



INDIVIDUALS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

22 September 2015

Subject Heading:	Adult Social Care – Complaints, Comments & Compliments Annual Report
CMT Lead:	Isobel Cattermole Director Children, Adults & Housing
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Policy context:	Quality and high customer satisfaction

SUMMARY

The 'Annual Report 2014-15 Adult Social Care Complaints, Comments & Compliments' attached as Appendix 1 is for consideration and outlines the complaints, enquiries, compliments and Members correspondence received during the period April 2014 – March 2015.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Members note the contents of the report and the continued work in resolving and learning from complaints and the future challenges faced by the service.
2. That Members note the actions identified to improve services and the continued monitoring to ensure actions are implemented to evidence service improvements.
3. That Members note the positive feedback to services by way of compliments received.

REPORT DETAIL

4. The number of overall complaints have decreased slightly in 2014/15 by 17% from 2013/14, however there was a slight increase in the number of formal complaints compared to 2013/14 by 7%. The number of Ombudsman referrals in 2014/15 increased from 2013/14. Of the Ombudsman referrals, two were found no evidence of maladministration with two findings of maladministration, one with injustice the other no injustice.
5. The changes within Adult Social Care have continued and therefore teams are reflective of both the old structure and structure at the time in order to take into account previous year's figures. Preventative & Assessment had the highest number of complaints which included a number of disabled freedom pass complaints, following responsibility transferring from London Councils to the local authority. External provider agency complaints have continued to decrease in 2014/15, homecare by 41% and residential/nursing homes by 22%.
6. 'Quality of service' remains the highest reason for complaint, but has dropped by 58% in 2014/15 compared to 2013/14. 38% were in relation to home care and mainly timing of visits. 'Dispute decision' is the next highest mainly around provision of adaptations/equipment e.g bathing facilities and eligibility for the Disabled Freedom Pass. 'Level of service' second highest also, related to respite stays within residential/nursing homes and service provided by home care agencies, as well as discharge arrangements. 'Behaviour of staff' dropped by almost half in 2014/15.
7. The main outcome is 'explanation given' which links to 'apology given' when acknowledged that information may not have been communicated effectively. Meetings offered have increased and has been helpful to both complainant and Service.
8. Complaints responded to within 10 working days have dropped by 14% for informal complaints and 39% for formal. There has also been an increase in the number of complaints being responded to over 20 working days. Complaints have become more complex and have required information/ involvement of other agencies which has led to timescales not always being met. This may still be comparatively low in 2015/16 where complaints require involvement of other agencies.
9. The number of complaints has increased across nearly all age ranges with the highest for those aged between 55-64 and 45-54 of 60% and 67% respectively. Age ranges for 2015/16 will not be broken down in the same way, but will be reporting on 18-64, 65-74, 75-84 and 85+. There was an increase of 67% of those with a physical disability which may be reflective of the number of complaints involving disabled freedom passes. 'White British' still remains highest and reflective of Havering's population, although

dropped slightly in 2014/15. Recording information has improved with all information being recorded in 2014/15.

10. Letter, email and telephone continue to be the most preferred method of contact in 2014/15, with a slight increase in those online.
11. There was no expenditure incurred for 2014/15.
12. Although compliments have decreased by 17%, they continue to compare almost equally to the number of complaints.
13. Members' correspondence has increased by 33% in 2014/15 with 80% being responded to within timescale, an improvement from 2013/14 with 75% being responded to within timescale.
14. Complaints information continues to be a useful performance tool to improve services. Efforts will need to be made to improve response times, however with more complex complaints and more agencies involved this may still remain comparatively low.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

There are no specific financial implications to this report, which is for information only. Costs incurred through complaints will be contained within Adult Social Care allocated budgets.

Legal implications and risks:

There are no apparent direct legal implications arising from noting of this report

Human Resources implications and risks:

Adult Social Care continues to support a personalised approach to customer needs in the Havering community. Training and development opportunities for staff will focus on the skills that are essential for effectively undertaking this responsibility. It is of vital importance that existing, and potential, customers receive the highest quality of service delivery possible. The needs of Adult Social Care staff in relation to implementation of the Care Act, with greater integrated working with health services, have been captured within the new Workforce Development Strategy and Plan.

The Council uses monitoring data from the complaints process as an indicator of how well Adult Social Care is delivering its services to the community. To ensure that there is significant continuity, and consistency in advice, along with other areas of delivery, frontline and support staff across the service teams need to be part of a stabilised workforce that is able to meet service and quality standards. Relevant outcomes from the complaints process have been incorporated into the new Plan in order to aid learning and improve staff performance..

Equalities implications and risks:

We are regularly monitoring the equalities profile of our customers and it is encouraging that disclosure is improving year on year.

The most recent monitoring information has evidenced that the number of ethnic minorities accessing the complaints process is reflective of the population within Havering and therefore accessing information about our Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy and Procedure or the facilities available to make a complaint/compliment is available to these groups. Monitoring data shows that there has been a significant increase in complaints made by service users with physical disabilities and this has been linked to the increase in disabled freedom pass complaints, however this will need continued monitoring.

We will continue to ensure that our communication is clear, accessible and written in Plain English, and that translation and interpreting services or reasonable adjustments are provided upon request or where appropriate. We will need to ensure accurate and comprehensive monitoring data is maintained to cross-tabulate complaints data against protected characteristics. This will provide us with more detailed information on gaps/issues in service provision and barriers facing people with different protected characteristics, and will enable us to take targeted actions and make informed decisions on service improvement and future service provision.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None