



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council
Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

Annual Complaints Monitoring Report

April 2025 – March 2026

Introduction

The model Complaints Handling Procedure for Local Authorities in Northern Ireland requires regular reports to be produced for the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council (the Council) Leadership Team, Elected Members, the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO), and the wider public.

The Council complaints handling procedure, modelled on the NIPSO procedure, ensures that the Council:

- complies with the statutory requirements established by the Public Services Ombudsman Act (NI) 2016;
- follows a standard approach to managing complaints across the public sector;
- makes it easier for members of the public to complain;
- gives staff and customers confidence in complaints handling;
- promotes a culture of learning from complaints; and
- encourages staff to make the best use of lessons learned from complaints.

Complaints Handling Procedure

The Council's definition of a complaint is **'An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's action or lack of action, or about the standard of a service provided by or on behalf of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council '**.

All complaints received are managed under a 2 stage complaints procedure:

Stage 1: **Frontline stage** provides an opportunity to resolve or respond to complaints quickly and effectively and to consider immediate actions to resolve the complaint. A response should be issued within 5 working days.

Stage 2: **Investigation stage** requires a full and detailed investigation for usually more complex or serious issues. A response should be issued within 20 working days.

A person can make a complaint verbally, including face-to-face and by telephone, and in writing (letter or email) or via the [online form](#).

Overview

This report covers complaints received by the Council between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026.

This report includes data on key complaint handling indicators and shows how the Council has used complaints to improve its services.

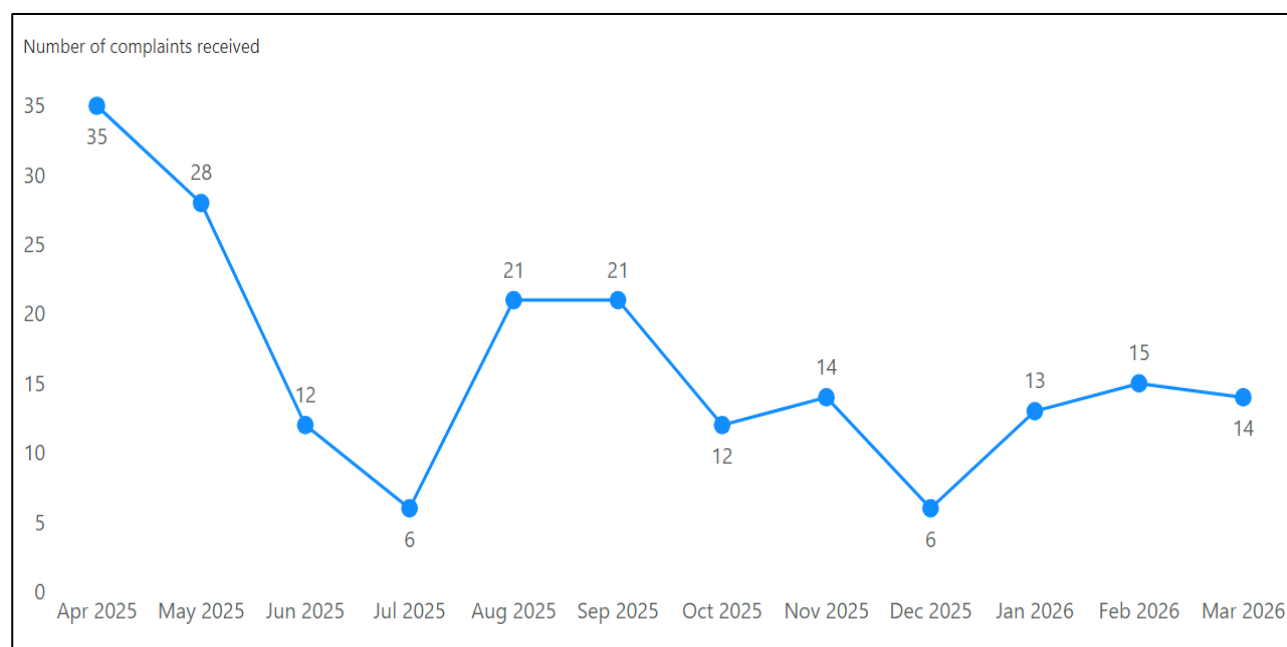
The total number of complaints received includes the total number of complaints received at Stage 1 and those which were escalated to Stage 2.

