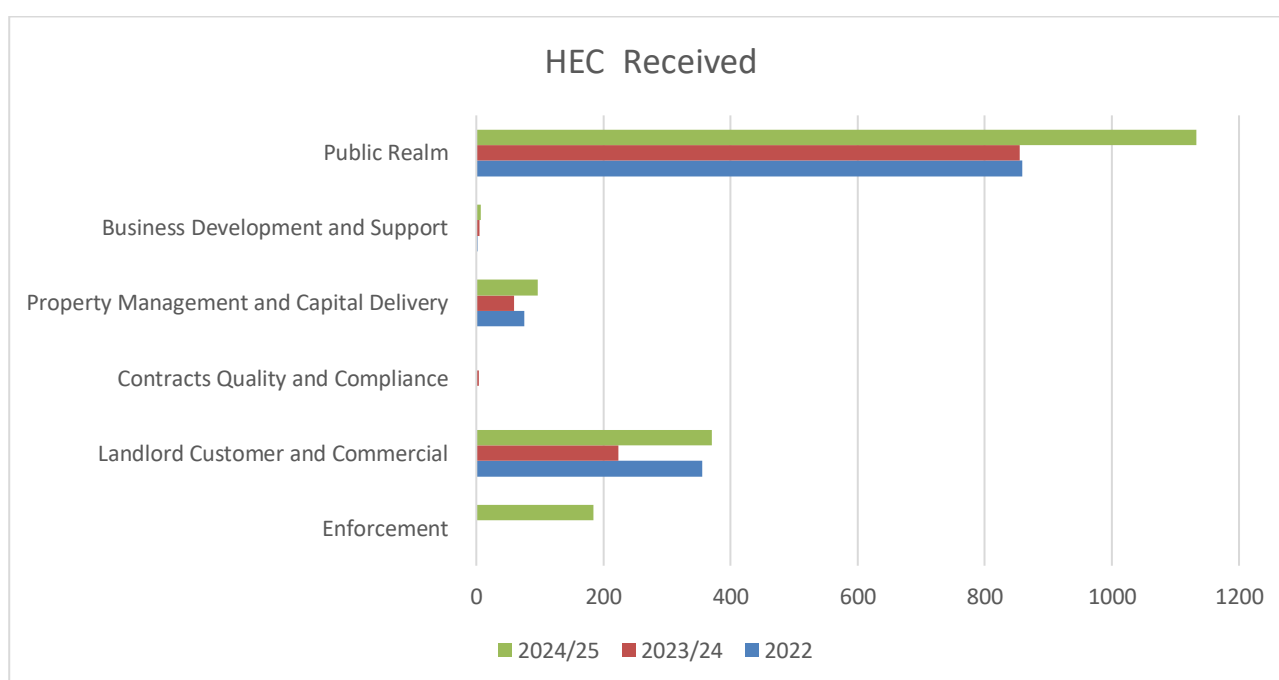
Stage 1 Complaints Received Inclusive Growth			
	2022	2023/24	2024/25
Place Shaping and Regeneration Strategy	4	5	1
Housing and Asset Strategy	2	3	7
Enterprise Job and Skills	3	1	1
Commissioning and Programmes	2	3	3
Total	11	12	12



- 7.1 Inclusive Growth is a commissioning function with three core priorities: to develop an aspirational and affordable housing offer, to shape great places and strong communities through regeneration, and to encourage enterprise and enable employment. As a strategic service, Inclusive Growth does not directly deliver frontline services to residents.
- 7.2 Inclusive Growth plays a pivotal role in delivering the Council's long-term vision for the borough. The service's impact is primarily realised through policy development, programme oversight, and strategic partnerships. As a result, the number of complaints received remains minimal, reflecting the nature of its indirect engagement with residents.

8. Housing Environment and Communities (HEC)

Stage 1 Housing Environment and Communities			
	2022	2023/24	2024/25
Enforcement	0	0	184
Landlord Customer and Commercial	355	224	371
Contracts Quality and Compliance	1	4	0
Property Management and Capital Delivery	76	59	97
Business Development and Support	2	5	7
Public Realm	859	855	1,133
Total	1,293	1,147	1,792



- 8.1 The Housing, Environment and Communities (HEC) directorate has become the Council's primary provider of frontline services to residents. Following recent structural changes, HEC now encompasses a wide range of functions including Housing Allocations, Homelessness Prevention, and all services previously delivered by Enforcement Services. This consolidation has positioned HEC as the largest generator of complaints across the Council, a trend that is expected to continue given the breadth and visibility of its service delivery.
- 8.2 Public Realm has seen a 32% increase in case volume this year. Within this area, Parking and Refuse continue to generate the highest levels of casework. During the 2024/25 reporting period, more than two-thirds of all complaints received by the Council were related to Public Realm services, highlighting the high degree of public engagement these services entail.
- 8.3 HEC has demonstrated a strong commitment to learning from complaints and using feedback to inform service improvements. There has been a marked increase in engagement between service teams and the corporate complaints function, with a

