



**Resources and Public Realm  
Scrutiny Committee**  
24 February 2026

**Report from the Corporate Director,  
Finance and Resources**

**Deputy Leader and Cabinet  
Member for Finance and Resources**  
- **Cllr Milli Patel**

**Complaints Analysis Report 2024-25**

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Non-Key Decision
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
<b>List of Appendices:</b>	<p>Appendix A: Annual Complaints Report 2024 – 2025 – Cabinet September 2025</p> <p>Appendix B: ASC Complaints Annual Report 2024-25 (<i>Appendix A to the Cabinet Report</i>)</p> <p>Appendix C: CYP Complaints Annual Report 2024-25 (<i>Appendix B to the Cabinet Report</i>)</p> <p>Appendix D: Table Comparing to other London LAs (<i>Appendix C to the Cabinet Report</i>)</p> <p>Appendix E: Housing Management Service (HMS) Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report (<i>Appendix D to the Cabinet Report</i>)</p> <p>Appendix E (i): Housing Ombudsman performance report for Brent (<i>Part of Appendix D to the Cabinet Report / Appendix 1 to the HMS Annual Report</i>)</p>

	<p>Appendix E (ii): Code Self-Assessment- July 2025 <i>(Part of Appendix D to the Cabinet Report / Appendix 2 to the HMS Annual Report)</i></p> <p>Appendix E (iii): Spotlight on Knowledge Information Management <i>(Part of Appendix D to the Cabinet Report / Appendix 3 to the HMS Annual Report)</i></p> <p>Appendix E (iv): Spotlight on Attitudes Respect and Rights <i>(Part of Appendix D to the Cabinet Report / Appendix 4 to the HMS Annual Report)</i></p> <p>Appendix E (v): Brent Council Complaints Policy - July 2025 <i>(Part of Appendix D to the Cabinet Report / Appendix 5 to the HMS Annual Report)</i></p> <p>Appendix F: Compensation breakdown for last three years</p> <p>Appendix G: Correlation between issue types and outcomes of complaints by department 2024-2025</p> <p>Appendix H: Learning and improvements arising from complaints 2024-2025</p>
<b>Background Papers:</b>	N/A
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> (Name, Title, Contact Details)	<p>Mariza Barros Complaints and Casework Manager <a href="mailto:Mariza.Barros@brent.gov.uk">Mariza.Barros@brent.gov.uk</a> Tel: 0208 937 1381</p>

## 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a breakdown of complaints received by department and the top five issues of complaint for those respective departments. The report also provides a breakdown of the number of complaints that have been upheld, not upheld, partly upheld, rejected or withdrawn for each department.
- 1.2 Appendix A, the Annual Complaints report 2024-25 sets out complaint's performance in Brent Council for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 and focuses on the nature of complaints and the learning they provide to inform Brent's future approach to service improvement.
- 1.3 Some complaints concerning Adult Social Care (ASC) and Children's Social Care are governed by separate statutory complaint procedures and individual summary reports have been provided for statutory complaints about these services in Appendices B and C respectively as part of the Annual Complaints Report 2024-25.

- 1.4 A comparison of the Council's performance with other London boroughs provided by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has been provided as part of the annual complaints report in Appendix D.
- 1.5 Appendix E, the HMS Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report provides performance of Housing Management complaints from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 as required by the Housing Ombudsman Service.
- 1.6 Appendix F provides a compensation breakdown for the last three years and Appendix G provides a correlation between the root causes and their issue types and outcomes of complaints.

## **2.0 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 Scrutiny is asked to note Brent's performance in managing and resolving complaints.

## **3.0 Detail**

### **3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities and Strategic Context**

- 3.1.1 Complaints provide important learning points for the Council and allow us to inform the Council's priorities in many different ways. Through these learning points, we can make changes to achieve and further our priorities and move forward together.

Complaints provide an opportunity for the Council to understand issues and put things right, also ensuring that they do not reoccur.

