

Customer Service Complaints Report

2024-25 Quarter 4

Meeting Date	14 May 2025
Meeting name	LT Governance Meeting
LT Responsible person	Head of Improvement, Standards and Engagement
Dashboard link	250401 Customer Service Complaints Dashboard Q4 2024-25 details - Objective
Linked reports	
Outcomes sought	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Noting quarterly statistics: <u>Statistics – 2024-25 Q4</u> 2. Note findings, learning and improvement actions taken: <u>Findings, learning and actions</u> 3. Noting the future development and actions taken: <u>Future development and actions</u>
Executive summary	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The number of received and closed cases, 49 and 32, are higher than Q3 but more in line with Q2 and Q1. 2. A lower closing rate was observed in this quarter, most likely due to the increase in volume of received cases. 3. One stage 1 case was open for 35 days due to requiring additional advice and an oversight. 4. One case was resolved at stage 1 and one case withdrawn at stage 3. Resolved and withdrawn cases are not common. 5. Majority of the time spent on cases in Q4 was towards stage 2. 6. Communication – timeliness was the subject of the complaint in 10 cases, 7 of which were upheld. This is higher than usual. 7. No learning and improvement remedies were noted.

1. This Customer Service Complaints (CSCs) performance report provides a summary of CSCs received and responded to by the SPSO in the previous quarter, including a summary of outcomes, trends, actions and key learning for SPSO, to promote continuous improvement of our service.

Statistics – 2024-25 Q4

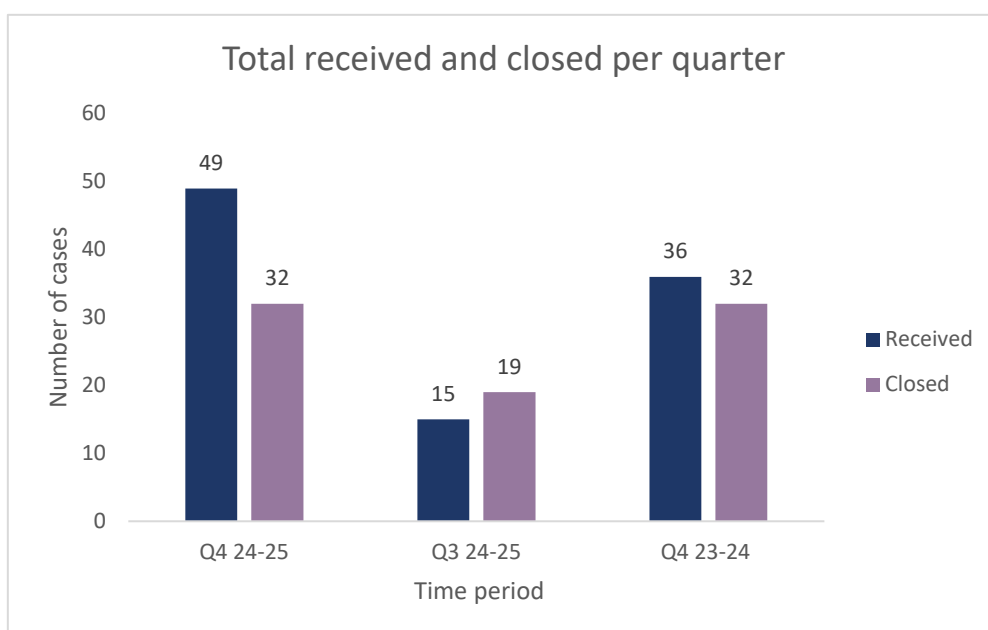
2. The table below shows the total received and closed cases in Q4 of 2024-2025. These are split by stage 1, stage 2 and stage 3. Stage 2 cases are further separated into cases that were escalated from stage 1 to stage 2, and cases that surpassed stage 1 and escalated directly to stage 2.

