

# Annual SPSO, PSC Customer Satisfaction Survey Results and Analysis 2024-25

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## 1. Introduction

This report provides an overview of the feedback gathered from customers of SPSO's Public Service Complaints (PSC) service during 2024/25. We measure our service delivery against SPSO's service standards [Our customer service standards | SPSO](#)

It covers:

- Response rates.
- Satisfaction from members of the public who received a decision in all complaints considered and closed post triage and early decision [How we handle complaints | SPSO](#)
- Plans for improvement generated from feedback.

The main findings over the past year are listed below:

- 1.1** Complainants clearly value being kept informed. Where we do this well, complainants respond positively in terms of their satisfaction. Several positive comments were received regarding regular updates and telephone contact. There were also positive comments noting appreciation of the respectful and professional communication delivered throughout the complainant's journey.

Where we fall short of our commitments in relation to keeping complainants informed and communicating effectively, complainants feel extremely dissatisfied. There has been a focus on this at 1:1 meetings to ensure that updates are happening as expected and that we are providing complainants with a consistent service in this regard.

**1.2** Satisfaction levels in time taken to consider complaints is low. Whilst the number of complaints received continue to increase and available resourcing remains static it is difficult to overcome this challenge. Nevertheless we have made significant progress in reducing the number of cases in the unallocated pool and case age on allocation and we will continue to focus on this going forwards.

**1.3** There have been a number of positive comments from complainants relating to our website/online complaint forms:

*Website was easy.*

*Easy to access the forms and information.*

*The initial form was easy to complete.*

*Online format relatively simple to complete.*

*The online system was easy to understand and accessible.*

**1.4** In the early part of the year, there were some negative responses in relation to Q7 on the survey form: 'I received a clear explanation of the reasons for the SPSO's decision(s) on my complaint.' However, we consider that the statement of reasons expansion to casework at the preliminary investigation stage will assist us in improving the clarity of our decisions.

## 2. Distribution and Returns

The SPSO's satisfaction survey is issued with final decision statement of reasons, letters and investigation reports at preliminary investigation and investigation stages.

The distribution method is email, complainants can request a paper copy of the survey if required.

### 2.1 Annual Total

Total no. of surveys issued	1677
Total no. of surveys completed	156
Response rate %	9%

We have narrowly missed our target response rate of 10% or over. During 2025/26 when resourcing is available, we will pilot issuing a reminder to complainants to complete the survey if they did not do so when they received their complaint response.

## 3. Quantitative and Qualitative Survey Results

- Quarter 1 : [Quarter 1](#)
- Quarter 2 : [Quarter 2](#)
- Quarter 3 : [Quarter 3](#)
- Quarter 4 : [Quarter 4 Survey Monkey](#) and [Quarter 4 MS Forms](#)

## 4. Analysis of Customer Satisfaction Feedback

Feedback has been analysed by SPSO's Head of Investigations, PSC and PSC Operational Managers and shared with SPSO's Leadership Team, Service Improvement Forum and all SPSO PSC colleagues.

#### 4.1 Analysis of feedback

Notable points for <b>improvement</b>	Relevant service standard(s)	Management response/action/recommendation. Date of any action taken.
<p>1. Low level of satisfaction (quantitative and qualitative) in terms of time taken to consider complaints.</p>	Timeliness	<p>During 2024/25 complainants may have experienced a delay in their complaint being allocated of anything between 12 to 16 weeks. Although this delay is a significant decrease from previous years, it is clear that it leads to dissatisfaction. Whilst the number of complaints received continue to increase and available resourcing remains static it is difficult to overcome this challenge. SPSO are committed to continuing to reduce this delay. The PSC management team monitor the age profile of cases and the Unallocated Pool Project has made significant progress in terms of reducing the number and age of unallocated cases.</p> <p>A number of comments in relation to timeliness appeared to suggest that complainants expected a decision at the point of allocation. In response we improved the acknowledgement template for unallocated cases and priority allocations to make it</p>