- 3.1.2 Complaints are wide-ranging and dealt with across the Council. Owing to this, they touch upon all the priorities within the Borough Plan as detailed below:
  - *The Best Start in Life* - Being able to deal with concerns at crucial stages of people's lives allows them to get the best start in life. Assisting our looked after children and children with special educational needs with issues that they may have, and providing advocacy to bring these issues forward to the Council will ensure that they are provided with the necessary support in life.
  - *Thriving Communities* - Providing our residents with a route to complain and provide feedback not only encourages resident engagement but allows us to make improvements and inform change. In turn, by addressing their concerns and developing solutions that will benefit them, communities are given the opportunity to thrive.
  - *A Cleaner, Greener Future* - The Council receive a number of complaints regarding environmental issues, which are reviewed and help us target specific areas. This also allows the Council to evaluate services that are being provided to ensure they meet our aspirations for a cleaner, greener future.

- *Healthier Brent* – Complaints regarding leisure services and our parks allow the Council to investigate and develop more initiatives to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents and those that visit Brent. During our complaints process we also signpost to relevant services that can assist our complainants, such as Mental Health services.
- *Prosperity and Stability in Brent* – Analysis of complaints received about housing needs is fundamental in terms of providing the tools and initiatives to support, empower and equip residents, and ensure long term stability.

3.1.3 Complaints also feed into some of the current strategies, priorities and plans set out for Brent, such as the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024–2028. The Complaints Service ensures residents and service users are provided with access to the complaints procedure in line with the Public Sector Equalities Duty (PSED). The Digital Strategy 2022-2026 and the extended Digital Road Map 2026-28 also plays a pivotal role when looking at how users are accessing our services and how they are logging complaints. The Complaints Service have made it easier for users to log complaint casework, view the history of what they have logged, and access everything in one place.

## 3.2 Background

3.2.1 Scrutiny Committee has asked for a cover report on the themes and issues resulting from complaints and a comparison of compensation paid over the last three financial years. This is provided in appendix F.

Scrutiny Committee has also asked for a breakdown by department of the key issues and the outcomes of complaints that are investigated by the Council. This is provided in appendix G, with headlines summarised in this section.

3.2.2 Breakdown of complaints closed by department and issue type

A breakdown is provided below of the top five issues as recorded on the Council's complaints management system where available for each department. The Council's commissioned services' complaint issues have been incorporated in the overall data. On the issue of commissioned services, appendix B, the Adult Social Care Statutory Complaints Report, includes details relating to complaints received by ASC's Commissioning Contracting and Market Management. Appendix G provides further details for Housing Management Property Services and services provided by parking contractors.

### **Breakdown**

#### **Service Reform and Strategy – 165 stage 1 complaints**

Adult Social Care responded to 164 stage one complaints. The top five issues were:

- Social Worker – 45
- Access and Information – 35

- Hospital discharge – 22
- Client Invoices - 12
- Care Package/Care Package Review – 11

Public Health received 1 stage 1 complaint.

### **Children, Young People and Community Development - 167 stage 1 complaints**

Early Help and Social Care responded to 123 stage 1 complaints. The top 5 issues were:

- BFFD/MASH/NRPF (combined): 32
- Care Planning (combined): 12
- Looked after Children (combined): 11
- CYP LAC & Permanency (combined): 10
- East Locality Teams (combined): 7
- West Locality Teams (combined): 7

Education, Partnerships and Strategy responded to 44 stage 1 complaints. The top 5 issues were:

- Input form service: 22
- SEND Specialist Services (combined): 9
- Commissioning (combined): 5
- School Admissions (combined): 5
- CYP Commissioning (combined): 2

### **Finance and Resources - 18 stage 1 complaints.**

Top issues were:

- Access & Facilities (combined): 6
- Insurance (combined): 4
- Acquisitions & Disposals (combined): 2
- Commercial Property (combined): 2

All other teams received 1 stage 1 complaint each.