Q4 headlines:

- At stage 1; we received 24 cases and closed 14 cases
- At stage 2; including both stage 2 escalated and direct cases, we received 15 cases and closed 14 cases
- At stage 3; we received 10 cases and we closed 4 cases

Customer Service Complaints	Received	Closed
Stage 1 - Frontline resolution	24	14
Stage 2 - Direct to stage 2	6	5
Stage 2 - Escalated from S1 to S2	9	9
Stage 3 - Independent Review	10	4
SPSO Total	49	32

3. A comparison of the current quarter, the previous quarter and the same quarter last year:



- Q4 2024/2025: closed 65% of cases received
- Q3 2024/2025: closed 127% of cases received
- Q4 2023/2024: closed 89% of cases received

Timescales

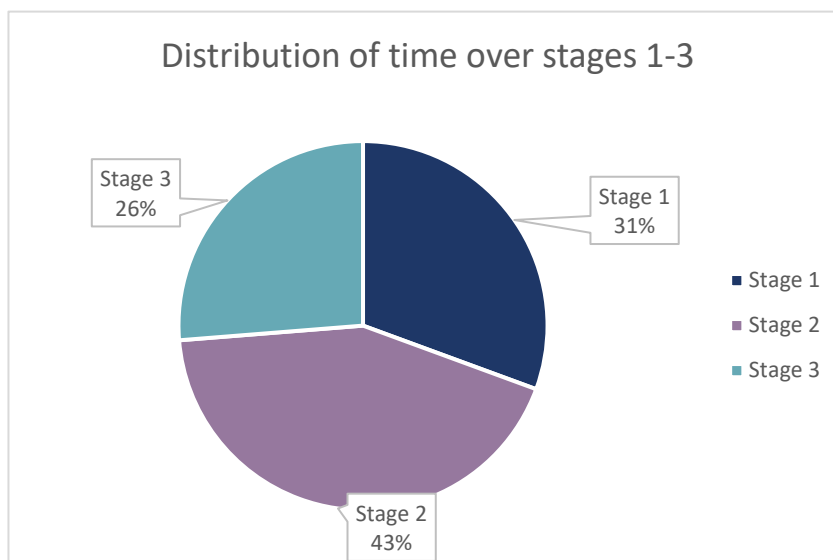
4. The timescales by which we measure our performance against the requirements of the complaints procedure are:
- 5 working days at stage 1
 - 20 working days at stage 2
 - 40 working days for independent review
5. The table below summarises the average timescales in working days to close service complaints at each stage, how many were closed on time and how many missed the target during Q4. Due to requiring additional advice, and an oversight of the complaints reviewer, a stage one complaint took 35 days. This complaint was fully upheld.

Average timescales	Average	On Time	Missed	Oldest Case
Stage 1	4	13	1	35
Stage 2	13	14	0	22
Stage 3 - Independent Review	15	4	0	23

6. The table below shows the time that all SPSO staff spent on the customer service complaints closed during Q4 for stages 1 and 2. The stage 3 time relates only to time spent by the Independent Customer Service Complaints Reviewer (ICSCR) on complaints at stage 3 up to April 2025.

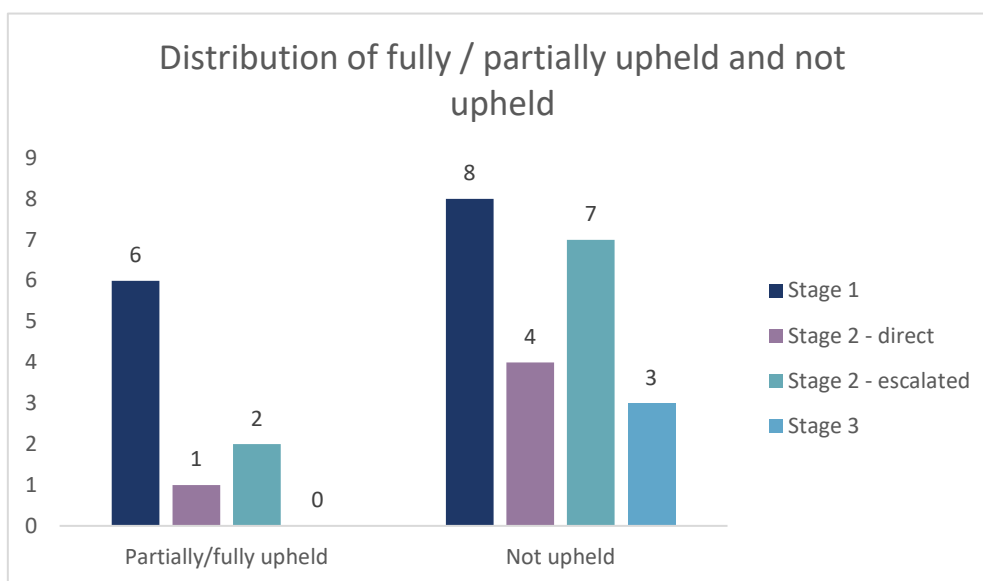
Stage	Total Time	Average Time	Range of Time
Stage 1	1,660	114	20-180
Stage 2	2,340	167	60-300
Stage 3 - Independent Review	1,425	356	45-600
Total	5,355		

