



Highways Complaints Report

Quarter 3 2022/23

January 2023

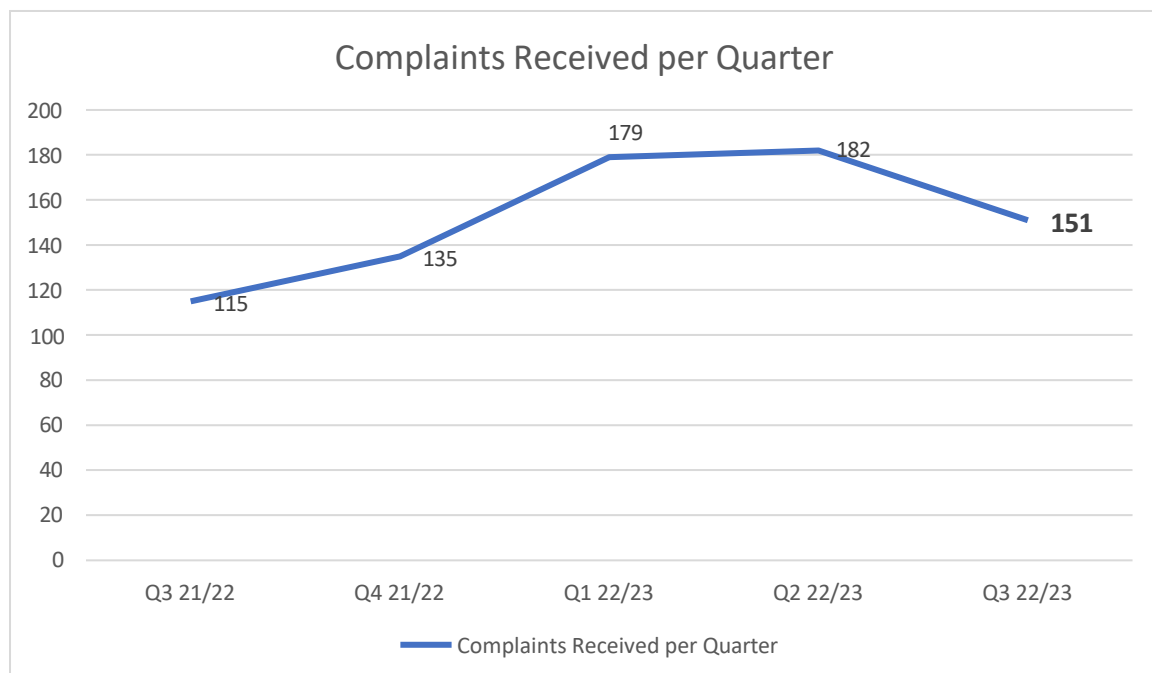
Introduction

The following report is a summary of findings from the complaints raised in the 3rd Quarter of 2022/2023 for Highways. Details on any common themes within complaints and overall figures for numbers received and the outcomes will be provided. This report will be incorporated into reports provided to the Audit Committee and Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).

In this report the figures for each department will be broken down to provide a more in-depth look at the main issues we are currently experiencing.

Q3 Overview

Lincolnshire County Council received a total of 19,010 Fix My Street submissions, Customer Service Centre (CSC) calls and CSC emails for the Highways Department. With a total of 189 contacts to the Customer Relations Team in the second quarter of 2022/2023, from individuals wishing to give feedback, report issues or complain about various services. Out of these 189 contacts, 151 entered the formal complaints process, this equates to 80% of all contacts received. The remainder were resolved informally through early resolution. The number of complaints entering the formal process has decreased by 20% this quarter in comparison to the previous quarter but has increased by 31% in comparison to the same quarter as last year.