### **Law and Governance - 10 stage 1 complaints**

Top issue was:

- Legal Team – Brent legal services: 5

All other teams responded to 1 stage 1 complaint each.

### **Neighbourhoods and Regeneration - 192 stage 1 complaints**

Public Realm responded to 148 stage 1 complaints. The top 5 issues were:

- HS&P (combined): 78 (mainly parking enforcement and permits)
- Highways Management (combined): 15
- Parks (combined): 8
- Grounds Maintenance (combined): 5
- NHM Multiple Issues: 5

Inclusive Regeneration and Employment responded to 31 stage 1 complaints. The top 5 issues were:

- Planning Enforcement (combined): 11
- Other: 4
- Inadequate Investigation or Analysis: 3
- Other Planning matters: 3
- South Kilburn Estates Regeneration: 2

Strategic Housing responded to 10 stage 1 complaints  
Property and Assets responded to 3 stage 1 complaints

### **Resident and Housing Services - 1421 stage 1 complaints**

Housing Services responded to 643 stage 1 complaints. The top 5 issues were:

- Repairs To My Property (Including Inspections): 139
- Outstanding Repairs (combined): 112
- Communal Repair: 64
- Housing Customer (combined): 54
- Anti - Social Behaviour: 46
- Damp and/or mould: 43

Resident Services responded to 428 stage 1 complaints. The top 5 issues were:

- Council Tax (combined): 312
- Libraries (combined): 26
- Debt Recovery (combined): 14
- Housing Benefits (combined): 9
- Local Welfare Assistance (combined): 8

Housing Needs and Support responded to 329 stage 1 complaints. The top 5 issues were:

- Homelessness application (combined): 222
- Offers of accommodation: 31
- Temporary Accommodation or Bed & Breakfast: 31
- Application for social housing waiting list: 20
- Banding: 12

## **Service improvements**

- 3.2.3 Service areas use the information gathered from complaints to make service improvements. Once a complaint has been investigated any corrective actions that arise from the complaint are recorded on the Council's case management system to be tracked and monitored to completion. Officers are asked to upload any evidence so that it is readily available and can be retrieved when requested.
- 3.2.4 Appendix H provides more details on learning and improvements arising from complaints during 2024-2025.

## **Outcomes**

### 3.2.5 Breakdown of Stage 1 complaint outcomes by Department

There are several outcomes to a complaint. A definition has been provided below for each outcome:

#### *Upheld*

If substantive evidence is found to support the complaint, then the complaint should be recorded as upheld.

#### *Not upheld*

If there is no evidence to support any aspects of a complaint made, the complaint should be recorded as not upheld.

#### *Partly upheld*

If a complaint is made about several issues and one or more, but not all, are upheld then the complaint should be recorded as partially upheld.

#### *Withdrawn*

Sometimes people choose not to pursue their complaint. This may be because the issues have since been resolved, for personal reasons or because of a change in circumstances.

#### *Rejected*

Complaints may be rejected if the issues are currently being dealt with through court proceedings, a safeguarding investigation is ongoing or if it has been more than twelve months since the issue occurred.

<b>Department</b>	<b>Not Upheld</b>	<b>Partly Upheld</b>	<b>Upheld</b>	<b>Complaint Withdrawn / Not Pursued</b>	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
Housing Services	172	168	225	14	70	649

Resident Services	255	75	70	6	22	428
Housing Needs and Support	139	86	43	48	15	331
Adult Social Care	29	56	68	4	7	164
Public Realm	73	32	22	13	8	148
Early Help and Social Care	60	37	8	7	10	122
Education, Partnerships and Strategy	18	19	6	0	1	44
Inclusive Regeneration and Employment	22	7	2	0	0	31
Property & Assets	13	1	0	1	0	15
Community Development	7	0	3	1	1	12
Strategic Housing	1	4	3	2	0	10
Democratic Services	1	1	1	0	2	5
Law	5	0	0	0	0	5
Customer Access	4	0	0	0	0	4
Communications Insight and Innovation	2	0	1	0	0	3
Finance	0	0	1	2	0	3
Organisational Assurance and Resilience	2	1	0	0	0	3
Integration & Improved Outcomes	1	0	0	0	0	1
Public Health, Leisure & Parks	0	1	0	0	0	1