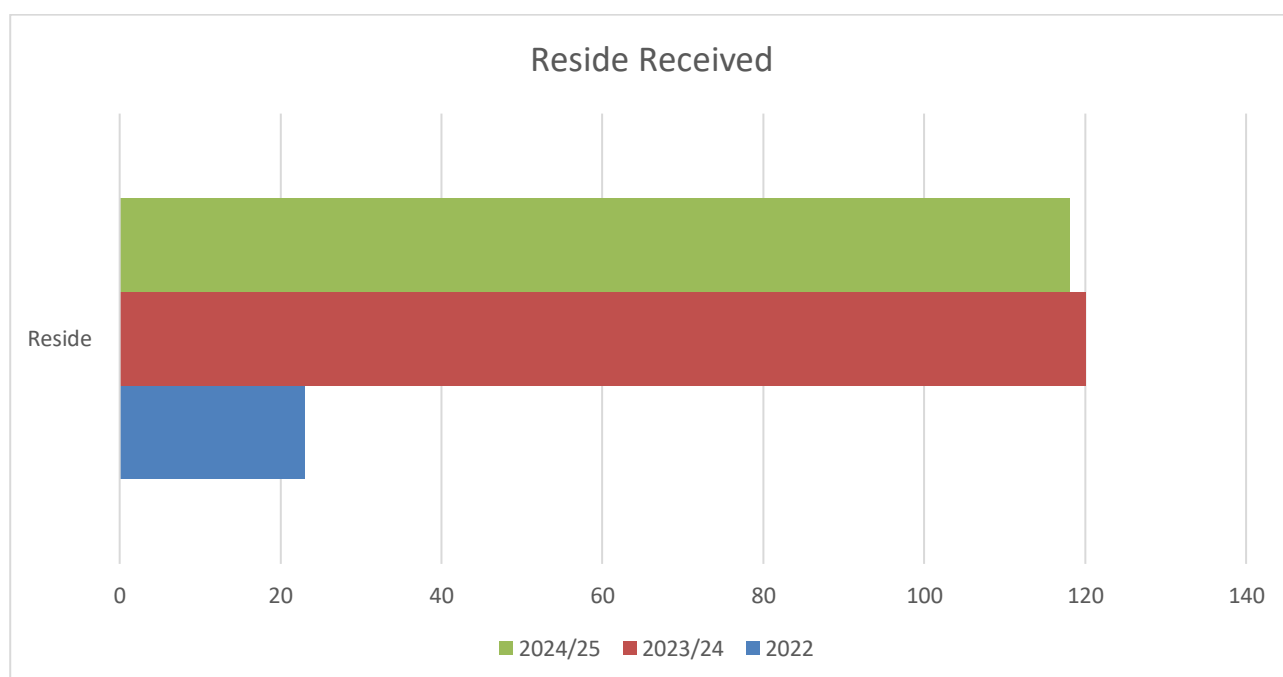
focus on identifying root causes and embedding lessons learned into operational practice.

- 8.4 One notable improvement has been the use of real-time data from refuse collection vehicles. This enables the Council to provide residents with specific explanations for missed bin collections, improving transparency and reducing repeat complaints. Additionally, following a recent restructure, all teams within HEC are now actively using the complaints management system to track and monitor casework, ensuring greater accountability and consistency in responses.
- 8.5 Beyond formal complaints, HEC has also expanded its efforts to engage directly with tenants and residents to gain deeper insights into their experiences. This proactive approach ensures that service development is informed not only by complaints but also by broader resident feedback.

HEC continues to work closely with delivery partners such as BD Group to ensure that contractual obligations—particularly around repairs—are met in a timely and effective manner. This collaborative approach is essential to maintaining service standards and addressing resident concerns promptly.

