



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:

Adult Social Care Complaints Procedure
and Annual Report

CMT Lead:

Lorna Payne

Report Author and contact details:

Veronica Webb
Mercury House, Mercury Gardens
Romford RM1 3SL
01708 432589

Policy context:

Adult Social Care Statutory Complaints
Policy & Procedure

SUMMARY

There are two documents attached as appendices for consideration. The Adult Social Care Complaints Policy & Procedures (Appendix 1), has been revised and updated in light of the changes internally and government agencies and is for Members to note.

The Adult Social Care Complaints Annual Report 2011-2012 (Appendix 2) provides details of complaints and Member enquiries received within Adult Social Care during the period April 2011 to March 2012.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Members note the contents of the annual report and the efforts made in resolving these at an early stage with the increased challenges faced by the service.
2. That Members note that lessons learnt are being evidenced in service improvements and that continued development of systems will lead to better outcomes as they will be linked to actions and recommendations.

REPORT DETAIL

3. Complaints have continued to decrease from last year (13% 2011/12 and 13% 2010/11), however many have been complex and challenging. This is reflected in the response times which have increased in those responded to over 20 days. However 78% of these involved other agencies/procedures. Complaints involving regulated services i.e. domiciliary care agencies or residential/nursing homes have continued to decrease by 23% and 31% respectively.
4. Ombudsman enquiries have increased from last year, due to the changes of approach by the Ombudsman for local resolution by making informal enquiries of which there were four. Of those formal enquiries received, one was found to be no maladministration by the Council after investigation and two were discontinued. One is still ongoing.
5. The changes in Adult Social Care structure has meant that comparisons could not be provided for all teams. Commissioning and Reablement complaints increased during 2011/12.
6. 'Quality of service' and 'behaviour of staff' continue to be the main reasons for complaint. As highlighted in the report, 'quality of service' was around late calls and tasks not being done in an appropriate manner. However behaviour of staff has also been linked to quality of service, eligibility and financial issues.
7. 'Explanation given' was the main outcome which involved defining roles of carers, explanation of eligibility/financial processes. 'Apology given' and 'change in practice' were the next highest outcomes.
8. Monitoring information has been provided for service users only. It is noted that there has been an increase involving those of 85+ and those with physical disabilities. Also there has been a small representation from across a number of ethnic minorities.
9. There were 56 compliments received for 2011-12. The development of the Customer Relations Management (CRM) system should link compliments to relevant teams next year.
10. Responses to Member enquiries have improved from last year with 80% being responded to within timescale.
11. Complaints need to continue to inform service improvements, for example the provision of consistent information with the establishment of Care Point and Quickheart, (a website providing information on adult social care), and with the continued challenges and changes within Adult Social Care, staff will

need to be equipped and feel confident in dealing with complaints at an early stage.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

There are no specific financial implications to these reports, which are 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 these reports.

Human Resources implications and risks:

Adult Social Care are supporting a personalised approach to customer needs in the Havering community, targeted training around the required skills to effectively undertake this new focus will be important in ensuring that existing customers and potential customers receive the highest quality of service delivery possible.

As monitoring data from the complaints process will be used as an indicator of how well Adult Social Care is delivering its services to the community, continued upskilling of frontline and support staff in the new teams will be a key requirement to maintaining, and improving on, service standards. This will be an area included in the new workforce development plan for Adult Social Care staff and will be delivered with support from HR professionals from Internal Shared Services (ISS).

Equalities implications and risks:

We are regularly monitoring the equalities profile of our customers. The most recent monitoring information has evidenced that a small number of ethnic minorities are accessing the complaints process. We will therefore continue working towards raising awareness of and improving the access to our Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy and Procedure.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.