

**REPORT TO** : **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**AGENDA ITEM** : **9**

**TOPIC** : **ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT 2018/19**

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**DATE OF MEETING** : **20<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2019**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this annual report is to inform the Committee of the number and types of complaints that have been managed through our Complaints Handling Procedure during 2018/2019, changes that we have made as a result of the complaints that we have received, and how well complaints have been managed in line with the Complaints Handling Procedure.

## **2. SUMMARY**

- There has been a notable improvement in performance against Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman (SPSO) timescales with 95% of all complaints answered in time during the 2018/19 period compared with 89% in the 2017/18 period.
- There has been a notable increase in both Stage 1 and 2 Complaints received during 2018/19. An increase in close cleaning complaints and general customer service complaints looks to be responsible for this.
- We have seen a rise in repeat complainants.

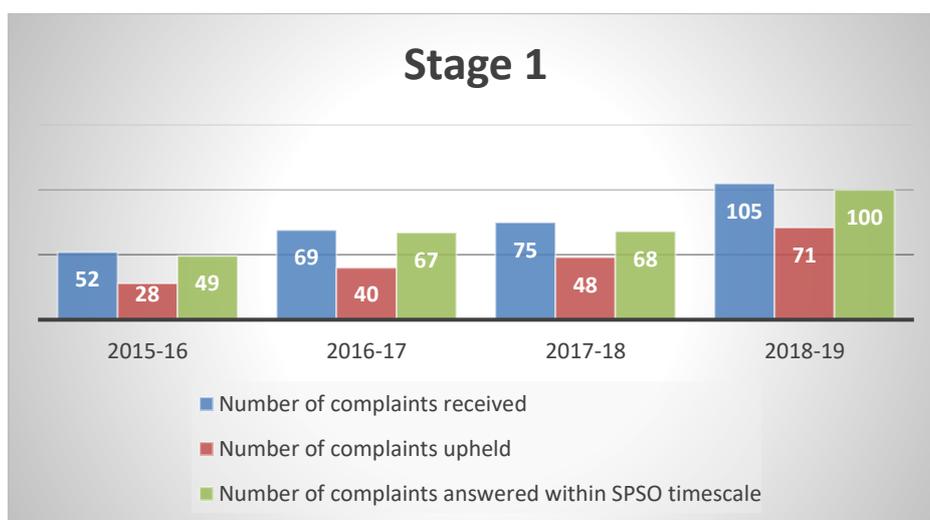
## **3. STATISTICAL INFORMATION**

New Gorbals Housing Association manages the complaints we receive in line with the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO) Model Complaints Handling Procedure. The target timescales to respond to complaints are detailed below.

- Complaints that are straightforward and can easily be dealt with by frontline staff members are categorised as Stage 1 complaints. Stage 1 complaints require a response within 5 working days.
- Complaints that are more complex, or of a serious nature, are dealt with as Stage 2. Stage 2 complaints must be investigated by a senior member of staff and require a written response within 20 working days.