9. Reside

Stage 1 Complaints Received Reside			
	2022	2023/24	2024/25
Reside	23	120	118
Total	23	120	118

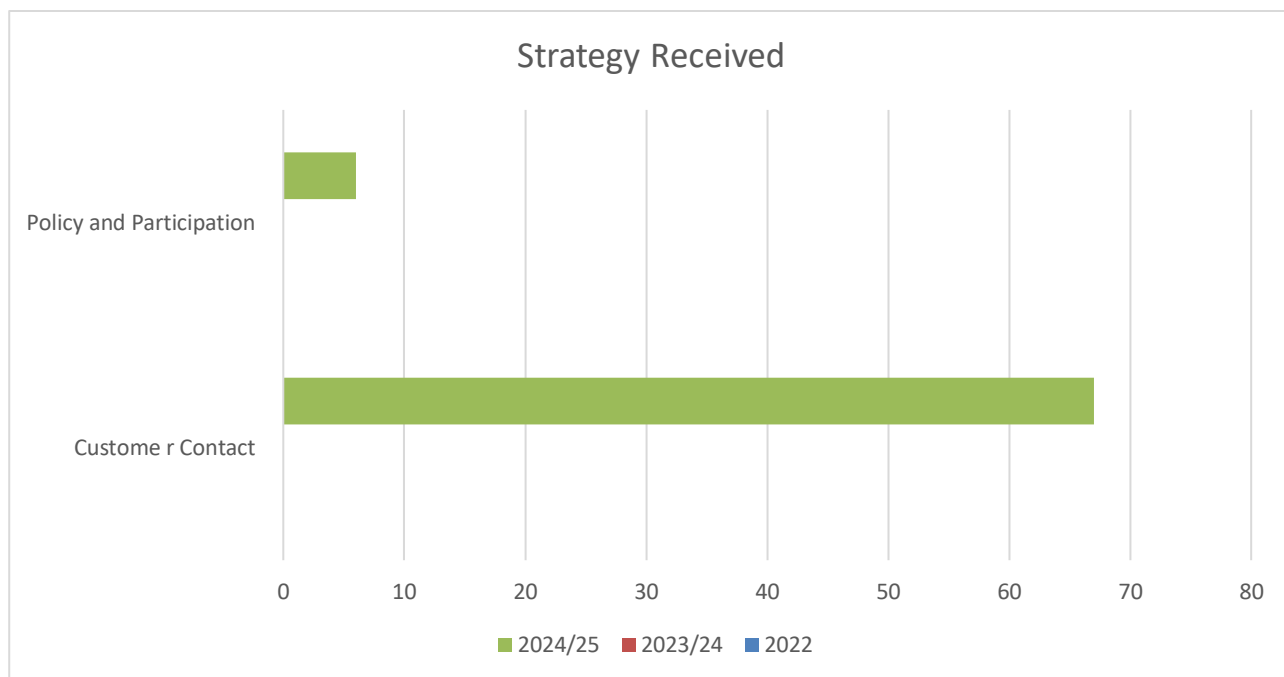


- 9.1 Reside is a housing company owned by the Council, established to provide affordable housing options through both shared ownership and rental schemes. Its primary aim is to support residents who are in employment but face barriers to accessing private rental markets or social housing.

- 9.2 During the reporting period, complaints relating to Reside primarily focused on three recurring themes: delays or dissatisfaction with repairs services, lack of effective communication, and concerns over service charge costs. These issues reflect the operational challenges of managing a growing housing portfolio and the complexities of resident expectations, particularly in newly built properties where responsibilities for repairs may be unclear.
- 9.3 It is important to note that during this period, Reside properties were managed by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham acting as a managing agent. However, in March, Reside made the strategic decision to transition to self-management of its housing stock. As a result, from the next reporting year onward, Reside will no longer be included within this corporate complaints report.
- 9.4 This transition marks a significant shift in operational accountability and is expected to bring greater clarity and responsiveness to resident concerns. The move also aligns with broader efforts to improve satisfaction with repairs and housing management, as reflected in recent performance data.

10. Strategy

Stage 1 Complaints Received Strategy			
	2022	2023/24	2024/25
Customer Contact	0	0	67
Policy and Participation	0	0	6
Total	0	0	73



- 10.1 As Strategy is a newly established service, no complaints were recorded in previous years. This explains the nil return for earlier reporting periods. Strategy encompasses several teams: Customer Contact, Policy and Participation, Strategy and Performance, and Data Insight and Intelligence. It is important to note that while Customer Contact and Policy and Participation have direct resident-facing

