

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| DECISION-MAKER: | GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE |
| SUBJECT: | ANNUAL AREPORT ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LEARNING/HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS 2011/12 |
| DATE OF DECISION: | 25 SEPTEMBER 2012 |
| REPORT OF: | CUSTOMER CARE AND QUALITY MANAGER |
| STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY | |
| NONE | |

BRIEF SUMMARY

This 2011-12 "Learning from our Customers" annual complaints report for Children's Services and Learning and Health and Adult Social Care sets out the performance of both Directorates in responding to complaints and other contacts (compliments, comments and MP enquiries) between April 2011 and March 2012.

This report also includes information on the number of Subject Access requests under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 for both Children's Services and Learning and Health and Adult Social Care directorates.

All the above are co-ordinated through a dedicated Customer Care and Complaints team which covers these functions for both directorates. The reason that these complaints are managed separately from the corporate complaints process as they are subject to complaint management arrangements set out in statute.

This report is presented annually to the Standards Governance Committee for consultation purposes as part of a wider suite of reports upon corporate complaints and Ombudsman complaints to inform members' views of how the council is developing its customer care and to recognise the important feedback provided to the Council about its services through these complaints processes.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) That the report be noted

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To provide Council Members with an overview of the issues arising out of complaints made by the public to Children's Services and Learning and the Health and Adult Social Care Directorate during 2011-12, and provide information on actions taken following on from complaints to demonstrate how we learn as an organisation and improve future performance

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

2. The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 and the Health & Social Care Act require Local Authorities with social care services to set up and maintain a complaints procedure. This procedure must operate according to specified timescales and methods of investigation and review. The guidance requires that a report be published annually. The published report should provide an overview to staff, the general public as well as the Council's Governance Committee.

3. The reports at Appendices 1 and 2 provide a analysis of comments / concerns, compliments, enquiries from Councillors and MPs, informal complaints (representations), formal complaints as well as Access requests to Personal Social Care files (Data Protection Act 2000) and Freedom of Information requests for both Children's Services and Learning and Health and Adult Social Care directorates.

Overall levels of complaints

4. There was a 28% rise in statutory complaints about Children's Social Care and schools between 2010-11 and 2011-12, from 176 to 225. There was also a 28% increase in statutory complaints about Health and Adult Social Care services, from 111 in 2010-11 to 142 in 2011-12). In relation to corporate complaints about Health and Adult Social Care services there was a 20% fall in complaints, from 84 complaints in 2010-11 to 67 in 2011-12.

Responding to complaints

5. There has been 15.1% deterioration in the timeliness of responses for Children's services to statutory complaints from 77.8% in 2010-11 to 62.7% in 2011-12. There has been an overall improvement in the timeliness of responses for Adult services to statutory complaints. Unfortunately we cannot compare the Adult services performance to that of last year as there were problems with the database last year. We have therefore only been able to compare these figures with 2009/10.
6. Of the 225 complaints for Children's services 41 were upheld, 52 were partially upheld and 123 were not upheld. Of the 204 complaints for Adult services:- 46 were upheld, 49 were partially upheld and 87 were not upheld. A full breakdown of this is included in the annual reports at Appendix 1 and 2.

Themes from complaints and learning from complaints

7. Identifying overall themes from complaints can be difficult. Many complaints are personal to the complainant, and relate to more than one issue. However the Customer Care and Complaints team works closely with management teams to make as much sense as possible of themes at the broader level. The vast majority of issues generating complainants relate to access to services and the actions of staff. Some of the complaints about access to services relate to reductions in services that have been reduced through savings. Complaints about the actions of staff, especially in Children's services have been consistent with the messages from the Ofsted Announced Inspection; many service users have reported poor service arising from changes in social worker and inconsistency of service provision arising from this.
8. There was inconsistent practice in 2011-12 in the completion by managers of templates following the resolution of a complaint to summarise what has been learnt from it. Some of this is thought to relate to high turnover, particularly in some of the Children's social care teams. In response to this that Customer Care and Complaints Team have worked with Directorate Management Teams and service managers to revise these forms and make them easier to complete. There has also been a concerted effort to re-

engage managers in both Children's Services and Learning and Health and Adult Social Care during 2012-13 which has led to improvements in the consistency and timeliness with which these forms are completed.

Contacts

9. The Customer Care and Complaints Team dealt with 400 contacts for Children's Services and Learning and 353 contacts for Health and Adult Social Care during the period 2011-2012. These contacts are analysed in Appendices 1 and 2.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

10. N/A

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

11. This report has not had the benefit of financial input.

Property/Other

12. This report has not had the benefit of input from property services.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory Power to undertake the proposals in the report:

13. Local Authority complaints mechanisms are operated under Section 11 Local Government Act 1972 and complaints in relation to Children's and Adult Services in accordance with corresponding primary legislation, regulations and guidance.

Other Legal Implications:

14. N/A

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

15. The matters set out in this report are consistent with the Council's Constitution and Policy Framework

| | | | | |
|----------------|---------|---------------------------------------|------|---------------|
| AUTHOR: | Name: | Christine Williams | Tel: | 023 8083 3258 |
| | E-mail: | christine.williams@southampton.gov.uk | | |

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Non-confidential appendices are in the Members' Rooms and can be accessed on-line

Appendices

| | |
|----|--|
| 1. | Learning from our Customers - Review of Complaints for Health and Adult Social Care |
| 2. | Learning from our Customers - Review of Complaints for Children's Services and Learning. |

Documents In Members' Rooms

| | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | N/A |
|----|-----|

Integrated Impact Assessment

| | |
|--|----|
| Do the implications/subject/recommendations in the report require an Integrated Impact Assessment to be carried out. | No |
|--|----|

Other Background Documents

| Title of Background Paper(s) | Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable) |
|------------------------------|--|
|------------------------------|--|

| | | |
|----|-----|--|
| 1. | N/A | |
|----|-----|--|

Integrated Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at: N/A

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED: | |
|------------------------------------|--|