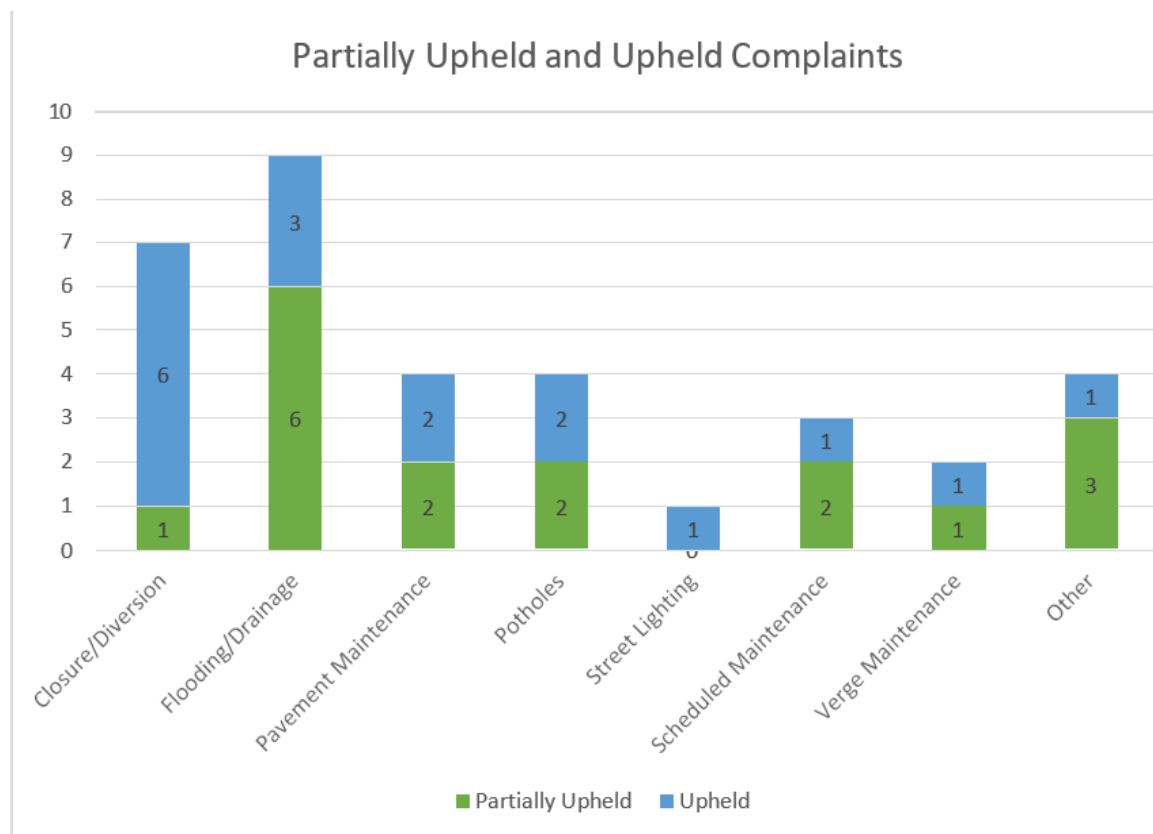
Of the 151 complaints formally investigated, 6 cases were escalated to the next stage of the complaints process and required a further investigation. 1 case was partially upheld and the remaining 5 resulted in no fault being identified. The Partially upheld case was as a result of a lack of action that was in relation to flooding, however delays were unavoidable due to the increase in rainfall.

Given the significant volume of enquiries/contacts that teams in this area received in the quarter, the receipt of 151 complaints with an escalation of 4% of cases, reflects the positive work being done on addressing the concerns raised. The positive approach in providing thorough responses and suitable remedy, where appropriate, whilst remaining in line with the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). No cases raised with LGO have resulted in further action being required from the Local Authority.

Complaints raised were in relation to the following areas:



The following shows the areas in which complaints were either fully or partially upheld, out of 151 cases, 34 were partially upheld or fully upheld.