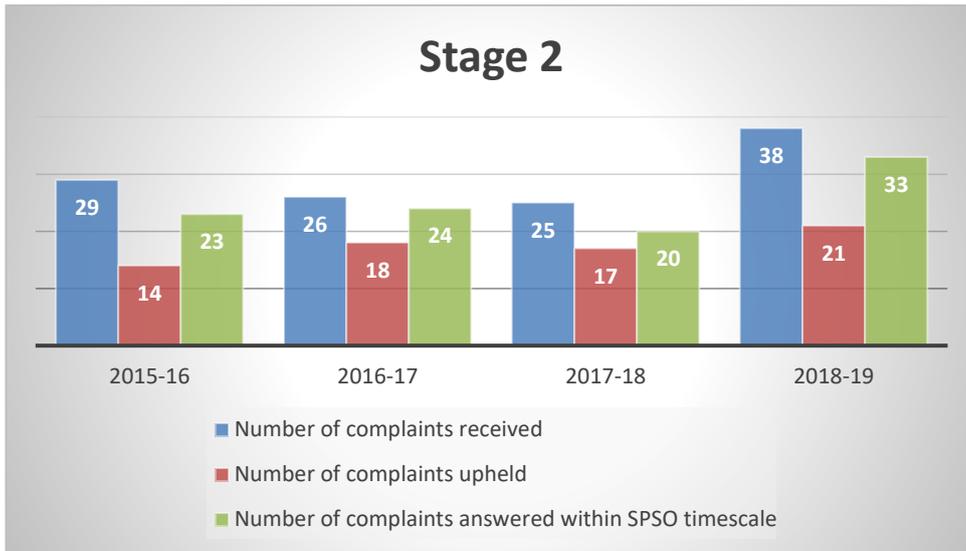
## Stage 1

- We received 105 Stage 1 complaints in 2018/19 but answered 106 as one had been carried forward from 2017/18 reporting year.
- Of the 105 Stage 1 complaints that we received in 2018/19, 100 were answered within SPSO timescales (95.24%).
- The 1 complaint that was carried over from 2017/18 was initially logged at Stage 2, and was re-categorised as a Stage 1 after it had been resolved. Due to this change to Stage 1, the complaint response was out with the SPSO timescale having been resolved in 9 working days.



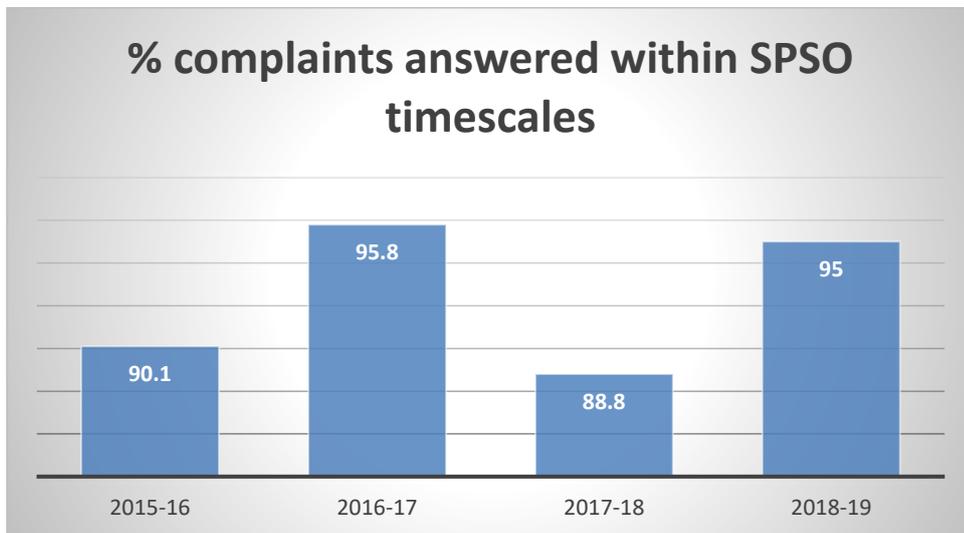
## Stage 2

- We received 38 Stage 2 complaints in 2018/19 and answered 34 of them. 2 had been carried forward from 2017/18 and 4 will be carried forward to 2019/20.
- Of the 34 Stage 2 complaints that we answered in 2018/19, 33 of them (97.05%) were answered within the SPSO timescale. This is an improvement from 2017/18 when 86.96% of Stage 2 complaints were responded to within the SPSO timescale.
- It should be noted that partially upheld complaints (where not all elements of the complaint are upheld) are reported as being upheld.
- The 2 complaints carried over from 2017/18 were both responded to within timescale and the 4 carried over to 2019/20 will be included in the statistics for the next Annual Complaints Report.



### Trends

- A comparison over the last four years shows that there has been a notable rise in both Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints this year.
- There has been a considerable rise in Stage 1 close cleaning complaints and Stage 1 general customer service complaints. At Stage 2 we have also seen a rise in general customer service complaints.



- The number of complaints responded to within SPSO timescales has risen from 2017/18 when we saw a dip in performance. We believe that increased resourcing from the Communications team has been responsible for this.

### Repeat complainers

There has been an increase in repeat complainers. The two tenants with the highest number of complaints logged this period had six and five complaints respectively.

## Equalities

There were two complaints made with equalities issues. Neither were upheld.

### 3. COMPLAINTS BY CATEGORY

Data on complaint categories for 2015/16 and 2016/17 will be provided prior to the Management Committee Meeting.