In 2025/2026, the Council received 197 complaints. 166 were resolved at Stage 1, and the remaining 31 were escalated to Stage 2.

Service Area	Areas of Complaint	No of complaints
Waste Management	Refuse Collections, Civic Amenity Sites, Street Cleansing, Public Conveniences	138
Regulatory Services	Dog Control, Animal Welfare, Environmental Health, Licensing, Building Control	18
Place Shaping & Regeneration	Planning, Enforcement	15
Community Services	Community Centres, PCSP, Community, Good Relations	10
Parks, Estates & Property	Play parks, Grounds, Off street car parking, Cemeteries, Property, Forest parks	8
Wellbeing & Cultural Services	Leisure Centres, SAC, Geopark	6
Cross Directorate	Planning and Building Control issues, ATI response not meeting standards	2

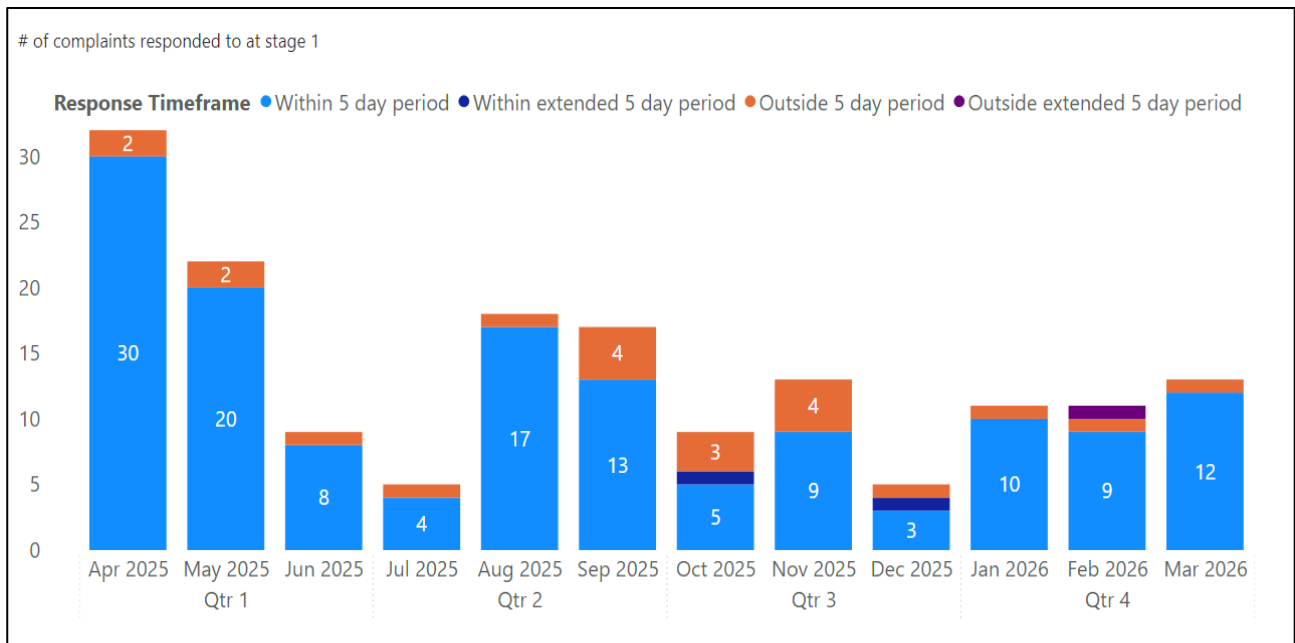
Complaint performance statistics

