

## Appendix C – 2017/18 Complaints Root Cause Summary & Improvement Actions by Department

### Community Wellbeing Department - Housing Directorate (778 cases including BHP and HMS)

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Customer Care – 237 cases; 181 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor communication – 101</li> <li>• Service failure - 54</li> <li>• Other - 34</li> <li>• Incorrect action/advice - 30</li> <li>• Attitude – 17</li> <li>• Correspondence – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Repairs &amp; Voids – 126 cases; 85 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delays in job being raised/completed – 66</li> <li>• General enquiry – 21</li> <li>• Unfinished works/repairs - 19</li> <li>• Reporting a matter for investigation – 9</li> <li>• Service failure - 9</li> <li>• Inspection information/quality - 2</li> </ul> <p><b>Housing Options – 69 cases; 29 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officer not answering calls/emails/letters/conduct - 24</li> <li>• Delay in processing application - 19</li> <li>• General enquiry – 12</li> <li>• Reporting a matter for investigation - 7</li> <li>• Housing application refused – 6</li> <li>• Interim Accommodation Refused - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>TA Support – 45 cases; 20 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitability of TA - 18</li> <li>• Length of time in B&amp;B/TA - 12</li> <li>• Band Assessment – 1</li> </ul>	<p><b>HMS – Property Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ HMS - Property Services carries out over 30,000 repairs a year.</li> <li>▪ The service has introduced the following measures to help improve service delivery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integrated Assessment Management Contact Improvement plan focused on rectifying service issues identified in customer satisfaction surveys;</li> <li>- Access policy covering access to council and leaseholder properties to fix leaks and other repairs;</li> <li>- Scaffolding protocol for all scaffolding contracts and weekly management of scaffolding arrangements (Wates ceased using two scaffolding sub-contractors because of poor performance).</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Customer service training rolled out for service staff from October 2018.</li> </ul> <p><b>HMS - Customer Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ HMS - Customer Service manages over 8,000 tenants and leaseholders in Brent.</li> <li>▪ Service improvements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customer Care complaints analysed to identify any themes/issues with Brent staff or contractors;</li> <li>- customer service training for staff;</li> <li>- new CRM system to improve case management and performance monitoring/management oversight;</li> <li>- Service Charge Dispute Resolution process;</li> <li>- duty officer system implemented;</li> <li>- Housing Service Promise and Customer Experience Panel launched.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Root Cause	Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officer not answering calls/emails/letters/conduct - 44</li> </ul> <p><b>Building Services – 34 cases; 29 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delays in job completion – 24</li> <li>• Service failure - 9</li> <li>• Insurance claims – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Rehousing – 34 cases; 13 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Band assessment – 15</li> <li>• Application – delays/progress - 9</li> <li>• Locata – bids/waiting times 5</li> <li>• Application review – 2</li> <li>• Priority date – 2</li> <li>• Property availabilities - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Leasehold Services – 33 cases; 13 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 20 notice - 8</li> <li>• Repairs – 7</li> <li>• Tenants / Leaseholders - 5</li> <li>• Right to buy – 4</li> <li>• Service charge – 4</li> <li>• ASB from council sub-letting – 2</li> <li>• Leasehold Services - 2</li> <li>• Communal upkeep - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Tenancy - 18 cases; 9 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Anti-Social Behaviour – 16 cases; 7 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Enforcement - 15 cases; 1 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Start Plus – 13 cases; 8 upheld/partly upheld</b></p>	<p><b>Housing Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Housing Needs received over 5,000 homelessness approaches in 2017/18.</li> <li>▪ An Outcome Based Review of Domestic Abuse support was carried out during the year and as a result a specialist post was created. A second specialist officer is being recruited because of the increasing level of demand for specialist advice and support.</li> <li>▪ Other service improvements include: individuals and households provided with a tailored housing plan (statutory requirement of the new Homeless Reduction Act); trainees attending a central government HRA Training Academy; service managers supported and given increased responsibility for managing service requests and complaints.</li> <li>▪ Planned improvements include the introduction of CRM case management and customer service training for staff).</li> </ul> <p><b>Private Housing Services (PHS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Private Housing Services (PHS) manages 8,000 licenced properties, carries out 1,500 enforcement inspections annually, and carries out approximately 450 Small Works Grants (SWG) jobs and 300 Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) jobs each year</li> <li>▪ Feedback from customer satisfaction surveys is used to improve service delivery.</li> <li>▪ The service has ISO 9000 quality system accreditation and complaints are discussed regularly with individuals and at team meetings.</li> </ul>

