



Highways Complaints Report

Quarter 1

2023/24

July 2023

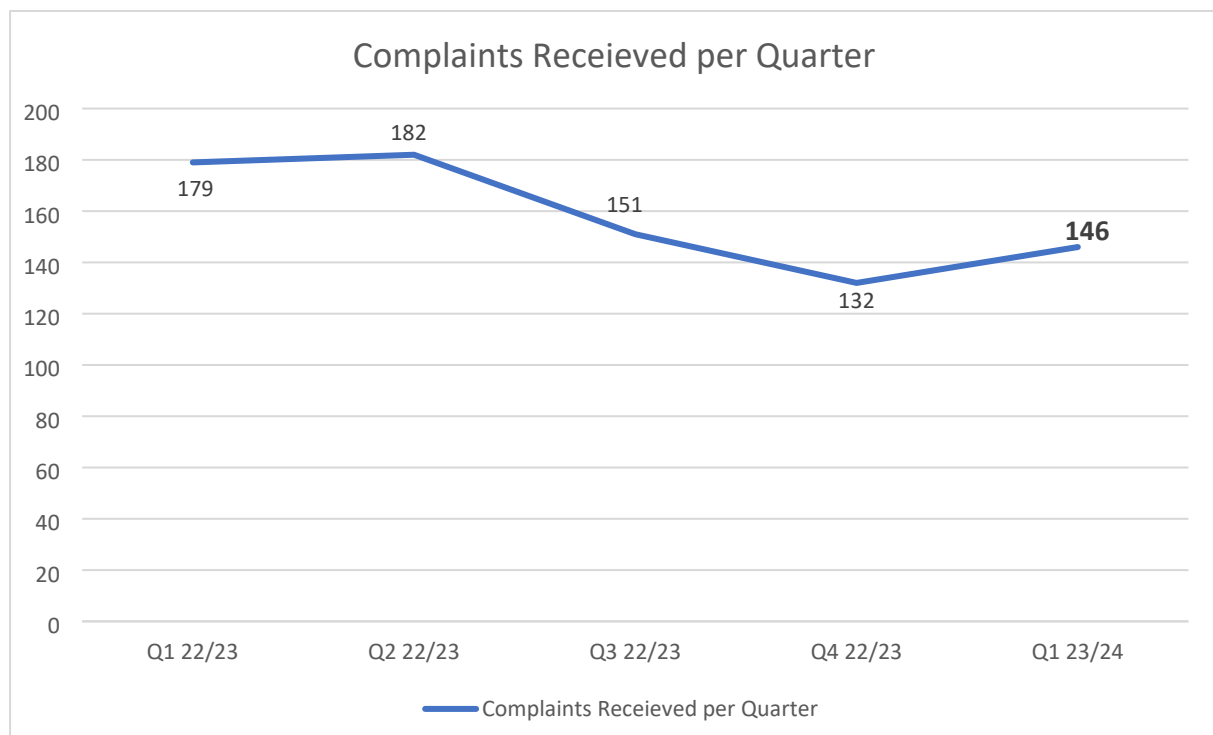
Introduction

The following report is a summary of findings from the complaints raised in the 1st Quarter of 2023/2024 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 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.

Q1 Overview

Lincolnshire County Council received a total of 16,966 contacts, with 10,030 Fix My Street reports, 5,346 CSC Calls and 1,354 CSC emails (the CSC data does not contain figures for June due to a fault in their reporting system) for the Highways Department and the Customer Relations Team receiving a further total of 233 contacts in the first quarter of 2023/2024 from individuals wishing to give feedback, report issues or complain about various services. Of these 233 contacts, 146 entered the formal complaints process, this equates to 63% of those contacts received. The remainder were resolved informally through early resolution. The number of complaints entering the formal process has increased by 11% this quarter in comparison to the previous quarter but has decreased by 18% in comparison to the same quarter of the previous year.