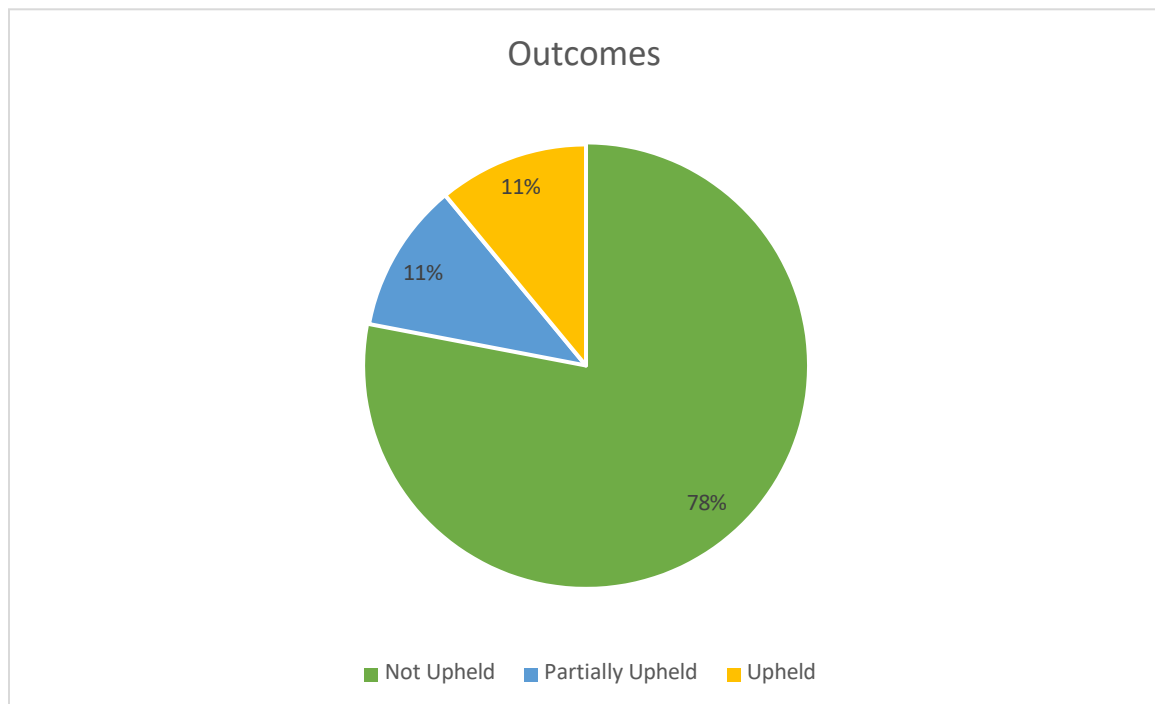


The area which received the highest number of concerns, raised by the public, was the in relation to road closures and diversions where existing signage, together with missing signs needed to be reviewed for clarity so drivers are better informed about the road closures and associated diversion routes.

We have seen a significant increase in flooding and drainage upheld/partially upheld cases in comparison to last quarter, with a range of concerns that were noted where service failed, these include complex issues causing delays in resolving blocked gullies, checks of rectification work that were not carried out which would have identified defects and communication through FMS updates.