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Planned Maintenance – 12 cases; 6 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Rents – 12 cases; 4 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Public Realm – 11 cases; 7 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Accommodation Services – 10 cases; 1 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Customer Response Team – 10 cases; 3 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Disabled Facilities Grant – 10 cases; 5 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b><i>Less than 10 root cause themes identified in the following cases:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All – 2; Appointments – 4; Cleaning - Internal/External – 4; Communal trees – 2; Communication – 6; Compliance &amp; Risk – 2; Decant – 3; Housing advice – 2; Lettings – 5; Mechanical &amp; Electrical – 4; Member / General Enquiry – 7; Parking – 2; Process / Procedures – 8; PRSO – 5; Rent Income – 1; Resident Involvement – 1; SWG – 6; Telephony – 3; Workmanship - 6</li> </ul>	

**Community Wellbeing Department – Adult Social Care Directorate (45 cases)**

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Service – 25 cases; 15 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor Service – 13</li> <li>• Service not up to standard - 5</li> <li>• Service not provided – 3</li> <li>• Wrong Service Provided – 2</li> <li>• 3rd party contractor issues – 2</li> </ul> <p><b>Customer Care- 11 cases; 5 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorrect action taken - 6</li> <li>• Rudeness – 2</li> <li>• Contact Issues – 1</li> <li>• Correspondence issues – 1</li> <li>• Poor Attitude – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Adults Transitions Assessments – 2 cases; 1 partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Safeguarding – 3 cases</b></p> <p><b>Physical disabilities – 2 cases</b></p> <p><b>Hospital discharge – 1 case; upheld</b></p> <p><b>Member / General Enquiry – 1 case</b></p>	<p><b>Adult Social Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In 2017/18, Adult Social Care directorate received over 3,600 contacts, made over 3,600 assessments for homecare, residential or nursing services, and also carried out over 2,100 hospital discharge assessments.</li> <li>▪ Service improvements included the introduction of appeals process.</li> <li>▪ The feedback/learning from complaints is discussed with individual staff members, at team meetings and management meetings to help improve service delivery.</li> </ul>

**Community Wellbeing Department - Culture Directorate (63 cases)**

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Libraries – 52 cases; 23 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• premises / environment - 15</li> <li>• customer service – 9</li> <li>• other service - 8</li> <li>• computer provision – 6</li> <li>• other customers – 6</li> <li>• events and exhibitions - 4</li> <li>• book loans – 1</li> <li>• membership applications – 1</li> <li>• online access – 1</li> <li>• support for schools - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Sports facilities – 11; 7 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff / Customer service - 4</li> <li>• Bookings / Classes – 1</li> <li>• Courts – 1</li> <li>• Other Service - 1</li> <li>• Pricing / Policies - 1</li> <li>• Health Suite – 1</li> <li>• Pricing / Policies – 1</li> <li>• Swimming Pool - 1</li> </ul>	<p><b>Culture Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Culture Services within the Public Health &amp; Culture directorate had over 36,000 active library borrowers and over 1.7m sports centre visits in 2017/18.</li> <li>▪ Service improvements during the year included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ongoing staff training and performance management;</li> <li>- regular discussion of complaint issues with individual staff, teams and management teams;</li> <li>- Bridge Park facilities issues addressed with the contractors;</li> <li>- heating and lighting issues at libraries addressed by the Facilities Management team;</li> <li>- staff training/guidance provided regarding customer behaviour or managing noise levels in library spaces.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Regeneration & Environment Department (424 cases)**

