

Adult Social Care Customer Care Annual Report 2024-2025

To:	Adults and Health Committee
Meeting Date:	5 March 2026
From:	Executive Director for Adults, Health and Commissioning
Electoral division(s):	All
Key decision:	No
Forward Plan ref:	No
Executive Summary:	To present the Adult Social Care Customer Care Annual Report 2024-2025, providing information about the complaints, compliments, representations and MP enquiries received for adult social care and the learning from this feedback and actions taken to improve services.
Recommendations:	The committee is recommended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) note and scrutinise the information in the Annual Adult Social Care Customer Care Report 2024-2025.b) agree to the publication of Annual Adult Social Care Customer Care Report 2024-2025 on the Cambridgeshire County Council's website.

Officer contact

Name: Fran Marshall

Post: Service Director Quality Assurance, Practice and Safeguarding (PSW)

Email: Fran.Marshall@Cambridgeshire.gov.uk

1. A healthy, fair and sustainable Cambridgeshire

- 1.1 This report reflects Cambridgeshire County Council's ambitions of **enabling full, healthy lives for all** and **ensuring fairness and opportunity wherever we can**. It specifically relates to the priority of Independent Living - to provide social care that supports adults and unpaid carers to live safely in the way they choose and prevents the need for more intensive support and care where possible.

2. Background

- 2.1 Regulation 18 of the 'Local Authority Social Services National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009' state that each Council has responsibility to publish an Annual Report containing information about: the number of complaints received; the number of complaints that were decided to be well founded (upheld); the number of complaints referred to the Local Commissioner or Health Service Commissioner; summarising the subject matter of the complaints; any matters of general importance arising from the complaints; and any matters where action has or will be taken to improve services as a result of the complaints.
- 2.2 Cambridgeshire County Council collects and collates information annually on the complaints, comments, representations, MP and Councillor enquiries, and compliments received for adult social care services. This information is provided in the Adult Social Care Customer Care Annual Report 2024– 2025 ("the annual report"), attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The annual report identifies themes to inform learning from complaints and sets out the actions taken to address these issues and improve practice.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1 The annual report brings together the information on complaints, representations, MP enquiries and compliments received by the council in respect of Adult Social Care Services. This allows learning from complaints across all service areas to be identified, and actions agreed to make improvements in services. The report also provides a comparison with previous financial years so that any changes in patterns can be highlighted and any actions to be taken considered.
- 3.2 The annual report includes an executive summary which provides an overview of the content of the full report. Information on complaints from the executive summary and annual feedback overview have been used in the sections below.
- 3.3 Emphasis is placed on learning from complaints. The response to a complaint will identify the actions to be taken to prevent a similar situation occurring again and any areas where the service provided could be improved. The annual report ('Themes and Service Improvement') details learning from complaints received during the last year. The top three reasons for complaints continue to relate to: paying for care, charges and financial assessments; Care Assessments; and the standard of care in residential care and home care. As a result of the learning identified from feedback, the Council have implemented numerous service improvements including system

and process improvements, revisions of documentation to ensure clarity of information and staff training.

- 3.4 The learning from each complaint is collated and where there are similar issues raised in several complaints, the common theme identified will lead to specific learning and development.
- 3.5 The various ways in which learning from complaints and the themes are shared by the Customer Care Team includes:
 - Attendance at Directorate Management Team meetings
 - Attendance at the Practice Governance Board
 - Meetings with Heads of Service and the Principal Social Worker for Adults
 - Sharing feedback about commissioned services with the Commissioning Team
 - Email communication for cascading to teams
 - The learning gained from specific complaints is shared at complaint training sessions for Adult Social Care managers and staff
 - The annual complaints report is also shared with the Adults and Health Committee to ensure there is oversight and assurance.
 - Dissemination of learning through a variety of methods led by the Practice Standards and Quality Team and the Principal Social Worker for Adults
 - Specific case studies which include learning from complaints investigated by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) are considered at practice learning sessions run by the Principal Social Worker and the Practice Quality & Standards Team
- 3.6 222 formal complaints were received, and 217 formal complaints were responded to in 2024-2025. The number of complaints responded to fell by 19% in comparison to 2023 – 2024, when 283 formal complaints were received and 269 were responded to.
- 3.7 Formal complaints accounted for 24% (222) of the overall feedback items (923) received for the Adult Social Care service for 2024-2025. This is similar to 2023-2024 when formal complaints accounted for 26% of overall feedback.
- 3.8 In the year 2024-2025 the top three reasons for complaints continue to relate to: care assessments; paying for care, charges and financial assessments; and standard of care in residential care and home care.
- 3.9 The report highlights the outcomes and proportion of upheld complaints, Senior Manager Reviews and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman investigations (LGSCO).
- 3.10 During 2024 - 2025, there were 41 Senior Manager Reviews completed when a complainant remained dissatisfied with the response after their complaint was responded to. This is a 17% increase from the previous reporting year, when 35 Senior Manager Reviews were completed.

- 3.11 In light of the learning and themes identified from complaints, several actions have been taken to improve the services the Council provides, examples of which are illustrated in the 'Learning from Complaints' section of the report.
- 3.12 This reporting year, the LGSCO reviewed and decided 20 complaints for Adult Social Care. This equates to 9% of formal complaints that went on to complain to the LGSCO. 11 complaints received by the LGSCO (55%) were not taken forward for full investigation. Of the 9 fully investigated and decided, 4 (44%) were not upheld and 5 (56%) were upheld; details of these cases are shown in the annual report. There has been a slight increase in the number of fully investigated complaints reviewed by the LGSCO, compared to the previous reporting year.
- 3.13 The [LGSCO annual report](#) notes that their uphold rate for adult social care services is 79%. The uphold rate for the nine adult social care complaints fully investigated for Cambridgeshire is 56%.
- 3.14 231 compliments were received for adult social care staff or services in 2024-2025. This is a considerable decrease to the last reporting year where 367 were received. Although there has been a decrease, compliments continue to be the most common form of feedback the Council has received across adult social care services over the last 6 years.

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Adults, Health and Commissioning Committee:
- a) Notes and scrutinise the information in the Annual Adult Social Care Customer Care Report 2024-2025.
 - b) Agrees to the publication of Annual Adult Social Care Customer Care Report 2024-2025 on the Cambridgeshire County Council's website.

6. Significant Implications

6.1 Finance Implications – provided by Justine Hartley

There are no significant finance implications.

6.2 Legal Implications

The investigation of complaints can help to recognise areas where there may have been or has been poor practice and provides opportunities to improve the services provided by adult social care. There is a statutory obligation for the Council to have an adult social care complaints process and to publish an annual customer care report for adult social care.¹

¹ The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009

6.3 Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

6.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category. An EqIA is not required as this report is not being used to produce, change, or review any policies, services or projects.

6.5 Climate Change and Environment Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

7. Source Documents

7.1 LGO Cambridgeshire County Council Annual Review letter 2024-2025
[Councils' performance - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

7.2 LGO Data Sheet – Councils 2024-2025
[Adult social care complaint reviews - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)