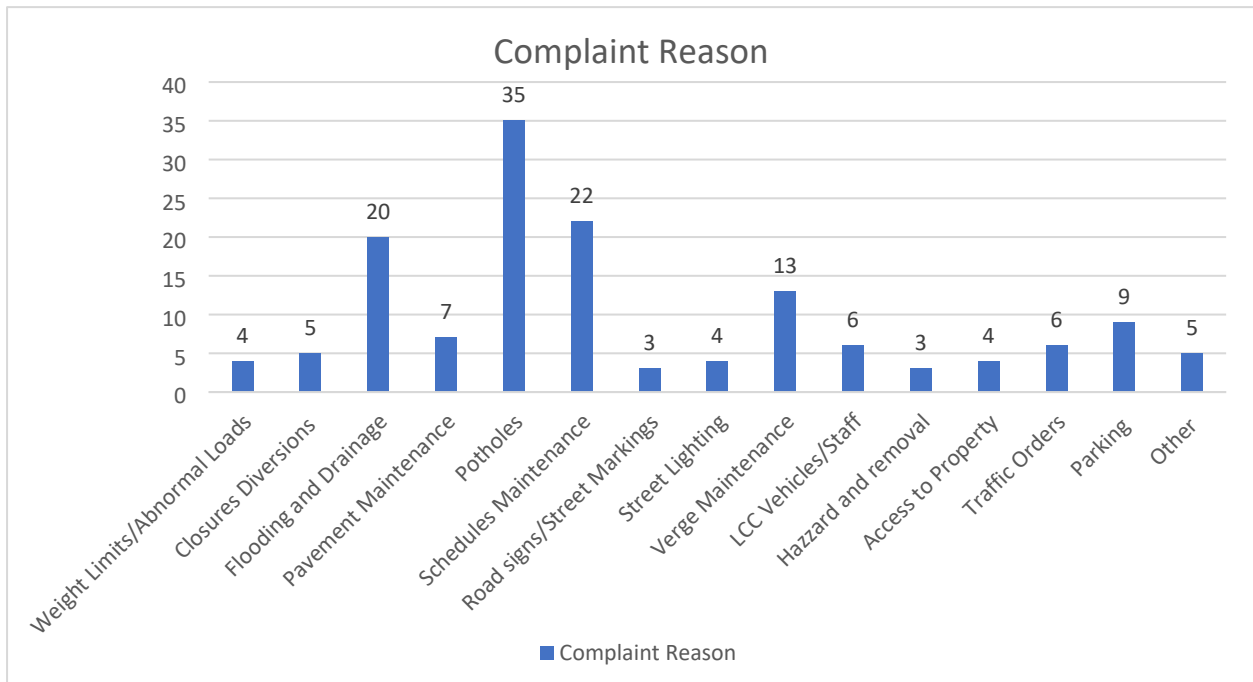


Of the 146 complaints formally investigated, 6 cases were escalated to the next stage of the complaints process and required further investigation.

4 of these escalated cases resulted in no fault being identified, 1 case remains in the investigation process and the final case was upheld as an officer failed to order new signage and raise a job for replacement at the same time as raising a job for the removal of the debris of the old sign. Given the significant volume of enquiries/contacts that teams in this area received in the quarter, the receipt of 146 complaints with an escalation of 4% of cases,

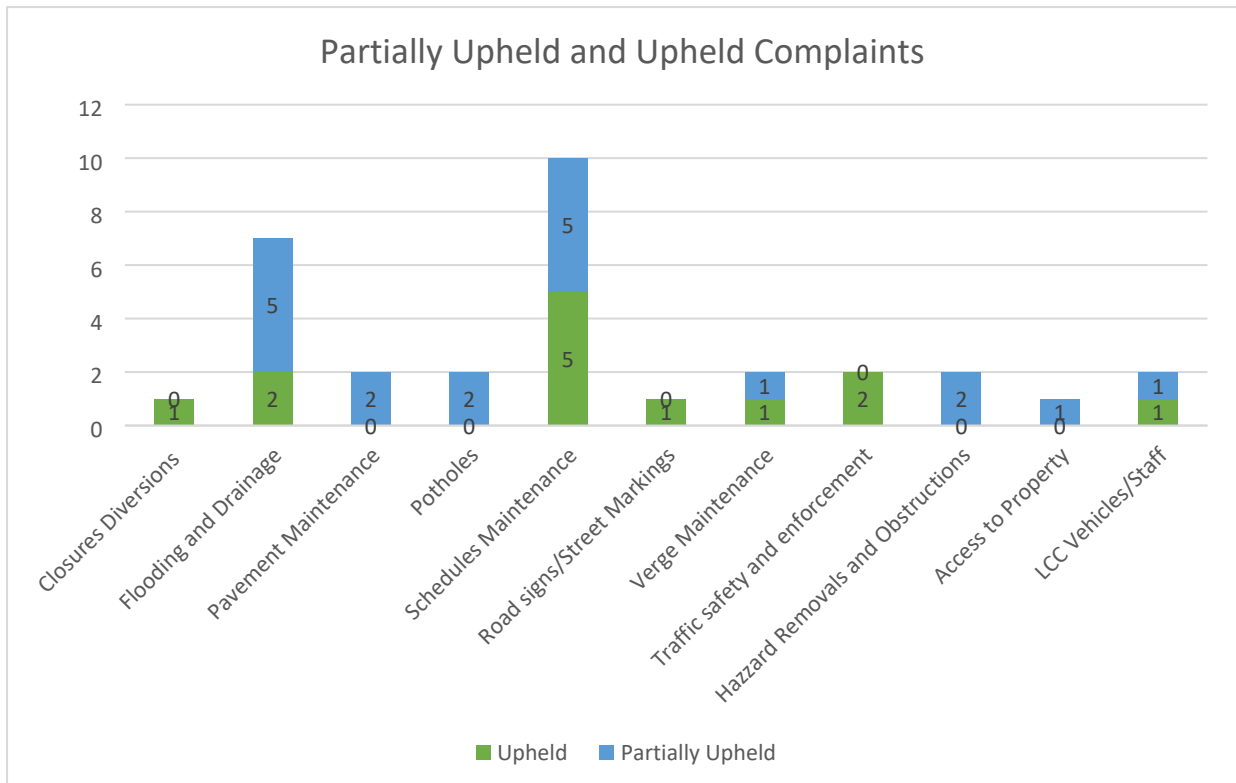
reflects the positive work being done on receipt of the addressing the concerns raised. The positive approach in providing thorough responses and suitable remedy, where appropriate, whilst remaining in line with the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) resulted in no cases raised where the LGO investigation resulted in further action being required from the Local Authority.