No of complaints received by Council in 2025/26



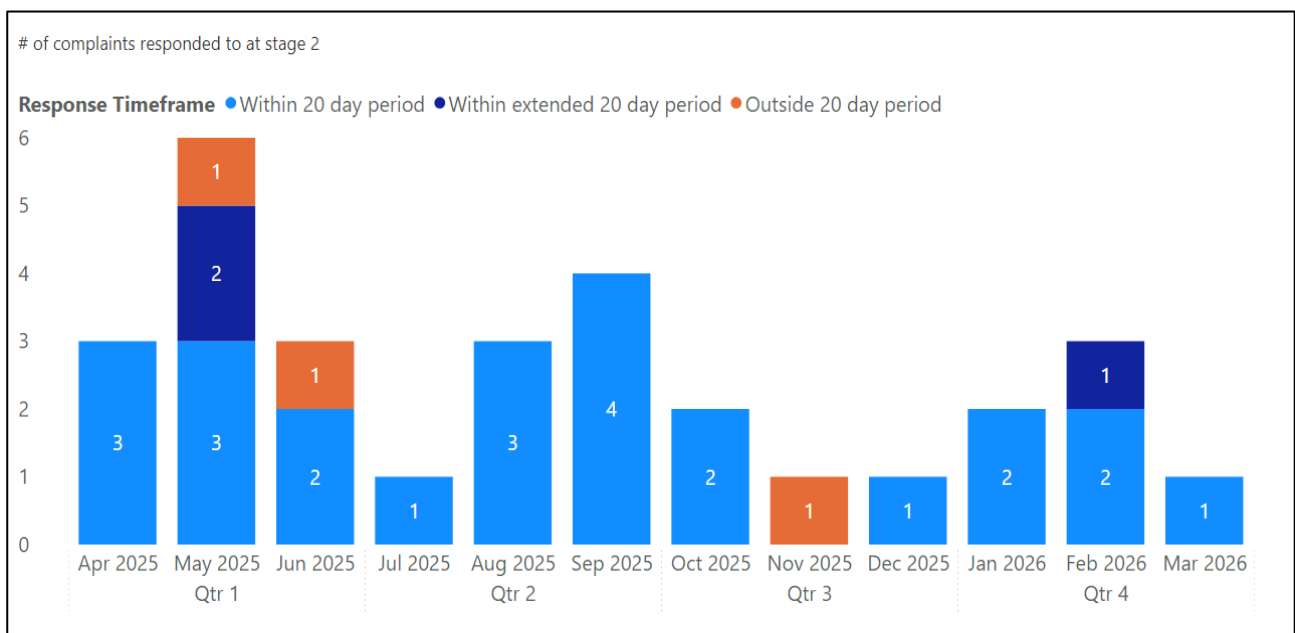
The number of complaints received throughout the year has varied each month with a high of 35 received in April 2025 and a low of 6 received in July 2025 and December 2025. Variations across the year may reflect seasonal factors, including holiday periods.

No of Stage 1 complaints closed within 5 days and extended 5 days



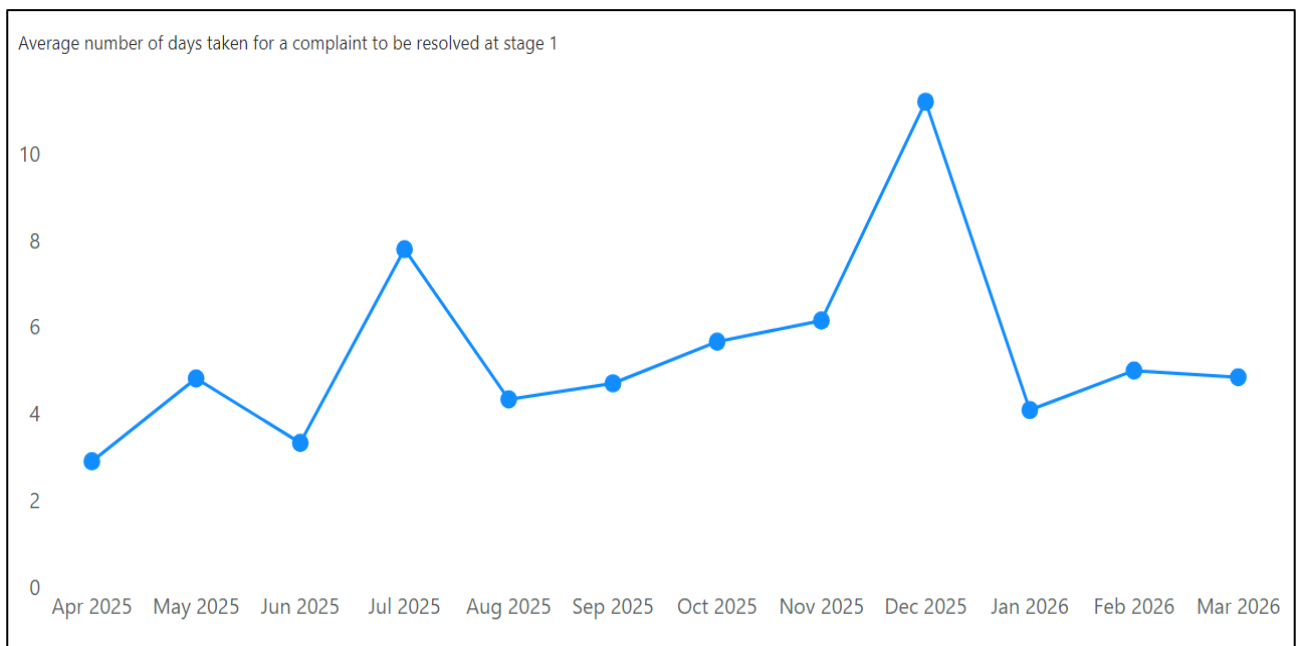
The large majority (86%) of Stage 1 complaints were responded to within the 5 working days period or the requested extension period. A smaller number of complaints (14%) were responded to outside of the 5 working days period and an extension was not requested. There is 1 complaint still live at Stage 1 meaning it is outside of the 5 working day period and the extension period.