- The total time spent on stage 2 cases is almost 2,5 times the time spent on stage 2 last quarter. However, this quarter is more in line with previous quarters.
- The total time spent on stage 3 is almost half the time that was spent on stage 3 cases in the previous quarter.



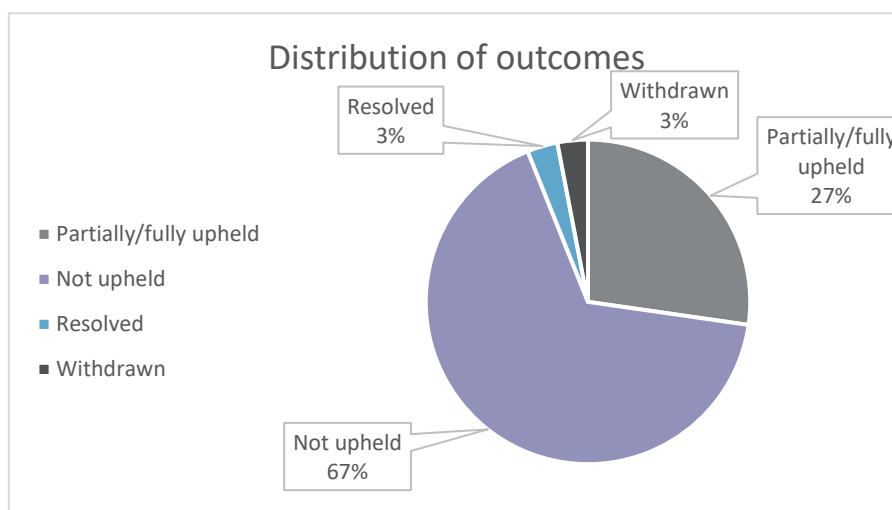
Outcomes and subject analysis

7. The number of service complaints remains very low in relation to the overall volumes of customer transactions delivered by SPSO each year. Nevertheless, upheld service complaints (and in some cases, not upheld service complaints) demonstrate that we take these complaints seriously and acknowledge when something goes wrong. The outcomes of these complaints help us to learn when things go wrong, so that we may improve our service provision in the future.
8. The table below covers complaints where a decision has been reached, or a resolution agreed. This does not include cases which were withdrawn. Note: resolved complaints are not included in the upheld calculation rate.