The below shows a breakdown of all cases received and the areas these were in relation to. There have been significant increases, with areas remaining consistent, in terms of volume per area, to previous quarter.



As evident, the highest concern from the public is the need to repair road defects. The main cause of this is the public's perception that the need to repair is greater than agreed with the intervention levels within our HIAMP.

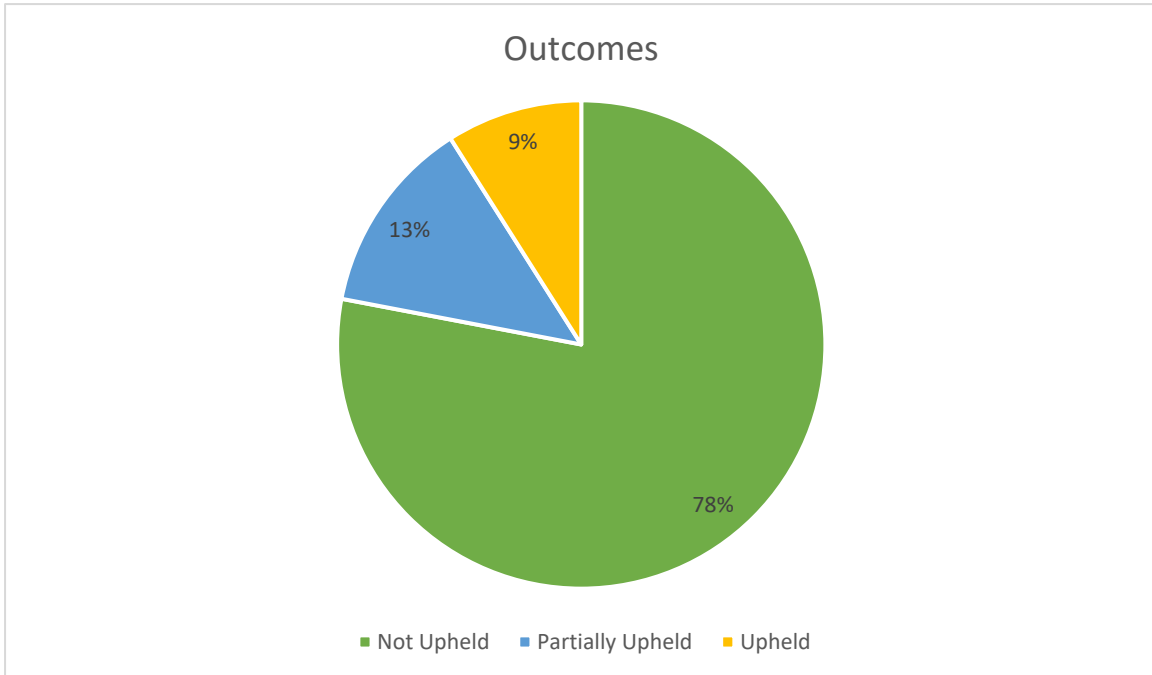
The following shows the areas in which complaints were either fully or partially upheld. Of 146 cases, 32 were partially upheld or fully upheld, this equates to 22% of all cases;



We have seen a high number of concerns relating to flooding and drainage, which resulted in a finding of either upheld or partially upheld in the quarter. 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 not satisfactorily addressed through FMS updates.