No of Stage 2 complaints closed within 20 days and extended 20 days



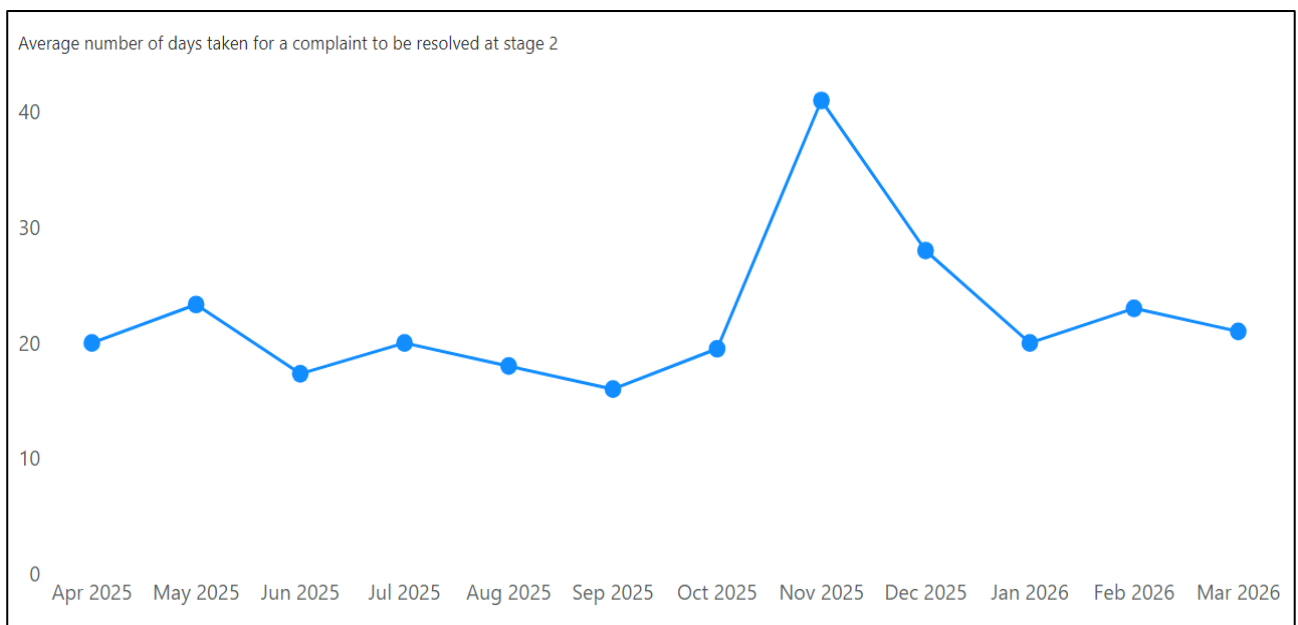
87% of Stage 2 complaints were responded to within the 20 working days period or the requested extension period. Three complaints were responded to outside of the 20 working days period and an extension was not requested. There is one complaint still live at Stage 2 meaning it is outside of the 20 working day period and the extension period.

