

Highways; Complaints Report

Quarter 3; 2021/22

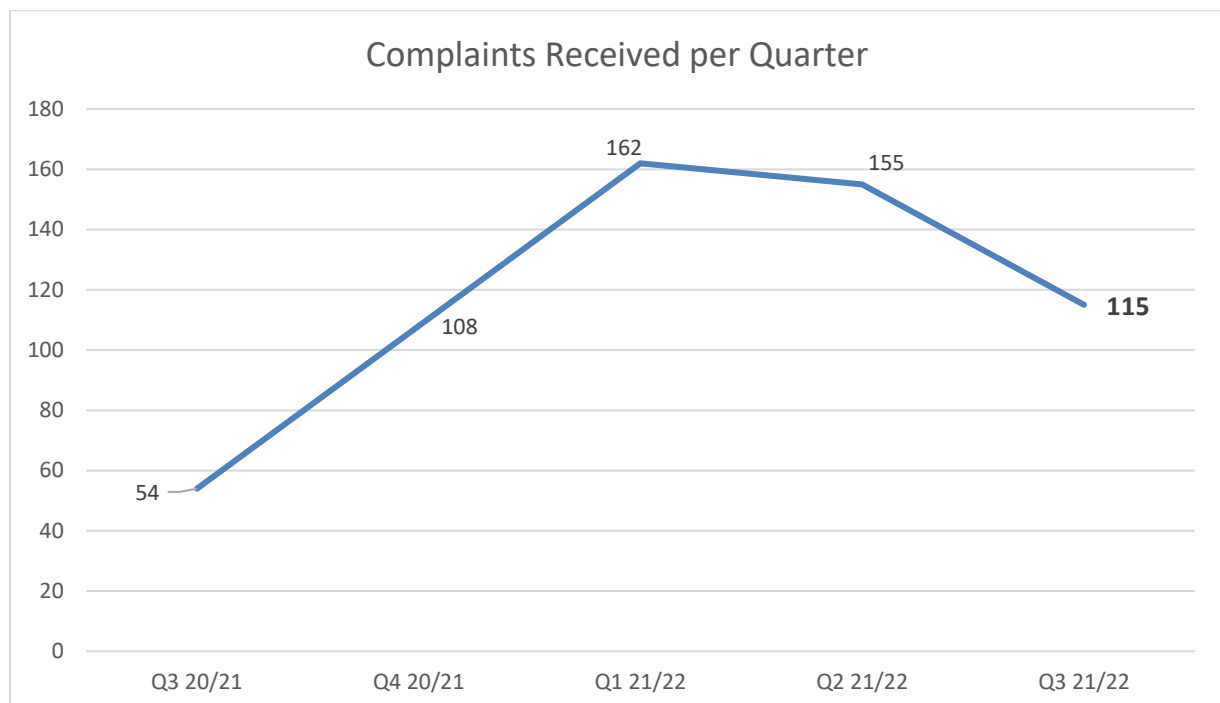
March 2022

Introduction

The following report is a summary of findings from the complaints raised in the third quarter of 2021/2022 for the Highways Service. Details on any common themes within complaints and overall figures for numbers received and outcomes will be provided.