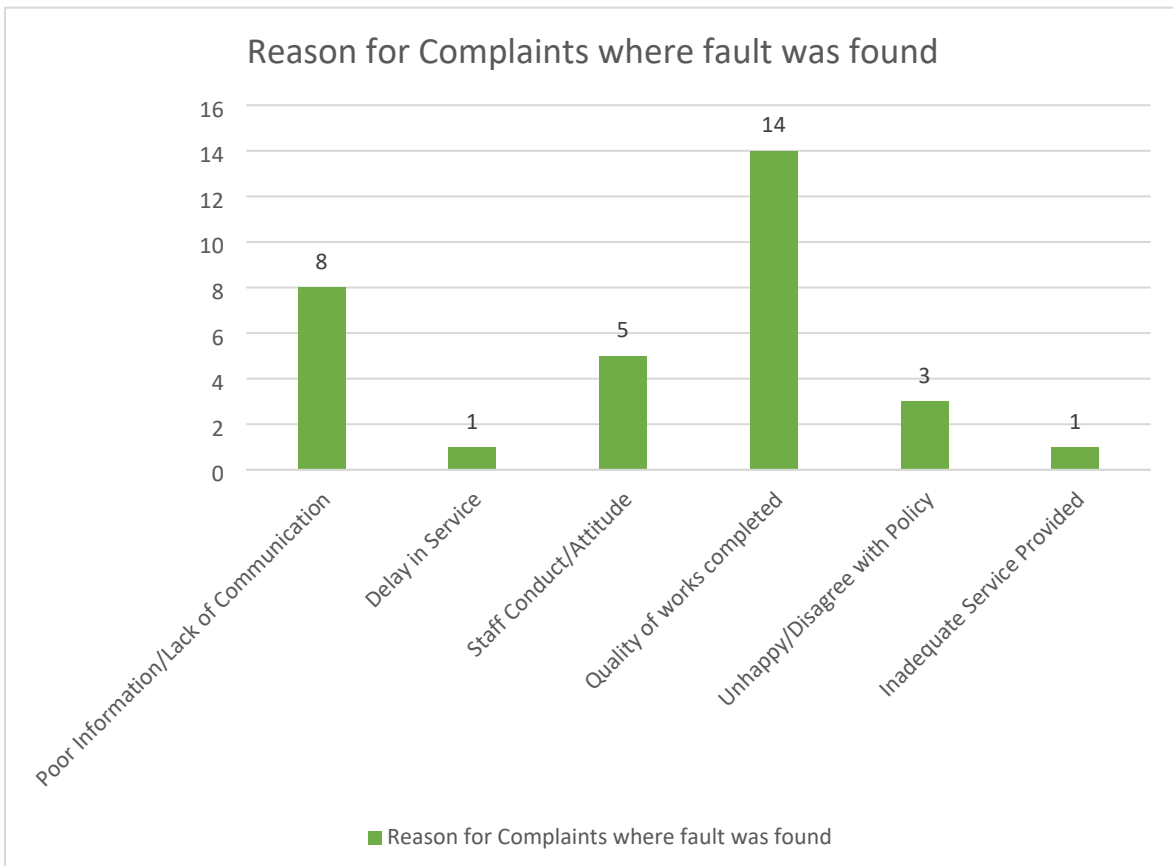
There have consistently been concerns raised for scheduled maintenance from the previous quarters, the remaining cases being reviewed are due to contractors not communicating with residents, such as failing to provide advance notice of works, particularly those which have caused disruptions.

The following shows an overall breakdown of the outcomes of complaints. It is of note that despite numbers fluctuating over the previous 3 quarters there is consistency in terms of those cases where fault is identified. This quarter has seen 114 complaints identifying no service failure which is a 2% increase from the previous quarter.



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

As mentioned previously in the report there has been an increase in the number of contacts this quarter compared to the previous quarter but there has also been a decline in comparison to the same quarter of the previous year. It also remains positive that even with a steady receipt of stage 1 complaints there has been no increase in complaints being upheld and partially upheld. It is worth noting there has been a substantial increase of contacts that have been managed as Early Resolution without the need to enter the formal complaint process.

Failure to provide an adequate service and complete works to a satisfactory level are the highest reasons where fault was found. This is evident in the example of works along Millfield Terrace, where 4 residents made contact to raise their concerns in relation to the work that took place during the scheduled repairs. Residents were not given prior warning of the scheduled maintenance, citing if they had, they would have ensured their cars were relocated.

Subject to specific issues such as those highlighted above which is currently being investigated with the responsible contractor, the positive approach to resolving complaints by the service is also reflected in the small number of complaints escalated to the next stage of the complaints process.