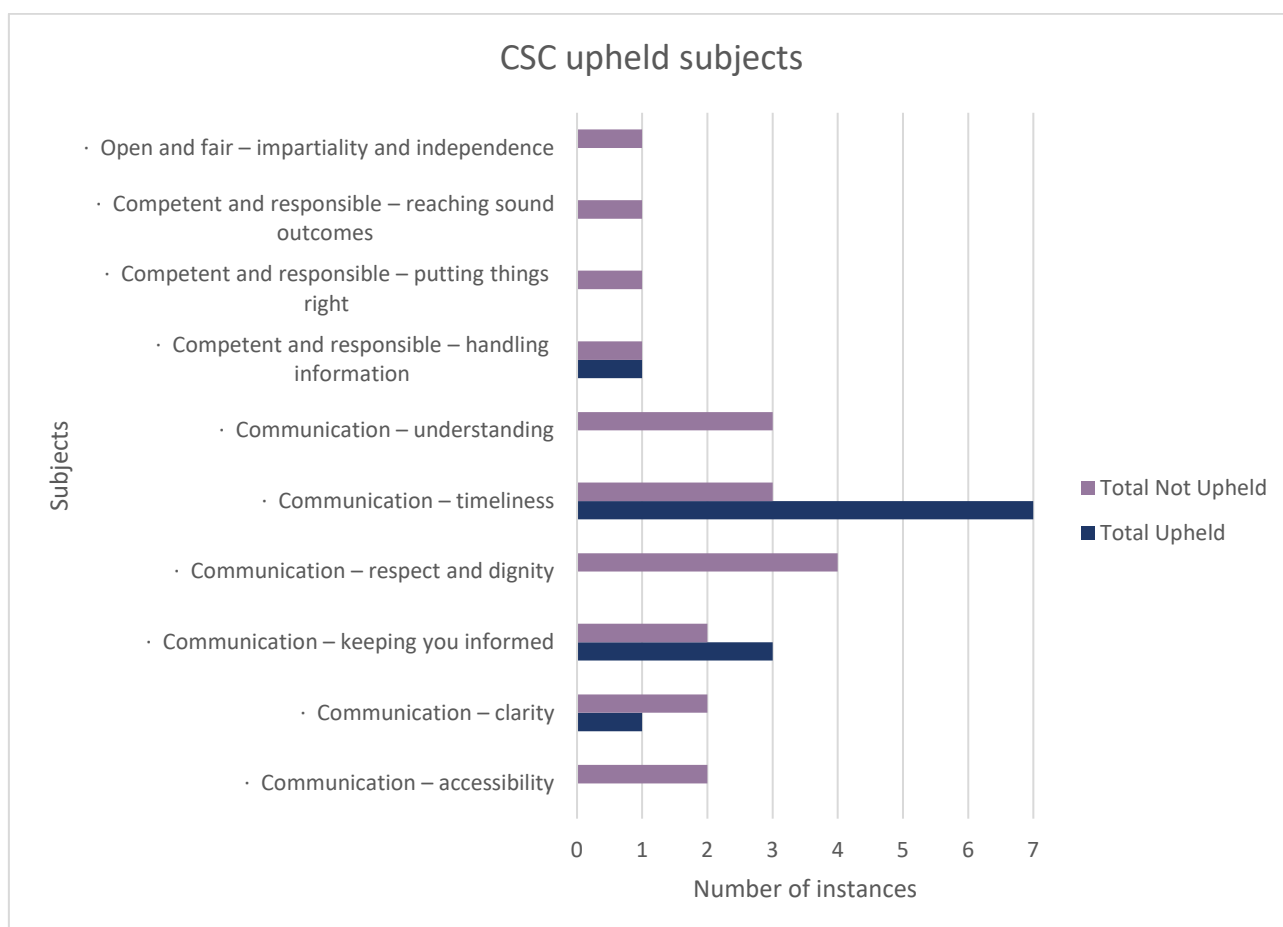
- Majority of the partially or fully upheld complaints were at stage 1, this can be explained by the higher volume of cases received at this stage
- There was only one direct stage 2 complaint which was partially or fully upheld, compared to 7 not upheld complaints at this same stage
- None of the stage 3 complaints were partially or fully upheld

9. Highlights Q4 24/25:



- 67% of the outcomes across all stages were not upheld, which is comparable to Q2
- 27% of the outcomes across all three stages were partially or fully upheld compared to 40% in Q2
- One complaint was resolved at stage 1 and one complaint was withdrawn at stage 3

10. The table below has been produced to illustrate the subjects which appear most frequently in Customer Service Complaints, and at which stage and their outcome.



11. There is some merit in considering the areas which appear most frequently in the subjects of complaints:

a. Communication – timeliness

7 out of 10 cases within this service standard were upheld/some upheld.

b. Communication – keeping you informed

3 out of 5 cases within this service standard were upheld/some upheld.

c. Communication – respect and dignity

0 out of 4 cases within this service standard were upheld/some upheld.

