

---

# NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

14 November 2023

## Audit and Scrutiny Committee

---

**Title:** 2022/23 Elected Member Requests Report

**Purpose:** To inform the Audit and Scrutiny Committee of the Council's performance and the volumes and trends of Elected Member requests handled in Financial Year 2022/23.

**Recommendation:** That the Committee notes the report and the information provided.

---

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report details Elected Member requests information covering the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 (referred to in the report as 2022/23).
- 1.2 To allow comparisons to be made the report also contains data relating to financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22.

### 2. Background

- 2.1 This section contains information and commentary on Elected Member requests handled by the Council during 2022/23.
- 2.2 ***Volume of Councillor requests recorded and actioned during 2022/23***

Total volume of requests recorded	2,903
Volume actioned	2,903

2.2.1 Councillor requests can be handled by Services under two stages:-

- Stage One* – non-complex requests with a timescale to action of 5 working days
- Stage Two* – complex requests with a timescale to action of 20 working days

2.2.2 The table below details all Councillor requests actioned during the period:-

	2022/23
Stage One requests actioned	2,903
Stage One requests actioned on time	2,588
<b>% Stage One requests actioned on time</b>	<b>89%</b>
Stage Two requests actioned	2
Stage Two requests actioned on time	1
<b>% Stage Two requests actioned on time</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Total % of requests actioned on time</b>	<b>89%</b>

2.2.3 Requests not meeting timescale were due to multiple factors, including:

- employee absence/annual leave
- reduced/lack of resources
- further information required in order to progress requests (including from third parties)
- operational pressures, some of which were ongoing issues as a result of the pandemic

2.2.4 The small number of requests handled at Stage Two was expected given most requests are straightforward in nature, however, requests handled at Stage One that required detailed investigation could have been escalated and handled at Stage Two. Whilst this would have reduced the volume of requests handled (and breached) at Stage One, such escalations would have delayed Councillors receiving responses from Services.

### 2.2.5 Year on Year comparison

2.2.6 The table below shows a comparison of the volume of Councillor requests received and actioned over the last three years:

Councillor Requests	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Stage One requests actioned	1,248	1,971	2,903
Stage One requests actioned on time	1,144	1,779	2,588
<b>% Stage One requests actioned on time</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>89%</b>
Stage Two requests actioned	0	0	2
Stage Two requests actioned on time	0	0	1
<b>% Stage Two requests actioned on time</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Total % of requests actioned on time</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>89%</b>

2.2.7 A significant increase (47%) in requests received from Councillors when comparing 2022/23 with the previous year.

2.2.8 Whilst there was a significant uplift in requests received in 2022/23, the percentage actioned on time remained high and in line with previous years.

## 2.3 Volume of requests per Directorate

### 2.3.1 Councillor Stage One requests (5 working day timescale to action)

Directorate	Department	No. of requests actioned	No. actioned on time	% actioned on time	Average no. of days to resolve Stage Ones	Target (days)
Chief Executive's	Customer Services	32	26	81%	3.3	5
	HR	1	1	100%	1	5
	IT	2	1	50%	12	5
	Legal	18	18	100%	2.6	5
Communities	Community Facilities	4	3	75%	3.8	5
	Community Learning & Dev.	10	6	60%	5.4	5
	Libraries	2	2	100%	1.5	5
	Sports & Activity	18	12	67%	8.8	5
	Education	33	19	58%	6.1	5
	Facilities Management	29	25	86%	3.1	5
Place	Building Services	121	105	87%	3.5	5
	Housing	621	586	94%	2.9	5
	Planning	33	28	85%	3.2	5
	Protective Services	46	39	85%	3.6	5
	Roads	805	775	96%	2.6	5
	Streetscene	437	383	88%	3.3	5
	Waste	235	191	81%	4.2	5
	Business Development	1	1	100%	4	5
	Employability	4	4	100%	2.8	5
	Regeneration	25	19	76%	7.3	5
	Energy/Sustainability	17	15	88%	3.6	5
	PMI	168	148	88%	3.6	5
Transport	2	1	50%	6.5	5	
Health & Social Care Partnership	Children, Families & Criminal Justice	28	22	79%	5	5
	Health & Community Care	151	104	69%	5.3	5
	Mental Health	26	21	81%	3.5	5
	HSCP Support Services	2	1	50%	6.5	5
N/A	Emergency Services	32	32	100%	1	n/a
		<b>2,903</b>	<b>2,588</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>5</b>

2.3.2 There were a number of reasons recorded as to why Stage One requests were not responded to/actioned on time, including information being awaited from third parties, delays in approving responses, relevant officers being unavailable to assist with investigating requests, reduced resources and service/operational pressures.

2.3.3 Emergency Services was introduced as a Department option to allow Councillors to record when they have approached an emergency service with an issue. These cases are for noting purposes only.

### 2.3.4 Councillor Stage Two requests (20 working day timescale to action)

Directorate	Department	No. of requests actioned	No. actioned on time	% actioned on time	Average no. of days to resolve Stage Ones	Target (days)
<b>Communities</b>	Community Learning & Dev.	1	0	0%	23	20
<b>Place</b>	Building Services	1	1	100%	19	20
		2	1	50%	21	20

## 2.5 **MP/MSP requests**

2.5.1 MP and MSP requests have a set timescale of 10 working days to action and the table below details the requests actioned during the period:-

	2022/23
Requests actioned	562
Requests actioned on time	495
<b>% of requests actioned on time</b>	<b>88%</b>

2.5.2 Reasons for requests breaching timescale were similar to the reasons Councillor requests did not meet timescale.

## 2.6 **Recording Councillor requests**

2.6.1 The table below shows how Councillor requests were logged throughout the year:-

	Volume	%
Volume of Councillor requests recorded	2,905	
Volume logged by Councillors	1,614	55%
Volume logged by Member Services	800	27%
Volume logged via other channels (e.g. the Services directly, Contact Centre etc.)	491	17%

2.6.2 Of the 1,614 requests logged by Councillors during the year, 20 Councillors used their NAC online Member accounts to log requests themselves.

## 2.7 **Issue identified regarding follow up actions for Councillor requests**

2.7.1 At an Audit and Scrutiny Committee in early 2023, Committee members noted that some requests that require follow up actions are being closed and no updates are being provided to the Members once complete. As this is causing difficulties for Members trying to relay

full closure information to their constituents, a process was developed to address these concerns and was implemented on 30 October 2023. An update on the operational success of the process will be provided to a future Committee once sufficient information for analysis has been acquired.

### **3. Proposals**

- 3.1 That the Committee considers and notes the report and recognises the Council's performance in handling Elected Member requests.

### **4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty**

#### **Financial**

- 4.1 None.

#### **Human Resources**

- 4.2 None.

#### **Legal**

- 4.3 None.

#### **Equality/Socio-economic**

- 4.4 None.

#### **Climate Change and Carbon**

- 4.5 None.

#### **Key Priorities**

- 4.6 None.

#### **Community Wealth Building**

- 4.7 None.

### **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 None.

Aileen Craig  
Head of Service for Democratic Services

For further information please contact **Darren Miller, Complaint Manager**, on **(01294) 322988**.

#### **Background Papers**

None