3.2.6 The table above shows the breakdown of **stage one** complaint outcomes.

3.2.7 A breakdown of the departments which received the highest amount of stage one complaints and their uphold rate is provided below:

- Housing Services received 649 Stage one complaints. Of these 649 complaints, 393 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 61% of cases, some fault was found.
- Resident Services received 428 Stage one complaints. Of these 428 complaints, 145 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 34% of cases some fault was found.
- Housing Needs and Support received 331 Stage one complaints. Of these 331 complaints, 129 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 39% of cases some fault was found.

- Adult Social Care received 164 Stage one complaints. Of these 164 complaints, 124 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 76% of cases some fault was found.
- Public Realm received 148 Stage one complaints. Of these 148 complaints, 54 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 36% of cases some fault was found.
- Early Help and Social Care received 122 Stage one complaints. Of these 122 complaints, 45 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 37% of cases some fault was found.
- Education, Partnerships and Strategy received 44 Stage one complaints. Of these 44 complaints, 25 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 57% of cases some fault was found.
- Inclusive Regeneration and Employment received 31 Stage one complaints. Of these 31 complaints, 9 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 29% of cases some fault was found.
- Property & Assets received 15 Stage one complaints. Of these 15 complaints, 1 case were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 7% of cases some fault was found.
- Community Development received 12 Stage one complaints. Of these 12 complaints, 3 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 25% of cases some fault was found.
- Strategic Housing received 10 Stage one complaints. Of these 10 complaints, 7 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 70% of cases some fault was found.

All other departments received under 10 complaints and therefore percentages will be skewed.

Department	Not Upheld	Partly Upheld	Upheld	Complaint Withdrawn / Not Pursued	Rejected	Grand Total
Housing Services	24	44	48	0	1	117
Resident Services	19	11	2	1	0	85
Housing Needs and Support	16	32	17	1	2	68
Adult Social Care	3	10	7	0	2	22
Public Realm	8	7	0	0	4	19
Early Help and Social Care	7	6	1	1	0	15
Inclusive Regeneration and Employment	6	3	0	0	0	9

Customer Access	5	3	1	0	0	9
Education, Partnerships and Strategy	2	5	1	0	0	8
Integration & Improved Outcomes	0	6	1	0	1	8
Strategic Housing	2	2	2	0	0	6
Property & Assets	3	0	0	0	0	3
Community Development	1	2	0	0	0	3
Environment and Leisure	2	1	0	0	0	3
Organisational Assurance and Resilience	1	1	0	0	0	2
Law	1	0	0	0	1	2
Regeneration, Growth & Employment	1	0	0	0	0	1
Democratic Services	0	1	0	0	0	1
Communications Insight and Innovation	0	0	1	0	0	1

3.2.8 The table above shows the breakdown of **stage two** complaint outcomes

3.2.9 A breakdown of the departments which received the highest amount of **stage two** complaints and their uphold rate is provided below:

- Housing Services received 117 Stage two complaints. Of these 117 stage two complaints, 92 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 79% of cases some fault was found.
- Resident Services received 85 Stage two complaints. Of these 85 stage two complaints, 13 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 15% of cases some fault was found.
- Housing Needs and Support received 68 Stage two complaints. Of these 68 stage two complaints, 49 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 72% of cases some fault was found.
- Adult Social Care received 22 Stage two complaints. Of these 22 stage two complaints, 17 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 77% of cases some fault was found.
- Public Realm received 19 Stage two complaints. Of these 19 stage two complaints, 7 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 37% of cases some fault was found.

- Early Help and Social Care received 15 Stage two complaints. Of these 15 stage two complaints, 7 cases were upheld or partly upheld which means that in 47% of cases some fault was found.