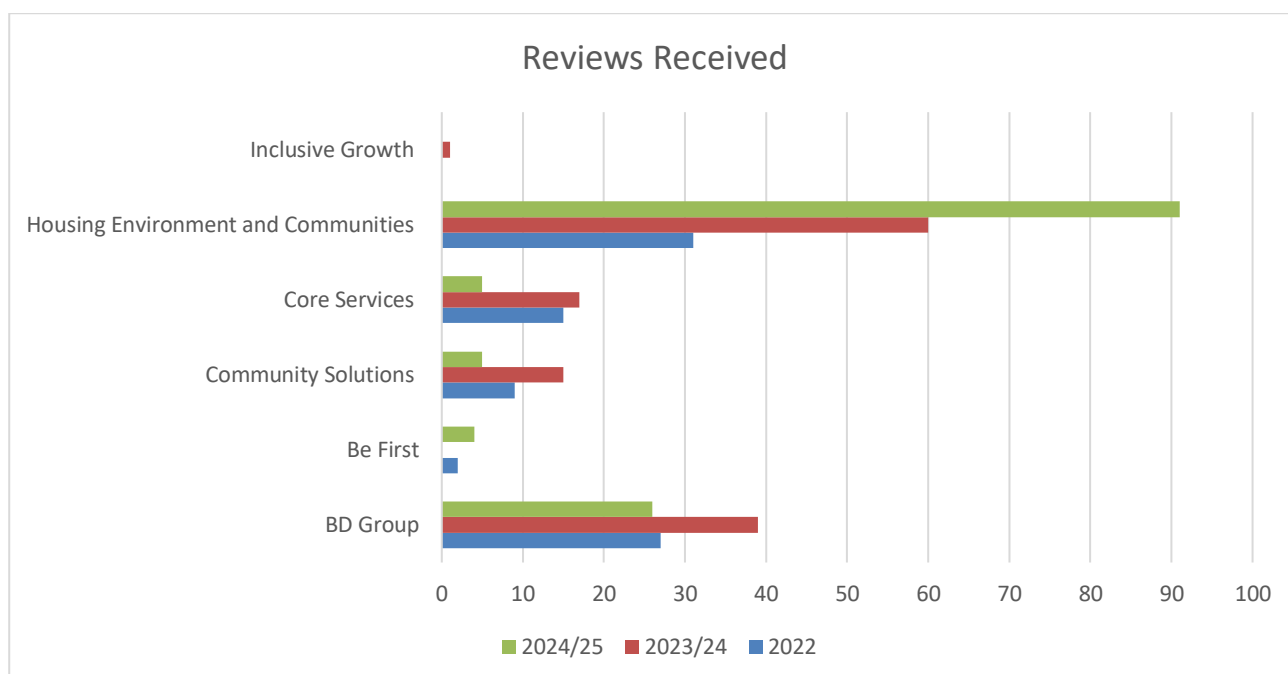
functions, Strategy and Performance and Data Insight and Intelligence operate in a more analytical and strategic capacity and do not typically generate complaints.

- 10.2 During the reporting year, 67 complaints were received within the Customer Contact team (this includes Registrars, daytime contact centre, out of hours and website). This figure represents just 0.02% of the interactions handled, underscoring the team's overall effectiveness in managing high volumes of resident interactions.
- 10.3 The theme of the complaints in the contact centre and out of hours cover length of waiting time, Out of Hours repair handling. There is much work happening around the digital contact centre transformation, particularly with the use of AI voice bots to ensure calls are routed to the right area and are answered more efficiently.
- 10.4 The Customer Contact Service has led several improvements that directly benefit residents. These include the implementation of voice analytics to assess the content and quality of resident interactions, enabling more responsive and empathetic service delivery. The service has also supported other departments in developing microsites to improve information sharing with residents, enhanced the AI-powered search functionality on the council's website, upgraded the Chat Bot to better assist users, and introduced online repairs reporting to streamline access to housing services.

These initiatives reflect Strategy service's commitment to continuous improvement and its role in shaping a more responsive and resident-focused council.

11. Review (Stage 2)

Reviews Received			
	2022	2023/24	2024/25
BD Group	27	39	26
Be First	2	0	4
Community Solutions	9	15	5
Core Services	15	17	5
Housing Environment and Communities	31	60	91
Inclusive Growth	0	1	0
Total	84	132	131