Q2 Overview

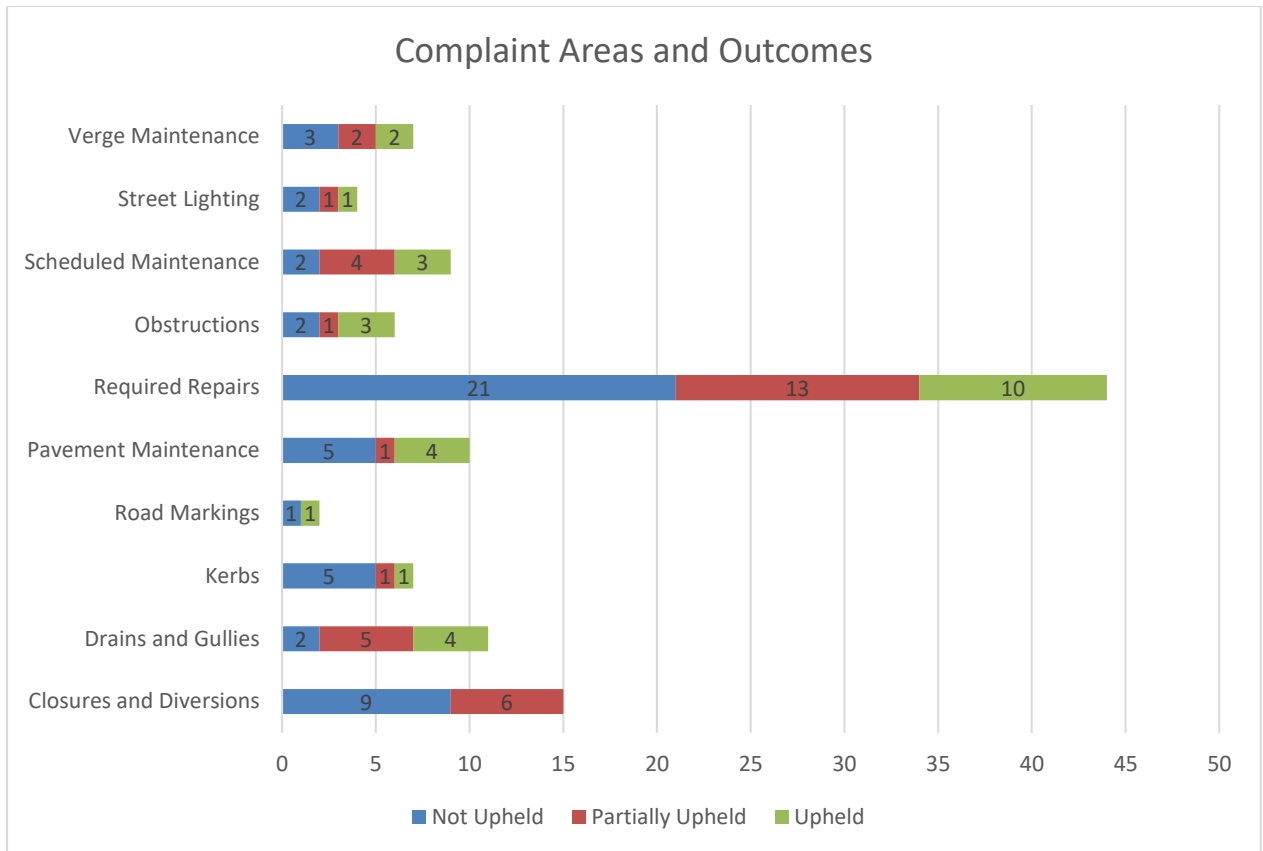
Highways received 7019 Fix My Street contacts, 8184 CSC calls, 2660 CSC emails* and the Customer Relations Team received 174 contacts totalling 18037 in the third quarter of 2021/2022, from individuals wishing to give feedback, report issues or complain about various services. Out of these 18037 contacts, 115 entered the formal complaints process, this equates to less than 1% of all contacts received (66% of contacts received by CRT entered the formal process), the remainder were actioned and resolved informally. The number of complaints entering the formal process has seen a 25% decrease in comparison to the previous quarter.



Of the 115 complaints formally investigated, only 2 cases saw an escalation to the next stage of the Council's complaints process. Neither of these cases resulted in fault being found in delivery of the highway services. It is positive to see the number of cases still being resolved informally to the complainant's satisfaction.

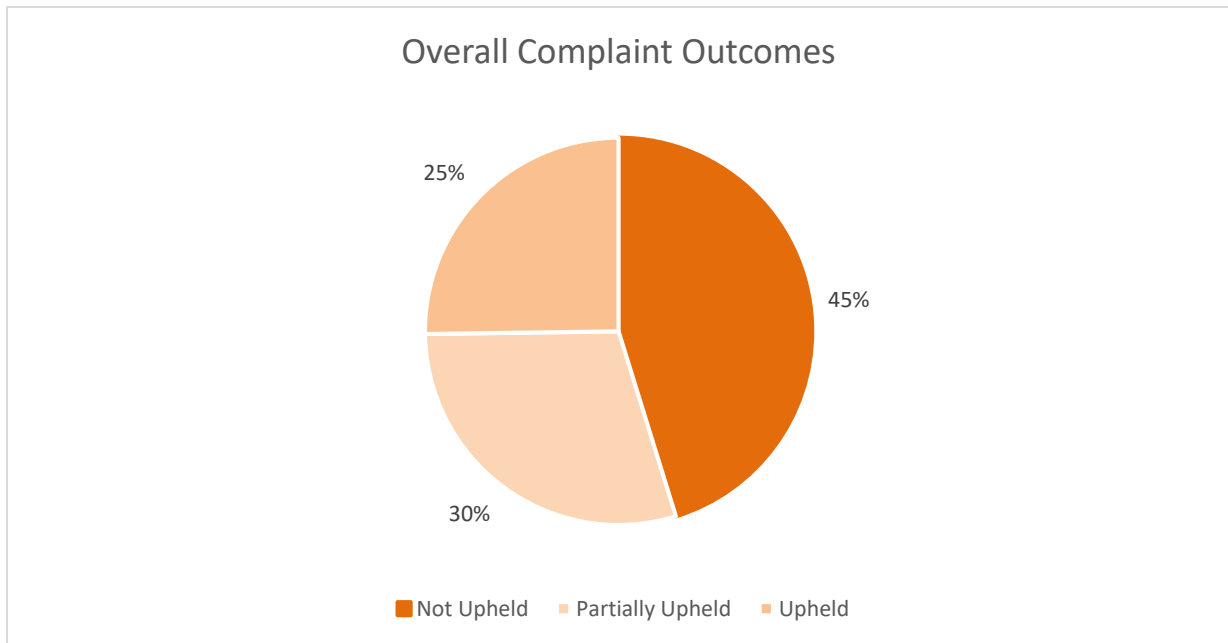
Given the significant volume of contacts the highways service received for this quarter against the receipt of 115 complaints with only an escalation of 1.5% cases, reflects the positive work being done. The constructive approach in providing thorough responses and suitable remedy where appropriate, and in line with the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). Whilst cases have been escalated to the LGO, none of these have seen fault found in either the way in which the service was delivered or the responses provided to individuals raising complaints.