12. The subjects upheld most often was communication – timeliness. These were all upheld on seven occasions.

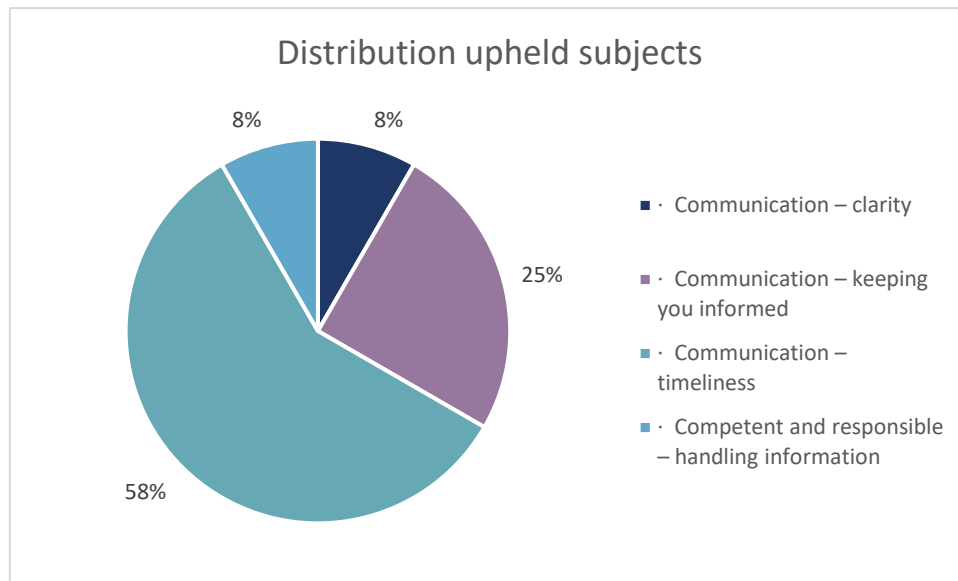


TABLE OF SUBJECTS, arranged by total frequency, and then by most upheld complaints	Stage 1 Upheld	Stage 1 Not Upheld	Stage 2 Upheld	Stage 2 Not Upheld	Stage 3 Upheld	Stage 3 Not Upheld	Total Upheld	Total Not Upheld	Total*
Communication – accessibility	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Communication – clarity	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	3
Communication – keeping you informed	0	1	3	0	0	1	3	2	5
Communication – respect and dignity	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	4	4
Communication – timeliness	6	1	1	0	0	2	7	3	10
Communication – understanding	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	3	3
Competent and responsible – ensuring impact	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Competent and responsible – expertise	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Competent and responsible – explaining our scope	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Competent and responsible – handling information	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	2
Competent and responsible – putting things right	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Competent and responsible – reaching sound outcomes	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
Open and fair – fairness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Open and fair – impartiality and independence	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
Open and fair – transparency	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Most cases have multiple subjects recorded; **this will therefore not add up to the total of CSC cases for this reporting period**