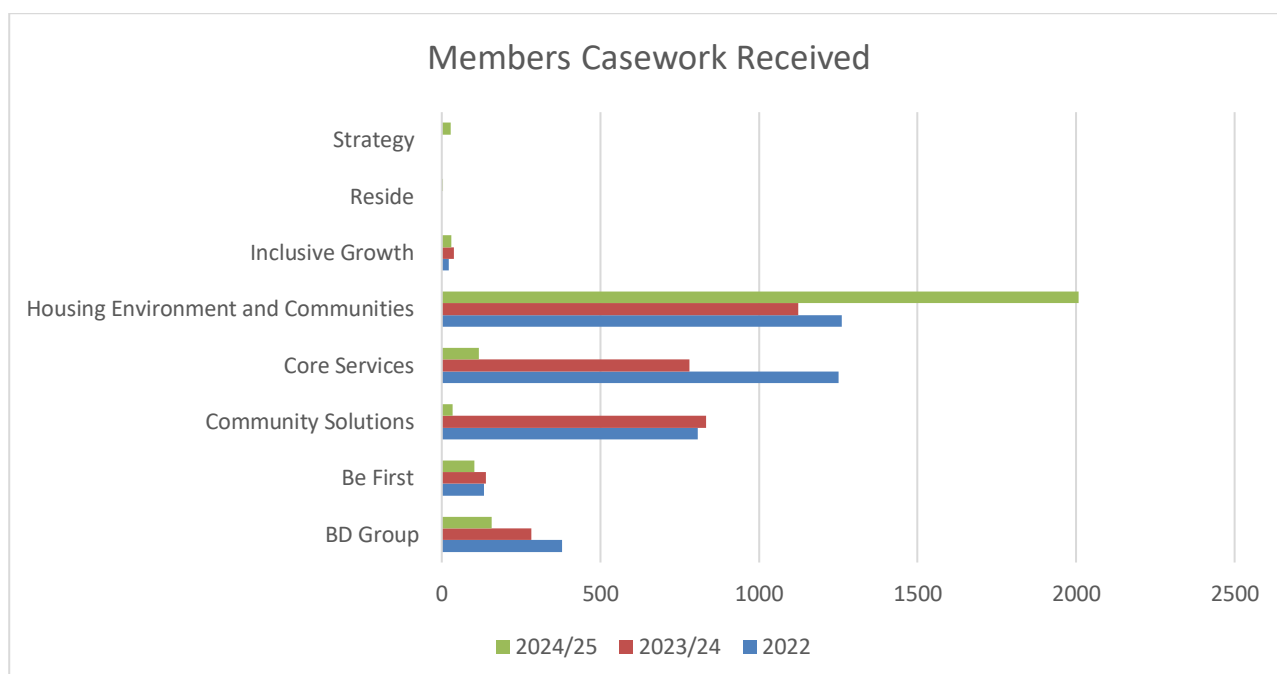
11.1 The council is committed to conducting thorough and well-evidenced investigations into all complaints received. While we aim to resolve matters to the satisfaction of the complainant at the first stage, residents retain the right to request a further review if they remain dissatisfied. This review stage is managed by the Customer Feedback Team and represents the final internal step before a complainant may escalate their concerns to the relevant Ombudsman.

11.2 In 2024/25, 5% of complainants requested a further review of their case. This relatively low percentage suggests that the majority of residents are satisfied with the responses provided. Where reviews were requested, common themes included a lack of clarity in the proposed actions and incomplete responses to all issues raised. In such cases, residents were justified in seeking further consideration of their concerns.

11.3 There was a 1% decrease in the number of review requests compared to 2023/24. The distribution of these requests across service areas has remained consistent. The top three services generating the highest number of review requests were Repairs (26), Housing and Neighbourhood (19), and Parking (24), collectively accounting for 53% of all review activity.

12. Members Casework

	2022	2023/24	2024/25
BD Group	379	283	157
Be First	133	139	102
Community Solutions	807	834	35
Core Services	1,252	781	116
Housing Environment and Communities	1,261	1,124	2,008
Inclusive Growth	23	38	30
Reside	0	0	4
Strategy	0	0	28
Total	3,875	3,199	2,480