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Parking &amp; Lighting – 175 cases; 73 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking Enforcement – 96</li> <li>• Parking Permit - 36</li> <li>• Parking Bay/Other – 17</li> <li>• Parking Bays – 10</li> <li>• Trees – 8; Car Parks – 4; Lighting – 2; Highways – 1; Member / General Enquiry – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Environmental Improvement – 94 cases; 27 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member / General Enquiry – 17</li> <li>• Parks and Open Spaces – 15</li> <li>• Recycling – 14</li> <li>• Refuse Collection - 14</li> <li>• On Street / Cleaning / Nuisance Control - 8</li> <li>• Cemeteries – 7</li> <li>• Customer Care - 4</li> <li>• Service – 3; Special Collection – 3; Vehicles – 3; Allotments – 2; Domestic – 2; BCS Contact Centre – 1; Trade - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Planning, Transport and Licensing – 68 cases; 22 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Application / Decision / Enforcement - 61</li> <li>• Member / General Enquiry – 3</li> <li>• Service – 2</li> <li>• Building Control – 1</li> <li>• Customer Care - 1</li> </ul>	<p><b>Parking &amp; Lighting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ During the year the Parking &amp; Lighting Service issued approximately 190,000 penalty charge notices (PCNs), processed 34,000 parking permits and administered 270,000 visitor parking bookings</li> <li>▪ Service area improvements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- review of Enforcement plan and targeted enforcement activity put in place to address hotspots;</li> <li>- replacement programme of pay and display parking machines underway;</li> <li>- parking contractor given clear timetable of parking suspensions and signage required and related PCN review process in place;</li> <li>- permit complaints addressed by system changes or customer advice;</li> <li>- tree maintenance requests/complaints considered against a planned schedule of tree maintenance across the borough and budget consideration</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Environmental Improvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Environmental Improvement service responsibilities include Council parks, open spaces and cemeteries; and management of refuse and recycling services for approximately 119,000 households in the borough.</li> <li>▪ The majority of complaints were about a policy decision to reduce grass cutting in parks and grass verges during the year and feedback was provided on individual complaints.</li> <li>▪ Missed refuse and recycling bins collections were also addressed on an individual basis and there were no systemic issues with waste collection identified this during the year.</li> <li>▪ The discovery of a trace amount of asbestos at Paddington Cemetery led to a rise in the number of cemeteries related complaints</li> </ul> <p><b>Planning, Transport and Licensing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Planning service processed over 5,500 planning applications during 2017/18.</li> <li>▪ The main causes of complaints were planning applications, decisions, or enforcement (61 cases) and member/general enquiry (3 cases).</li> <li>▪ It is recognised that planning decisions can be unpopular or controversial at times and complaints about planning decisions are managed through a separate appeals process.</li> </ul>

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Highways and Infrastructure – 44 cases; 12 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dropped Kerbs/Illegal Drop Kerbs – 11</li> <li>• Footway Defects /Information / Relay Schemes - 7</li> <li>• Carriageway Defects/Potholes/ Resurfacing Schemes – 5</li> <li>• Road Signs/Markings/Closures &amp; Diversions – 3; Dangerous Road Junctions – 2; General enquiry – 2; Highways information and advice – 2; Parking Scheme Issues – 2; Reporting a matter for investigation – 2; Traffic Calming – 2; Disabled Parking Bays – 1; Double Yellow Lines – 1; Enforcement Not Taking Action – 1; Insurance Claims – 1; Other highways issue – 1; Vibrations to Property - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Safety and Public Protection – 21 cases; 5 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nuisance – 12; Service – 3; Customer Care – 3; Member / General Enquiry – 2; Community Safety - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Standards and Enforcement – 9 cases; 1 partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service – 4; Planning/Planning Enforcement – 3; Parking Enforcement – 1; Customer Care – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Civic Enterprise – 7 cases</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Control – 5; Member / General Enquiry – 1; Pest Control - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Less than 5 root cause themes identified in the following cases:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Kilburn Programme – 4</li> <li>• Employment, Skills and Enterprise/Service Delivery – 2</li> </ul>	<p>Service errors in the administration of planning applications are discussed at an individual and team level to help improve service delivery standards.</p> <p><b>Highways and Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Highways &amp; Infrastructure service is responsible for roads and pavements in Brent and the service also handles approximately 240 drop kerb applications a year.</li> <li>▪ Service area improvements include: simplifying dropped kerb application forms; improved joint working with dropped kerb contractors; new Highways Enforcement team investigating illegal dropped kerbs; targeted 8-week pothole injection patching programme.</li> </ul>