		clearer that our consideration of the complaint starts at the point of allocation. (August 2024)
<p>2. Complainants clearly value being kept informed. Where we do this well, complainants respond positively in terms of their satisfaction (see below). Where we fall short of our commitments to keep complainants informed and communicate effectively, complainants can feel extremely dissatisfied.</p> <p>A number of negative comments were received expressing dissatisfaction:</p> <p><i>Could have done better if provided clear and consistent communication throughout without me needing to chase up the handler multiple times.</i></p>	Keeping you informed.	<p>All colleagues have been reminded of SPSO's service standards which state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will keep you informed and tell you what needs to happen at each stage.</li> <li>• We will always tell you who to contact if you have any questions.</li> </ul> <p>December 2024 – colleagues were advised Managers would be focusing on ensuring regular updates were being delivered and that complainants were being provided a consistent service at 1:1 meetings.</p>

<p><i>There was no update as to what was happening with the case and in the end I had to chase the officer.</i></p> <p><i>Could have emailed more frequently.</i></p> <p><i>There were long periods of time when we received no update at all.</i></p>		
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<p>3. We have noted fairly low statistical satisfaction to the question:</p> <p><i>I received a clear explanation of the reasons for the SPSO's decision(s) on my complaint.</i></p>	Clarity	<p>A new way of writing decisions has been introduced at the preliminary investigation stage which will assist us in improving the clarity of our decisions.</p> <p>Instead of lengthy decision letters, we now summarise our decision in a 'statement of reasons.' This is a more efficient way of working and ensures our decisions are easier to understand.</p> <p>PSC managers will monitor the effect of this during 2025/26.</p>
<p>A suggestion was received that it could be 'confusing knowing how a complaint was progressing and a flow chart would be good to illustrate'.</p>	Keeping you informed	<p>A flowchart has been incorporated into a new leaflet and website guidance which is issued with all new complaint acknowledgements and referenced throughout the complainants journey:</p> <p><a href="#">How the SPSO handles your complaint</a></p> <p>Launched : Quarter 3 2024/25.</p>
<p>One comment alerted us to a reasonable adjustment request that had not been adhered</p>	Accessibility	<p>We are committed to making reasonable adjustments to ensure all service users can access our service effectively, in accordance with our duties under the Equality Act 2010.</p>

to. The complainant had requested hard copy communication and was sent an email.		Action: colleagues were alerted to this oversight and reminded of the importance of checking and adhering to agreed adjustment requests.
<p>We decided to slightly alter the wording of the <i>Transparency</i> question in the survey.</p> <p>From: SPSO staff explained to me how my complaint would be handled.</p> <p>To: SPSO explained to me how my complaint would be handled.</p>	Transparency	<p>This is in recognition that our website and many comms materials also play a role in explaining how a complaint is handled.</p> <p>Alteration made December 2024.</p>
Notable points of <b>satisfaction</b>	Relevant service standard(s)	<p>Management response/action/recommendation.</p> <p>Date of any action taken.</p>
<p>Level of satisfaction (quantitative and qualitative) in the ease of submitting a complaint to the SPSO.</p> <p>A selection of positive comments received:</p>	Accessibility	<p>We welcome this positive feedback and note that the majority of complainants surveyed had submitted their complaints using SPSO's online complaint form.</p> <p>We developed and launched an online subject specific form in January 2024, for complaints about health services. The form is</p>