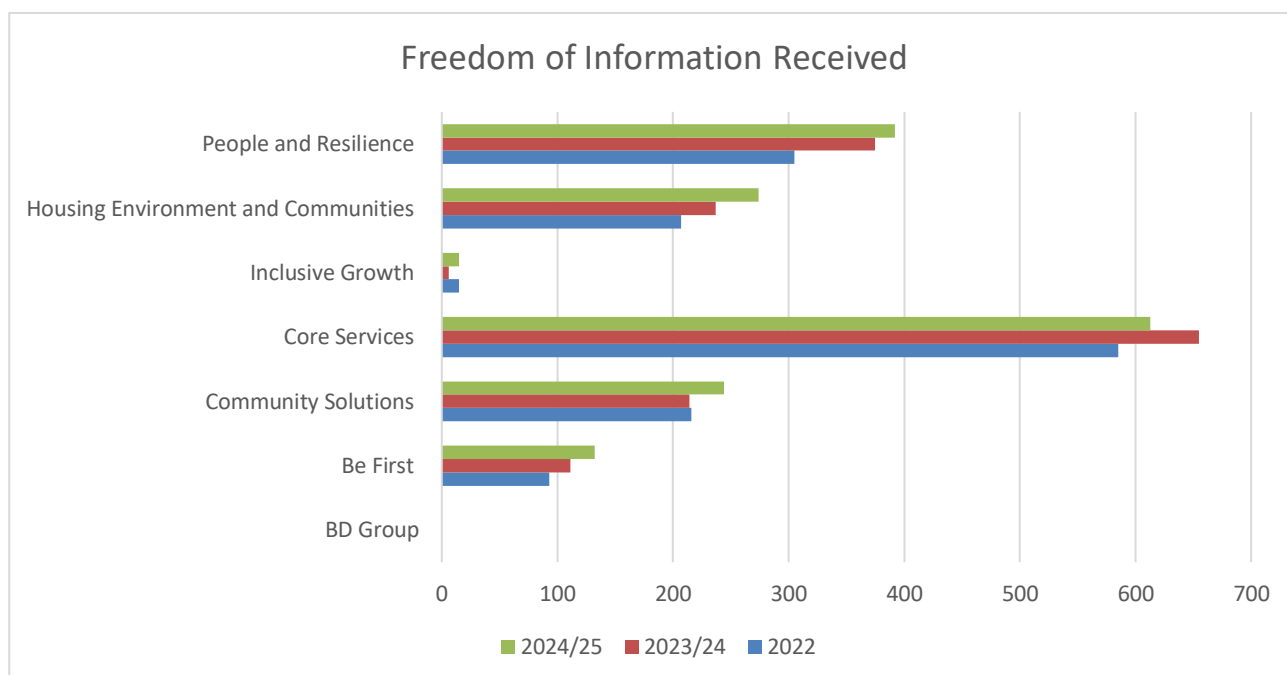


- 12.1 A robust casework system is in place to manage queries and concerns raised by Councillors and Members of Parliament. The council aims to respond to 90% of these cases within 10 working days.
- 12.2 Much of the casework submitted by members mirrors the types of issues raised through the formal complaint process. One notable area of concerns continues to be the wait times for Housing Allocations, where residents frequently seek member support to secure housing aligned with their assessed needs.
- 12.3 Importantly, the learning derived from complaint investigations is being used to inform and improve responses to member enquiries, helping to address root cause and reduce repeated issues.
- 12.4 In 2024/25 there was a 22% reduction in the volume of member casework received. However, only 76% of cases were responded to within the target timeframe, falling short of the council's corporate standard.
- 12.5 The year-on-year decline in member casework is believed to reflect the council's ongoing efforts to keep the residents better informed and to encourage the use of service request channels for first time issues. Additionally, there has been an increase in direct referrals to officers, which may be impacting the volume of formally logged cases. We would like to reinforce the importance of following the established process, which not only ensures proper tracking but also helps the council identify service areas requiring further attention.

13. Freedom of Information

Freedom of Information/EIR Requests Received			
	2022	2023/24	2024/25
BD Group	0	0	0
Be First	93	111	132
Community Solutions	216	214	244
Core Services	585	655	613

Inclusive Growth	15	6	15
Housing Environment and Communities	207	237	274
People and Resilience	305	375	392
Total	1,421	1,598	1,670