**Resources Department (197 cases)**

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Housing Benefit/Council Tax Scheme – 45 cases; 25 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reconsiderations/appeals – 16</li> <li>• change of circumstances – 10</li> <li>• Housing benefit - current claim - 8</li> <li>• Overpayment decisions - 4</li> <li>• New claims – 3</li> <li>• My Account portal - 2</li> <li>• Discretionary housing payment - 2</li> </ul> <p><b>BCS Contact Centre – 25 cases; 7 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact Centre - enquiry handling – 9</li> <li>• Contact Centre - officer behaviour - 9</li> <li>• Contact Centre - information and advice – 3</li> <li>• Contact Centre - waiting times – 3</li> <li>• Customer services – signposting –1</li> </ul> <p><b>Council tax/recovery - 18 cases; 10 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council tax – banding/billing, discount, queries, customer service, portal – 10</li> <li>• Council tax – recovery – 8</li> </ul> <p><b>Client Affairs – 15 cases; 7 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invoicing – 10</li> <li>• Assessments – 5</li> </ul> <p><b>Service – 12 cases, 5 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor Service – 5</li> <li>• Service not provided – 1</li> <li>• Service not up to standard - 6</li> </ul>	<p><b>Brent Customer Service (BCS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ BCS includes the Customer Contact Centre, Revenues &amp; Benefits service, Registration &amp; Nationality service, Client Affairs team, and Blue Badges team. The scale of BCS operations during 2017/18 included: 164,000 Contact Centre phone calls; 65,000 Contact Centre emails/web chat/tweets; over 121,000 live council tax accounts; over 10,000 Council Tax support awards and over 7,000 new Housing Benefit claims with over 130,000 changes in circumstances; 3,000 financial assessments; over 4,200 Blue Badge/Taxi Cards/Freedom pass applications.</li> <li>▪ A significant proportion of Housing Benefit complaints are about the benefit calculations and appeals are then dealt with through a separate statutory process. Feedback and learning points from complaints are discussed with individuals, teams and by the management teams across the department.</li> <li>▪ The department has recently been restructured and staff changes include the appointment of new manager for the Blue Badge service. Whilst there have been a few teething problems with staff changes and a few genuine mistakes, there have not been any significant systemic issues identified across the BCS during the year.</li> </ul>



Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Customer Care – 12 cases; 5 partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attitude/ Poor Attitude/ Rudeness – 5</li> <li>• Contact Issues – 2</li> <li>• Correspondence issues – 4</li> <li>• Incorrect action taken – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Client FM – 12 cases; 5 upheld</b></p> <p><b>Overpayments/SD/AR – 12 cases; 1 upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recovery – 11</li> <li>• Invoicing / Billing – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Member / General Enquiry – 10 cases; 5 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Registration and Nationality – 8 cases; 5 partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Benefit – General – 7 cases; 2 partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Accounts Payable – 5 cases; 3 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b><i>Less than 5 root cause themes identified in the following cases:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent Travel Team – 4; Customer Services – 2; Local Welfare Assistance – 2; Business rates – 1; Concessionary Travel –1; Finance – 1; General/ Customer Service – 1; Legal Services – 1; Parks and Open Spaces – 1; Payments – 1; Welfare rights – 1</li> </ul>	

**Children & Young People Department (110 cases)**

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Social Workers – 18 cases; 8 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Failure - 12</li> <li>• Communication – 6</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessments – 10 cases; 2 partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service not provided/not up to standard – 9</li> <li>• Communication – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Leaving Care – 10 cases; 7 partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Failure – 6</li> <li>• Communication – 3</li> <li>• Policy or Procedure - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Corporate Parenting – 8 cases</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service not provided/not up to standard –5</li> <li>• Communication – 3</li> </ul> <p><b>Family Social Work – 8 cases; 4 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service not provided/not up to standard – 7</li> <li>• Communication delays - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Customer Care – 7 cases; 1 partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correspondence issues – 3</li> <li>• Poor attitude/rudeness – 3</li> <li>• Incorrect action - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Service Failure – 7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service not provided – 6</li> <li>• Service delay - 1</li> </ul>	<p><b>CYP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CYP received over 5,300 referrals and completed over 5,100 Child &amp; Family assessments in 2017/18.</li> <li>▪ Learning points from complaints are discussed with individual staff and in team meetings and there is ongoing work with managers to improve service delivery.</li> </ul>

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Visits – 6 cases</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication/inaccurate/behaviour – 4</li> <li>• Service not provided/not up to standard – 2</li> </ul> <p><b>Placements – 5 cases; 3 partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Finance/LAC Finance – 5 cases; 2 partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service not provided/not up to standard – 4</li> <li>• LAC Finance - 1</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Less than 5 root cause themes identified in the following cases:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care Package – 3; Personal Advisors – 3; Family Support – 2; In Year Admissions – 2; Transfer Admissions – 2; Referrals – 2; Member/General Enquiry – 2; Child protection – 1; CP Conferences – 1; Communication – 1; Court Reports – 1; General enquiry – 1; Hardship and Subsistence – 1; LAC Reviews – 1; Reviews – 1; Quality Assurance – 1; Travel Arrangements – 1 case.</li> </ul>	