<p><i>Website was easy.</i></p> <p><i>Easy to access the forms and information.</i></p> <p><i>The initial form was easy to complete.</i></p> <p><i>I found the service easy to access.</i></p> <p><i>The online system was easy to understand and accessible.</i></p>		<p>designed to gather specific information related to complaints about health and improves the capture of quality data.</p> <p>After monitoring the success of the online health form we also developed a printed copy to ensure no complainants are digitally excluded.</p> <p>We recognise that people who approach our service, particularly with health complaints, may have experienced or be experiencing trauma. Having to repeatedly explain their complaint can be upsetting. Obtaining key information during the complaint submission helps to reduce the risk of this and demonstrates our commitment to trauma informed practice.</p> <p>Our website was also expanded during 2024/25 to include a complaint checker, designed to help users decide if their complaint is ready to be submitted to the SPSO. It also explains the possible outcomes that the SPSO may be able to achieve. Website analytics demonstrate that this function is being well used. We have also been promoting this function in email responses via our enquiries inbox.</p>
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<p>Complainants clearly value being kept informed. Where we do this well, complainants respond positively in terms of their satisfaction. Where we fall short of our commitments to keeping complainants informed and communicating effectively, complainants can feel extremely dissatisfied.</p> <p>Selection of appreciative comments:</p> <p><i>I always knew where we were in the process and I was always informed of what that stage entailed.</i></p> <p><i>Good to get dates of when to expect the next stage to be done.</i></p> <p><i>Was kept in touch by email and phone.</i></p> <p><i>Updated at every stage.</i></p> <p><i>Regular and clear updates.</i></p>	<p>Keeping you informed.</p>	<p>Positive comments received have been regularly shared with PSC colleagues, providing a useful guide on what they are doing well and what they may be able to do to improve the experience of customers, creating a sense of accountability and ownership over regular complaint updates.</p>
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<p>Several positive comments were received noting appreciation of the respectful and professional communication delivered throughout the complainants journey.</p> <p>Demonstrating commitment to the <i>Dignity and Respect</i> service standard as well as our <i>People Centred</i> value.</p>	<p>Respect and Dignity</p>	<p>A selection of the feedback received:</p> <p><i>Was addressed politely in correspondence.</i></p> <p><i>Always very open and professional, treated like a human.</i></p> <p><i>Staff member was very pleasant.</i></p> <p><i>Person on phone was very patient and clear.</i></p> <p><i>Empathy and professionalism was used.</i></p> <p><i>The lady who dealt with my complaint was so friendly and helpful and this allowed me to pursue my complaint with confidence.</i></p> <p><i>Very kind, this made me feel well supported.</i></p> <p><i>Communication was sensitive and respectful.</i></p> <p>Comments were shared with PSC colleagues throughout the year.</p>
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## 5. Conclusion

The process of gathering and analysing satisfaction feedback from complainants who have used our service over the year has been valuable. We have gained insight into complainants' needs and preferences and where possible we have used feedback to make improvements to our service.

We have narrowly missed our target response rate this year and during 2025/26 when resourcing is available, we will take action in order to try to increase the number of responses.

We recognise that we are not always able to achieve the outcome(s) complainants are seeking as a resolution to their complaint and that this can result in dissatisfaction being expressed in survey feedback.

As demonstrated in the management response to notable points for improvement (4.1), feedback has led to developments which support our commitments across various SPSO service standards and our organisational value to continually learn and improve [SPSO's Vision and Values | SPSO](#).

Positive feedback received has highlighted what we are doing well and can build upon. It is clear that considerate communication is valued. We are pleased that we have received many positive responses endorsing our dedication to treating complainants with courtesy, respect and dignity.

Over the last few years we have seen a channel shift in how complaints are submitted to SPSO, with many more received via our online complaint form. Accessibility is always at the forefront of our mind when designing and delivering our service.

Positive comments suggest that investment and developments of our website guidance and online complaint forms have been well received by complainants.

We are also committed to ensuring key online information is available in printed format and that no service users are digitally excluded.

In terms of timeliness, we are also committed to reducing the unallocated pool and age of case on allocation. Nevertheless we are mindful that this will be dependant on resourcing and the number of cases received throughout the year.

We are grateful to complainants who have taken the time to share their experience of our service via our customer satisfaction survey.