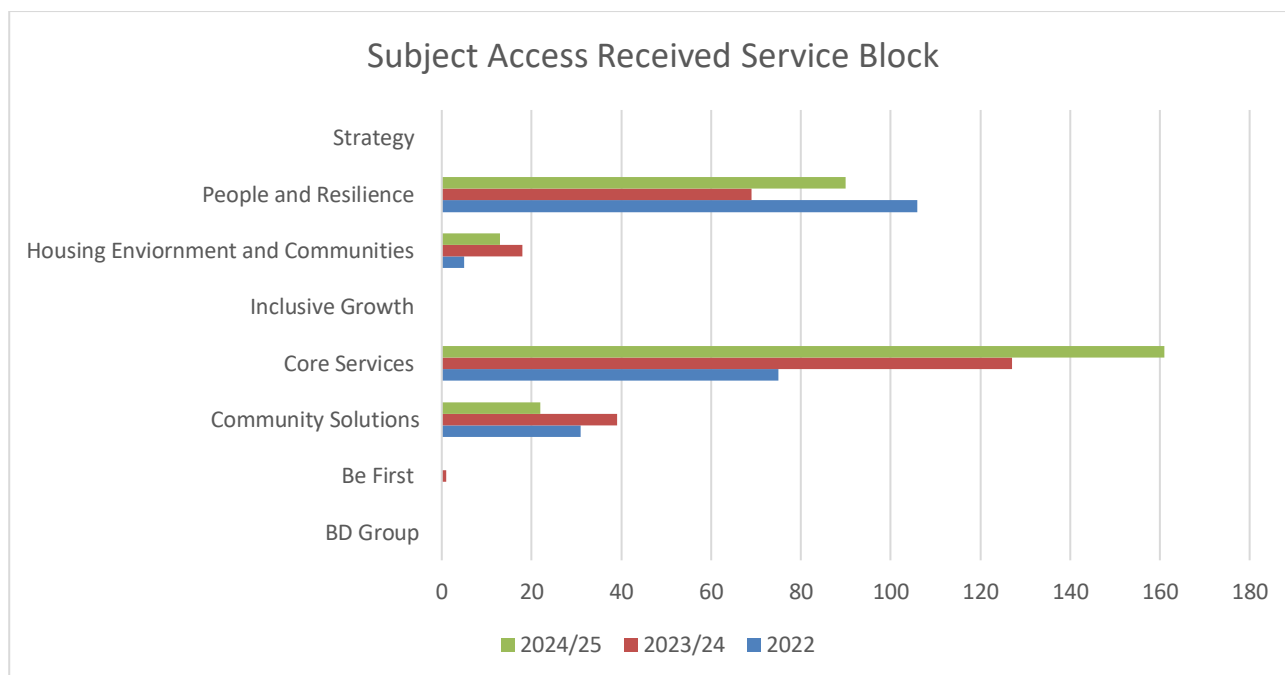


- 13.1 In accordance with guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office, the council publishes all responded Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulation (EiR) requests on its website. These can be accessed via the disclosure log at: <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/transparency-and-information-requests/freedom-information>
- 12.2 During 2024/25, we recorded a 5% increase in the number of FOI requests received.
- 12.3 As in previous years, the highest volume of FOI requests continues to be directed toward Core Services and the People and Resilience service, which together account for 60% of all requests.
- 12.4 Of the FOI and EiR requests received, 89% (1,494 out of 1,598) were completed within the statutory timeframe.
- 12.5 We are continuing to work closely with service areas to improve performance in this area and ensure full compliance with the standards set by the Information Commissioner's Office.

14. Subject Access Request

Subject Access Requests Received			
	2022	2023/24	2024/25
BD Group	0	0	0
Be First	0	1	0
Community Solutions	31	39	22
Core Services	75	127	161

Inclusive Growth	0	0	0
Housing Environment and Communities	5	18	13
People and Resilience	106	69	90
Strategy	0	0	0
Total	217	254	286