The following shows a breakdown of areas in which complaints were raised and the outcomes of these cases;



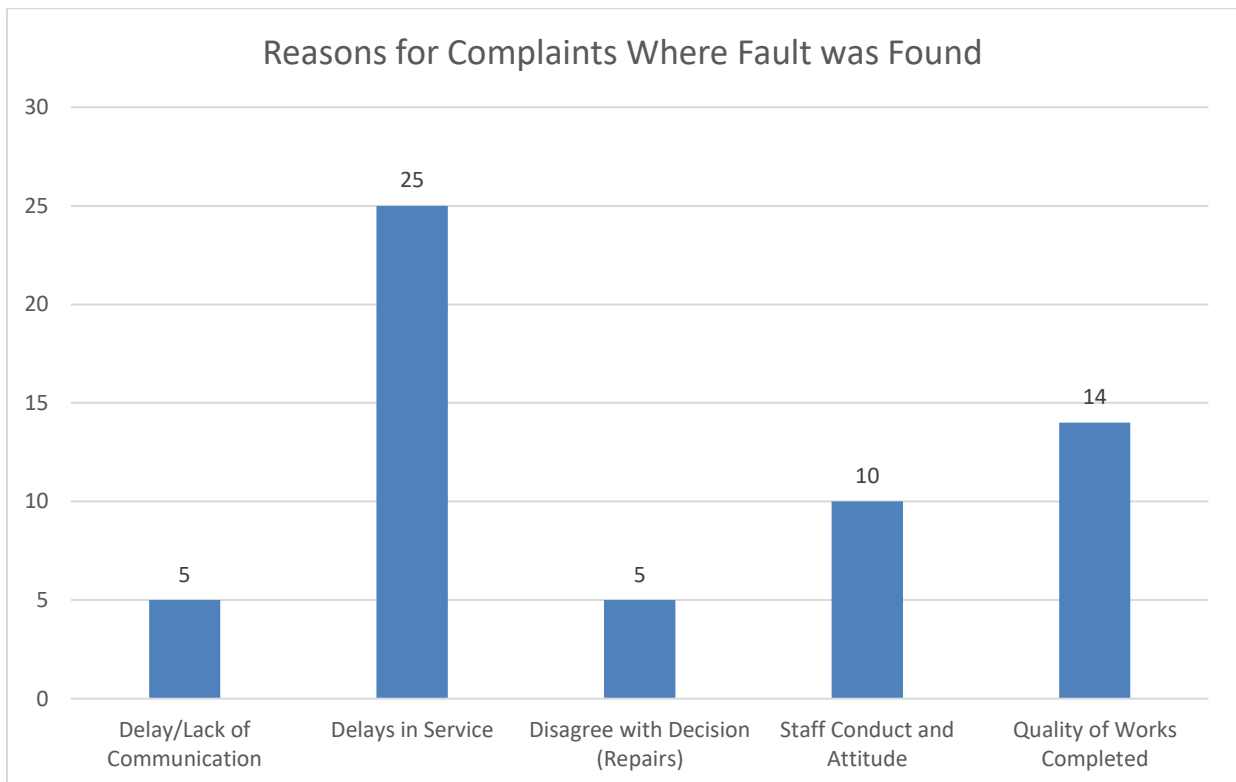
With a large increase in the number of complaints raised there has also been an increase in the number of complaints being partially or fully upheld. The positive in this is that it has allowed the service to effectively respond to concerns and rectify any issues. This can be observed in the lack of any cases being escalated to the next stage of the complaints process.

The following shows the overall breakdown of outcomes;



Partially and Fully Upheld Complaints

The following shows a breakdown of the main leading reasons for complaints received where the Council agreed that the service provided was not to the standard expected and has upheld/ partially upheld the complaint;



It should be noted that repairs are scheduled with awareness that should a more emergent issue

require immediate attention resources will be diverted to meet this. In addition, the quality of works completed is being monitored via the term maintenance contract, which accounts for any instances where this may occur. Recognising where delivery of service has not met the standards expected allows service to improve and it should also be considered that complaints in this area are relatively small in comparison to the number of enquiries and submissions received via FixMyStreet and Highways CSC.

Summary

Whilst complaint numbers remain higher than pre-pandemic levels, they should not be considered in isolation given the 18,037 enquiries/contacts were received. It should be noted that we are now beginning to see a gradual decline in the number of complaints being raised. It is positive that the highways service continues to see a high number of contacts being resolved informally to the complainant's satisfaction and a significantly lower number of cases being escalated to the next stage of the process.

** This information has been provided by the Target Cost and Performance Manager.*

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