Average no of days taken to close a Stage 1 complaint



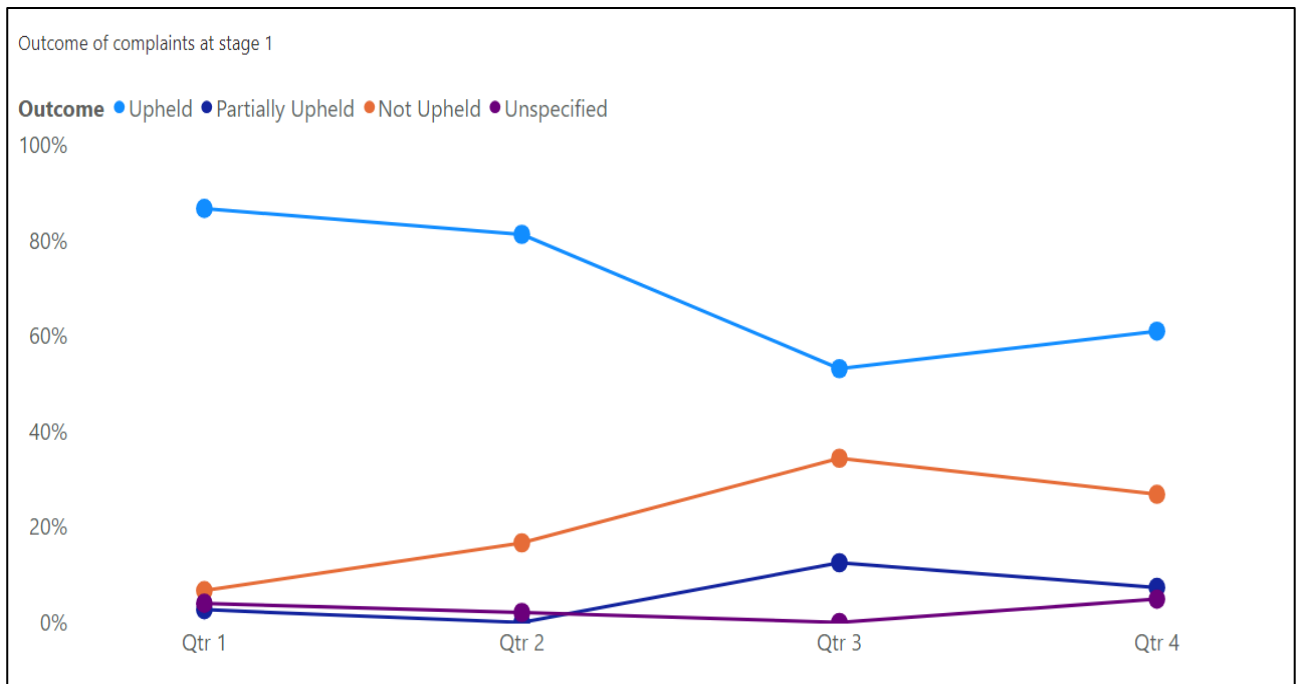
The average number of days to respond to a Stage 1 complaint varies with the lowest being 2.9 days. Overall the Council has an average response rate of 5.4 days for a Stage 1 complaint.

Average no of days taken to close a Stage 2 complaint



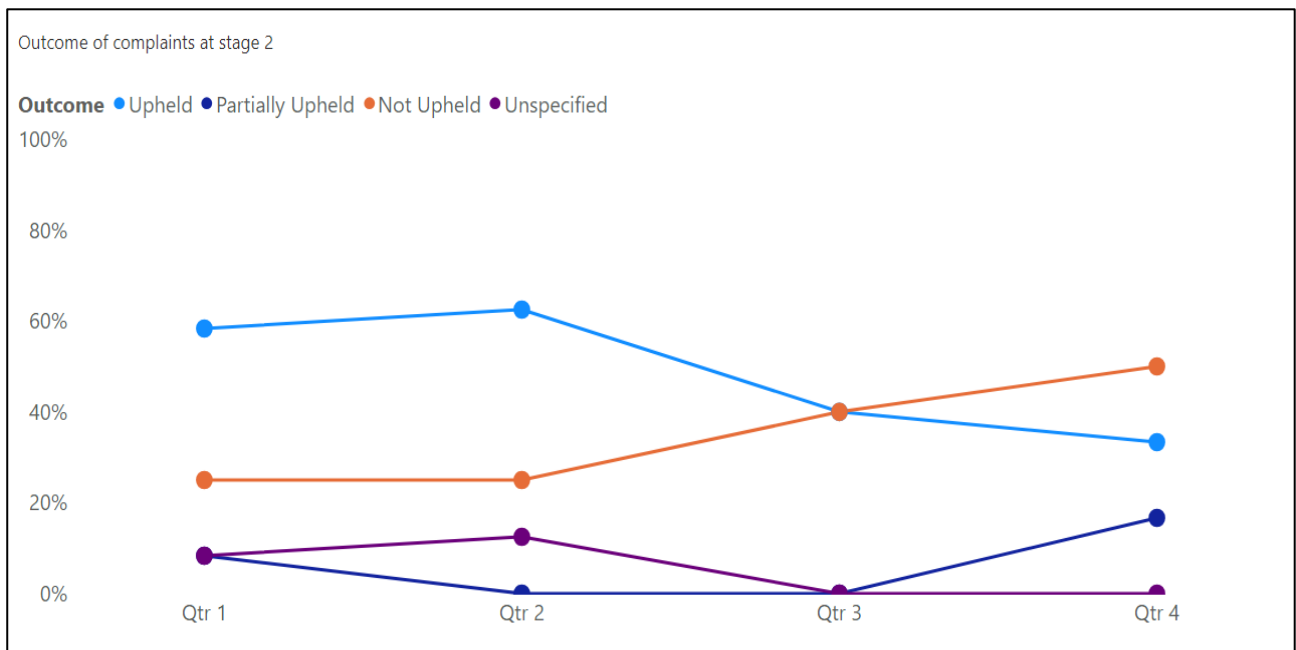
The average response rate to a Stage 2 complaint varies from 16 days to 41 days with an average for the year of 22.3 days.