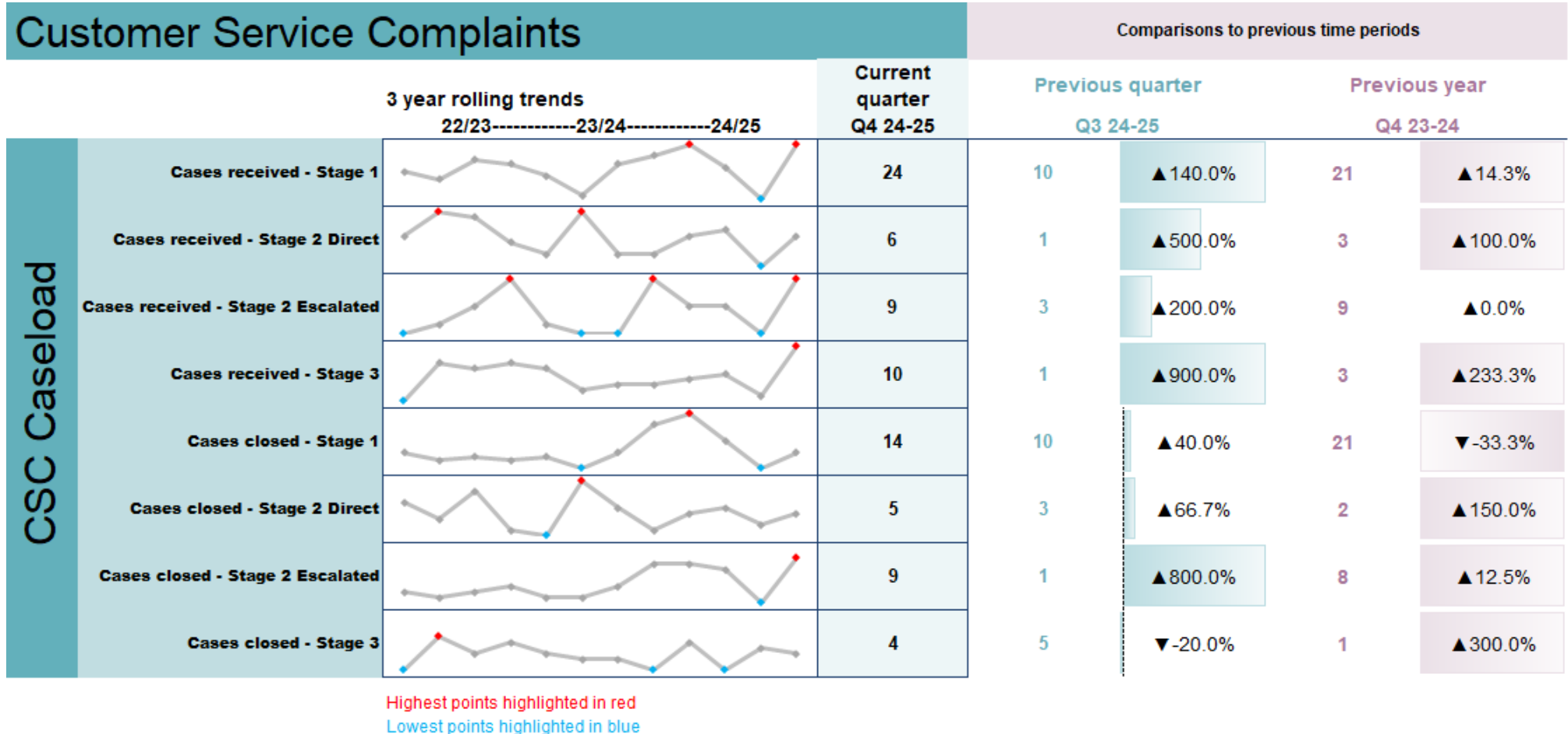
Findings, learning and actions

13. No learning and improvement recommendations and no other actions, aside from apologies, were recorded this quarter.

Future development and actions

14. A hint has been added to the learning and improvement remedy section on Workpro to encourage complaint reviewers to add further information for our own service improvement.

Appendix 1: CSC Caseload Dashboard



Appendix 2: Standards and guidance

15. We publish this report to help ensure transparency in our complaints handling and to demonstrate to our customers that complaints can, and do influence our service. We also publish, on an annual basis, more detailed information on our performance in handling complaints. Published reports can be read here: [Service standards performance | SPSO](#)
16. Customer Service Complaints are made when a complainant feels we have not met our customer service standards. The standards that are covered by this process can be read here: [Our customer service standards | SPSO](#)
17. CSCs are recorded and tracked on SPSO's case management system and we publish the outcome of complaints and the actions we have taken in response. We monitor and analyse CSCs for trend information to ensure that we identify areas where our service could be improved and take appropriate action.
18. CSCs may be closed at different stages of the procedure:
 - **Stage 1 - Frontline Resolution** refers to complaints closed at stage 1 of the procedure, with no escalation to the next stage
 - **Stage 2 - Investigation** refers to complaints handled and closed directly at stage 2 of the procedure (Frontline Resolution was not attempted)
 - **Stage 2 - Escalated Complaints** refers to complaints handled at Stage 1 and subsequently escalated to, and closed at stage 2.
 - **Stage 3 - Independent Review** is when the SPSO procedure has been completed and our final decision has been issued, but the service user remains unhappy with our response or the way we have handled the complaint. At that point, the service user can ask our Independent Customer Service Complaints Reviewer (ICSCR) to consider it. The ICSCR provides an annual report on these complaints and it is published on our website here: [Service standards performance | SPSO](#)