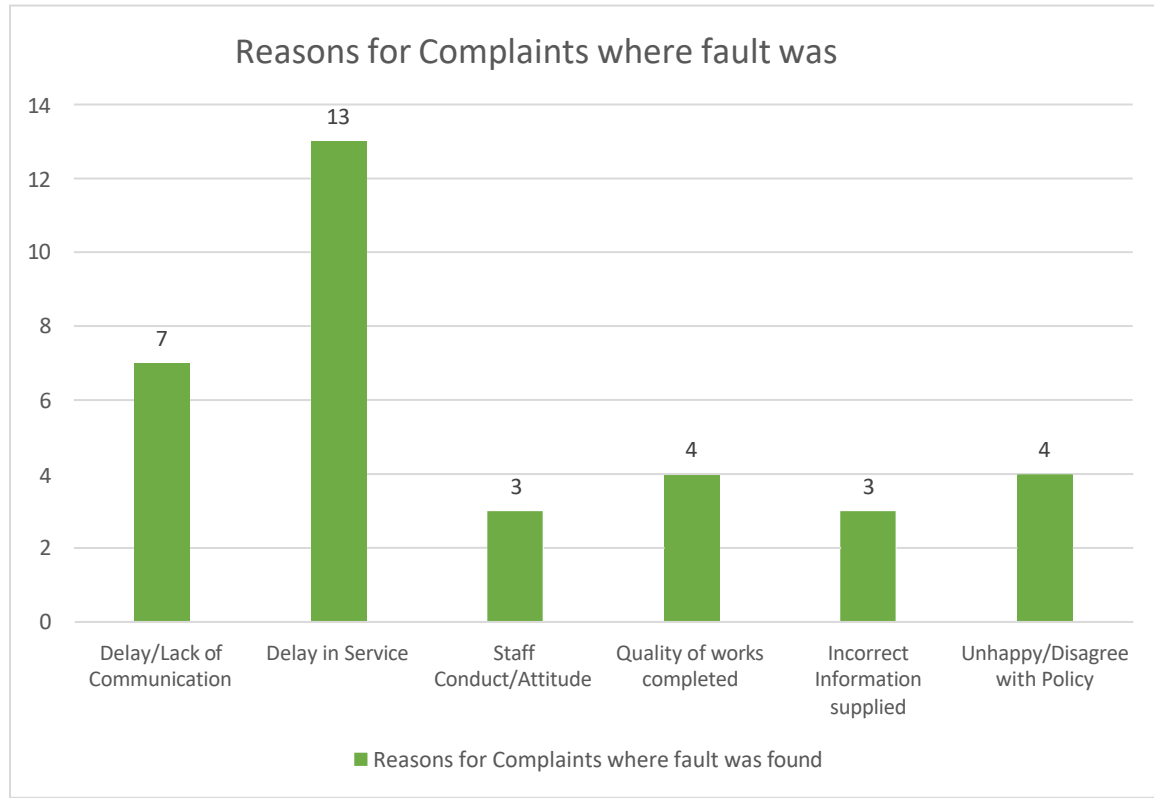
There has been a drop in concerns raised for scheduled maintenance from last quarter. The remaining cases being reviewed are due to contractors not seeking the relevant permissions from LCC and subsequently being fined for the repairs.

The following shows an overall breakdown of the outcomes of complaints. Whilst the numbers of concerns being reported are lower, the percentage breakdown of outcomes of complaints not upheld in comparison to previous quarters has remained the same as the previous quarter. 117 complaints identified no service failure.



Partially and Fully Upheld Complaints

The following shows a breakdown of the main reasons for complaints received where the Council agreed that the service provided was not to the standard expected and, as such, resulted in an outcome of upheld or partially upheld.



Summary

This is the first quarter where we have seen a decrease in formal complaints raised. It remains positive that even with a steady receipt of stage 1 complaints we have seen no increase in complaints being upheld and partially upheld. It is encouraging that 2 areas where we have seen an increase of complaints for both Parking and Street lighting from last quarter, none of the 27 cases reported any fault found with the services provided.

Street lighting has seen a number of concerns in relation to the number of lights out in the County, which for some have been deliberately switched off, otherwise they would be continuing to flash intermittently, which is not only a nuisance to residents, but also a distraction hazard to drivers when there a number of them. The team have been limited by two key factors. The first, is the availability of replacements, global supply-chain issues means that replacements have been subject to lengthy back-order delays. The second factor is the timing and availability of resource to undertake the repairs. In addition, many contracting staff also act as winter maintenance drivers, which has an impact on their availability to undertake their normal duties.

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