% of complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld at Stage 1



The majority of complaints are upheld/partially upheld at Stage 1.

% of complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld at Stage 2



A slightly smaller proportion of complaints at Stage 2 are upheld by the Council.

Complaint trends

For benchmarking purposes, it is helpful to show the number of complaints received as a percentage of the population.

	2025/2026
Council population	116,812 ¹
Total complaints received	197
% of population	0.17%

	2024/25	2025/26
No of complaints received	149	197
% of population	0.13%	0.17%
Resolved at Stage 1	135	166
Escalated to Stage 2	14	31
% of Stage 1 complaints closed within 5 days and extended 5 days	82%	86%
% of Stage 2 complaints closed within 20 days and extended 20 days	64%	87%
Average no of days taken to close a Stage 1 complaint	5.6	5.4
Average no of days taken to close a Stage 2 complaint	20.5	22.3
Complaints received by NIPSO	3	10
Complaints Upheld by NIPSO	0	0

¹ 2021 Census <https://explore.nisra.gov.uk/area-explorer-2021/N09000006/>

Actions taken/to be taken and Lessons learned

An individual complained that:	We listened; we acted:
When visiting a premises for inspection the Council officer did not identify themselves and discussed the visit openly in front of customers.	Staff were reminded to identify themselves when visiting premises.
Their brown food caddie had not been collected.	The Council is progressing a business case to harmonise and improve food and garden waste collections across the District, contributing to better recycling and composting outcomes.
There was racist graffiti at a play park.	The incident was reported to the PSNI, the area was quickly closed off so the graffiti could not be seen and was then removed.
Their recycling bin was not emptied	Explained the recycling bin contained a nappy and they should advise the Council when it has been removed.
They were not allowed to enter a viewing gallery while their child was taking part in a gymnastics class.	New arrangements were introduced to allow parents to watch their child in gymnastics class.
'Bounce and Play' sessions are not included in membership.	Communication to customers will be improved to ensure expectations are clearly understood

Heads of Service and Managers review complaints that are upheld or partially upheld to consider if a change is required to prevent the issue occurring again.

Remedies may include:

- Training and supporting staff where Council policy or procedures have not been followed;
- Putting things right where they have gone wrong, admitting where a mistake has been made; and
- Reviewing current policy or procedures to amend and improve Council services.

Complaints considered by NIPSO

Once a complaint has been dealt with at Stage 2 by the Council, if the complainant remains dissatisfied, they can contact the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman to investigate their complaint. NIPSO can investigate complaints about public service

providers in Northern Ireland. NIPSO publishes its findings on its website at <https://www.nipso.org.uk/investigations>

NIPSO received 10 complaints about the Council during 2025/2026. The complaints received were regarding the planning service, environmental health service, and a tender procedure. 9 of the 10 complaints were either not within NIPSO's remit to investigate, premature where the complainant had not exhausted the Council's internal complaints procedure, or further investigation was not required. NIPSO investigated one complaint which was not upheld.