	2017/2018			2018/2019		
	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
<b>Allocations</b>	0	0	<b>0</b>	1	2	<b>3</b>
<b>Estate Management</b>	2	3	<b>5</b>	3	3	<b>6</b>
<b>Factoring</b>	3	0	<b>3</b>	1	2	<b>3</b>
<b>Finance debt recovery</b>	0	1	<b>1</b>	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>General Customer Service</b>	5	5	<b>10</b>	17	18	<b>35</b>
<b>Major Repairs and Servicing</b>	10	0	<b>10</b>	14	3	<b>17</b>
<b>New Build Developments</b>	7	4	<b>11</b>	4	0	<b>4</b>
<b>Reactive Repairs</b>	34	6	<b>40</b>	17	4	<b>21</b>
<b>Rechargeable Repairs</b>	0	0	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Tenant Rent Payment</b>	1	1	<b>2</b>	1	0	<b>1</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	1	1	<b>2</b>	6	2	<b>8</b>
<b>Close Cleaning</b>	13	2	<b>15</b>	41	4	<b>45</b>

## **Reactive Repairs**

- There has been a reduction in reactive repairs complaints from 40 in 2017/18 to 21 in 2018/19. It is believed that this is due to the Reactive Repair Team settling in.

## **Close Cleaning**

- Close cleaning was the category with the highest number of complaints. Complaints in this category increased from 15 in 2017/18 to 45 in 2018/19. In light of these complaints there has been increased inspections carried out by staff and Housing Management are working with the contractor to improve performance.
- There were 35 close cleaning complaints made in the first half of the reporting year and 10 in the second half. This reduction is likely as a consequence of Housing Management's work with the contractor.

## **General customer service**

- There has been a marked increase in both Stage 1 and Stage 2 general customer service complaints.
- Of the 18 Stage 2 complaints made in this category:
  - 11 were about staff behaviour, four of these were upheld and there were no trends identified,
  - 2 complaints were made against different contractors,
  - 5 complaints were about failure to follow procedures, no trends were identified.
- Of the 17 Stage 1 complaints made in this category:
  - 11 were about the behaviour of a contractor, of these 10 were related to the district heating contract and 9 of them were upheld,
  - 3 were about staff behaviour and 3 were failure to follow procedure.
- Two tenants made three general customer service complaints each this year.

## **4. LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS**

The following action plan highlights the progress that has been made on actions that were identified in 2017/18 (completed tasks in green and ongoing tasks in orange). Required tasks from 2018/19 period are also listed. Progress will be reported on to the Management Committee in October 2019.

## Complaints Action Plan

Action	Responsible Section	Due	Status
Work with senior staff members to develop improved processes for learning from complaints and evaluating changes made.	Communications	To be completed by December 2019.	Ongoing
Staff training on Complaints Handling Procedure and Cirrus System.	Communications	Ongoing for new staff members. Refresher training offered to all staff.	Refresher training completed
Bespoke training on Complaints Handling for Maintenance team.	Communications	August 2018	Completed
Update to Housing Management software identified to improve note taking.	Housing Management	Instruction sent to all staff with interim measure. Implementation date to be confirmed.	June completion (with CRM launch)
Annual Complaints Bulletin to be developed.	Communications		Completed
A review of the Gas Safety Procedure to be carried out.	Maintenance	New procedure agreed in September 2017 and implemented.	Completed
A procedure for how decant/alternative facilities are discussed and recorded for major repairs.	Maintenance	Completion date June 2018.	Completed (PC)
Nordan Windows to investigate and report on a colour change to external cladding at Oregon Street.	Maintenance		Ongoing
Move to Castleton as our new complaints management system.	Communications	Estimated August 2019.	Ongoing

Train all staff on new complaints management system.	Communications	December 2019	
Closer monitoring of close cleaning complaints	Housing Management	Ongoing	
Training for Housing Management staff on how to deal with situations that involve domestic violence	Housing Management	December 2019	
Training for staff on how to deal with confrontational situations when on the estate.	Maintenance	December 2019	
Review procedures for receiving and receipting applications forms	Admin and Finance	December 2019	
Staff training on mental health	Various	March 2020	
Policy to address difficult behaviour/vexatious complainants	Communications	August 2019	

## 5. CONCLUSION

We continue to learn from and make improvements to our service as a result of the Complaints Handling Procedure.

Committee are requested to note the content of this report and that we will continue to monitor timescales closely to ensure that we are managing complaints in line with the SPSO timescales.