All other departments received under 10 complaints and therefore percentages will be skewed.

3.2.10 The volume of complaints is increasing, and the growing use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) by residents is contributing to this rise. In 2024/25 the Council received 1983 stage 1 complaints and 346 stage 2 complaints. So far this year, from April 2025 to January 2026 the Council has received 3379 stage 1 complaints (an increase of 70%) and 506 stage 2 complaints (an increase of 46%). Many complainants are now using AI tools to help them draft complaints and better understand their rights, which has had a noticeable impact on how complaints are received and managed. The Council recognises this shift and is exploring how AI can positively reshape complaint handling by improving speed, accuracy, and overall insight. Evidence shows that AI can enhance responsiveness and accessibility through functions such as automated triage, digital assistants, and improved communication tools. However, these benefits must be balanced with strong governance to ensure responsible use. While AI offers substantial advantages for complaints management, its implementation must carefully address ethical considerations, including bias, data governance, and accountability.

#### **4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement**

4.1 The report was discussed at Cabinet and is on the agenda for scrutiny committee.

#### **5.0 Financial Considerations**

5.1 The details provided in the Annual Complaints Report 2024-25 (Appendix A) on compensation payments and in Appendix F – Compensation Breakdown for last three years reflect the monetary impact of not getting things right the first time as an organisation and the need to improve the customer experience thus minimising the financial penalties incurred by the Council.

5.2 The total amount of compensation awarded in 2024-2025 has increased by just over 56% compared to 2023-2024.

5.3 The total compensation awarded/offered in 2024/25 was £277,814 compared to £177,754 in 2023/24.

#### **6.0 Legal Considerations**

6.1 Complaints concerning Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care fall under separate statutory complaint procedures. It is a legal requirement to produce annual reports for these areas, and these are included as part of the complaints annual report in appendices B and C with reference to the statutory frameworks for the management of these statutory complaints.

- 6.2 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) or the Housing Ombudsman provide the final stage in the complaints process, where an individual has complained to the Council and remains dissatisfied with the outcome.
- 6.3 The LGSCO can investigate allegations of maladministration in connection with the exercise of a local authority's administrative function, allegations regarding a failure in a service which it is the local authority's function to provide, an allegation or an apparent failure to provide such a service pursuant to the Local Government Act 1974 as amended.
- 6.4 The Housing Ombudsman investigates complaints and resolves disputes involving the tenants and leaseholders of social landlords (housing associations and local authorities), as well as for voluntary members (private landlords and letting agents).
- 6.5 The Social Housing Regulation Act gave the Housing Ombudsman considerable new powers. The Housing Ombudsman is now able to order a landlord to evaluate a particular policy or practice to prevent service failure being repeated. Previously, these types of orders would have only been recommendations, which the landlord was not legally required to act upon (although it has always been the Council's policy to do so). The expanded powers enable the Ombudsman to require landlords to go beyond the scope of individual complaints and seek to address any wider issues.

## **7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

- 7.1 Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a duty when exercising its functions to have 'due regard' to the need:
- (a) to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act.
  - (b) advance equality of opportunity; and
  - (c) foster good relations between those who share a "protected characteristic" and those who do not.
- 7.2 This is the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The 'protected characteristics' are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- 7.3 Although there have been no equality implications identified as a result of this report, the Council is improving the complaints system so that equalities data is captured, and data analysis can be used to identify issues that may disproportionately affect different equality groups.

## **8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

- 8.1 Not applicable

**9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)**

9.1 Not applicable

**10.0 Communication Considerations**

10.1 The Housing Ombudsman as well as the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman issue spotlight reports to address thematic issues. The Complaints Service ensure that these reports and any other significant communications from the Ombudsmen are highlighted to the relevant services.

10.2 The Council continues to advertise its complaints procedure and policy on its website and in correspondence with residents.

**Report sign off:**

***Minesh Patel***

Corporate Director of Finance and Resources