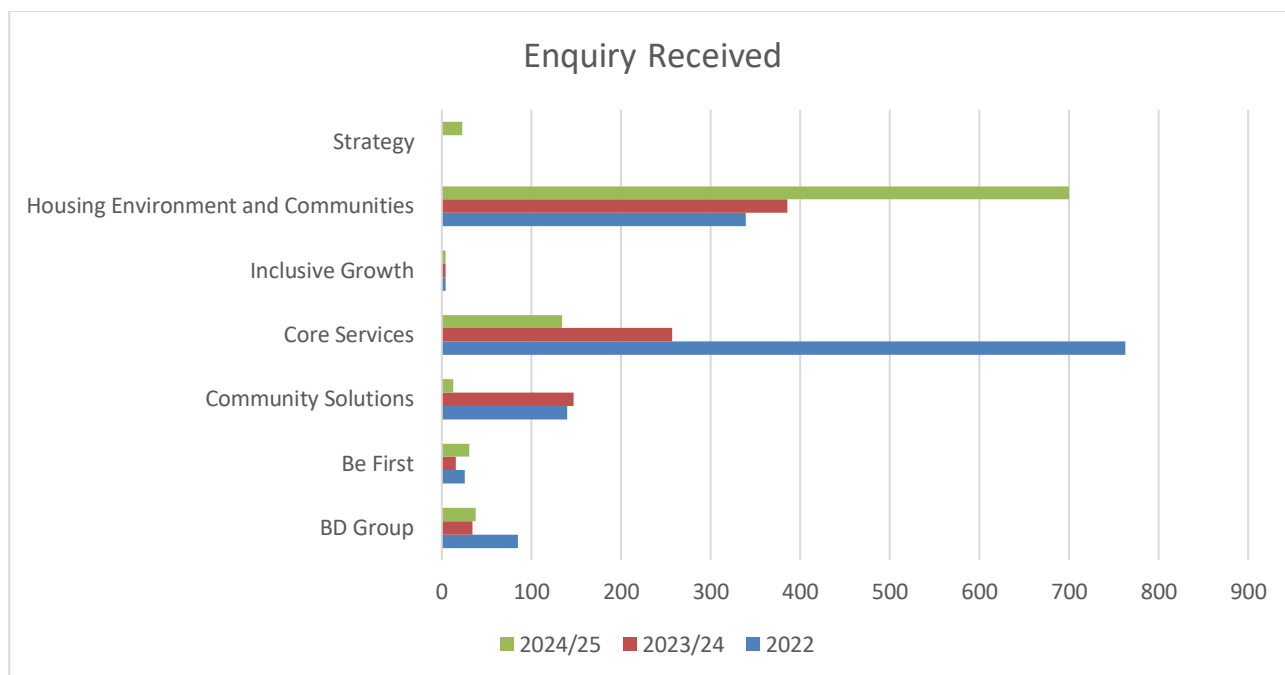


- 14.1 During the reporting period, the council has experienced a 13% increase in Subject Access Request (SARs). This is consistent with previous years, the majority of these requests continue to originate from People and Resilience and CCTV.
- 14.2 Of the SARs received, 76% were completed within the statutory timeframe. This marks a decline from the previous year's completion rate of 82%.
- 14.3 Children's Social Care remains the most complex area for SAR processing. To address this, we have provided additional strength within the team responsible for handling these requests to ensure timely and accurate responses.
- 14.4 It is also important to note that the team managing SARs for Children's Social Care also supports with disclosure requests. In 2024/25, a total of 2,356 disclosure requests were processed. These requests involve the sharing of information with partner agencies such as the Police, Courts, Probation Services and CAFCASS.

15. Enquiries

Enquiries Received			
	2022	2023/24	2024/25
BD Group	85	34	38
Be First	26	16	31
Community Solutions	140	147	13
Core Services	763	257	134
Inclusive Growth	4	4	4

Housing Environment and Communities	339	386	700
Strategy	0	0	23
Total	1,357	844	943



- 15.1 In addition to formal complaints, the Council continues to receive a significant volume of enquiries. These cases often represent the first point of contact from residents or stakeholders and may not always meet the threshold for a formal complaint. Enquiries typically include requests for information, clarification of policy, or expressions of dissatisfaction that are more appropriately addressed through alternative channels.
- 15.2 A substantial proportion of these enquiries are redirected to other services or external bodies. For example, challenges to Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) are not handled through the corporate complaints process but are instead managed through statutory appeals procedures. Nevertheless, these cases are logged within the complaints management system to ensure a complete record of resident contact and to support transparency and accountability in service delivery.
- 15.3 During the reporting period, 23% of all logged enquiries related to Parking Services. This reflects the high level of public interaction with this service and the complexity of the regulatory framework governing parking enforcement. While many of these cases are ultimately redirected, they provide valuable insight into areas where communication and public understanding could be improved.
- 15.4 The Council remains committed to capturing and analysing enquiry data to identify trends, improve service responsiveness, and ensure that residents are signposted to the correct resolution pathways. This approach supports a more efficient use of resources and helps to manage expectations by ensuring that residents receive timely and accurate information from the appropriate service area.

16. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Nurul Alom Head of Finance Corporate

- 16.1 To improve performance further we may require additional resource as not responding within timeframe can have a financial impact through fines imposed by Ombudsman's or needing to pay compensation for complaints upheld.
- 16.2 Additionally, financial investment will be required for digital development as the advancement of AI rises this will support the Customer Feedback Team, particularly with cumbersome administrative tasks such as larger redactions and potentially first line logging. Allowing the team to spend more time developing root cause analysis and supporting services with continuous improvement initiatives and improve productivity across the Council.

17. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Dr Paul Field Principal Solicitor

- 17.1 There is a statutory requirement for the Council to have a complaints process in relation to certain established services, for example, Children's Services under the Children Act 1989 and Adult Social Care services under the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009. These must have an annual report.
- 17.2 In terms of independent review there is the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman under the Local Government Act 1974; and the Housing Ombudsman, under the Housing Act 1996. They are independent and responsible for dealing with complaints about local authorities that there has been maladministration causing injustice or a service failure. The Housing Ombudsman is responsible for dealing with social housing complaints and can make various determinations which include maladministration, severe maladministration and service failure and will provide a decision which will include recommendations the council will be required to implement. If there are failings in services then these must be reported to the Council.
- 17.3 Finally, under the Localism Act 2011 the Council shall make arrangements regarding complaints about Council Members allegedly breaching the Members Code of Conduct. Such matters will now be reported to the new Standards Committee.

18. Other Implications

- 18.1 **Risk Management - None**
- 18.2 **Contractual Issues - None**
- 18.3 **Staffing Issues - None**
- 18.4 **Corporate Policy and Equality Impact** – Being evidence led and using data well to drive improvement form a key part of the council's corporate plan. The council uses data in relation to complaints, FOIs and Member case work to identify issues and put in place steps to improve performance. We recognise the value of learning from complaints and are ensuring this is embedded in our approach. Whilst we don't currently have a breakdown of complaints data by demographics, this is an

area we are exploring to ensure we can draw out more insight and help tailor or responses to our resident's needs.

18.5 Safeguarding Adults and Children - None

18.6 Health Issues - None

18.7 Crime and Disorder Issues - None

18.8 Property / Asset Issues - None

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- None

List of appendices:

- Statutory Social Care Adult Report
- Statutory Social Care Children Report
- Housing Ombudsman Updated Self-Assessment