

Customer Care Annual Report 1 April 2021– 31 March 2022

To: Adults and Health Committee

Meeting Date: 14 July 2022

From: Debbie McQuade, Director of Adult and Safeguarding

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: No

Forward Plan ref: No

Outcome: To present the Adult Social Care Customer Care Annual Report 2021-2022 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.

Recommendation: Adults and Health Committee is recommended to:

- a) Note and comment on the information in the Annual Adults Social Care Customer Care Report 2021-2022.
- b) Agree to the publication of Annual Adults Social Care Customer Care Report 2021-2022 on the Council's website.

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1. Background

- 1.1 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 and the number of complaints upheld.
- 1.2 Cambridgeshire County Council collects and collates information on the compliments, comments, representations, MP enquiries and complaints received for adult social care services annually. This information is provided in the adult social care customer care annual report 2021– 2022, attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.3 The adult social care customer care annual report 2021 – 2022 identifies themes to inform learning from complaints and sets out the actions taken to address these issues and improve practice.

2. Customer Care Annual Report

- 2.1 The annual adult social care customer care report 2021 - 2022 (Appendix 1) 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.
- 2.2 The annual report includes an executive summary that provides an overview of the content of the full report. Information on complaints from the summary has been used in the section below.
- 2.3 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 (section 6) details learning from complaints received during the last year.
- 2.4 The learning from each complaint is collated and where there are similar issues raised in a number of complaints, the common theme identified will lead to specific learning and development.
- 2.5 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
 - 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

- Specific case studies which include learning from complaints investigated by the LGSCO are considered at practice learning sessions run by the Principal Social Worker and the Practice Quality & Standards Team
 - Learning identified is also shared in the bi-weekly Adults and Safeguarding Newsletter
- 2.6 There were 226 formal complaints received in 2021-2022. This is an 8% (16) increase in comparison to 2020-2021, where 210 formal complaints were received. In addition, there were 66 informal complaints received in 2021-2022 which compares with 97 informal complaints received in 2020-2021, a decrease of 32% (31).
- 2.7 Although there is a year on year rise in the number of complaints received, the overall percentage of people receiving services who complained over the previous four reporting years remains very similar, having only increased from 3% to 3.5% this year, suggesting the annual growth rate has remained fairly consistent for 4 years.
- 2.8 Formal complaints accounted for 25% (226) of the overall feedback (906) received for adult social care for 2021-2022.
- 2.9 The majority of all formal complaints were made by people, or their representatives, who were receiving services from the Older People Teams, 84 (37%). This is to be expected, as they are the service with the highest number of people in receipt of adult social care. However, in proportion to their client base, it equates to 3%, which falls into the average formal complaint percentages across all adult social care services.
- 2.10 Overall, 78 (35%) complaints related to the provision of care by council commissioned care providers.
- 2.11 Complaints relating to care assessments accounted for the most common reason for a complaint, 29% (62). This is quite a broad category and examples of complaints that fall into this category are complaints about the content of the assessment (inaccuracies); disputing the outcome of the assessment; delays in the assessment being undertaken or completed; disputes about the mental capacity of people and therefore their ability to provide an accurate account of their needs; disputes about who forms part of the assessment gathering process.
- 2.12 In 2021-2022, there were 19 Senior Manager Reviews completed. This the same number of reviews that were completed in 2020-2021. The number of Senior Manager Reviews over the last 5 reporting years has only fluctuated slightly, with the mean number of Senior Manager Reviews since 2016 to present being 15
- 2.13 In light of the learning identified from both individual complaints as well as the themes identified across complaints in general, several actions have been taken to improve the services we provide, examples of which are illustrated in section 6 of the report.
- 2.14 There were 5 final decisions issued by the Local Government Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) this reporting year. This compares to 4 adult social care decisions being issued in 2020-2021 and 6 final decisions being issued in 2019-2020.
- 2.15 The LGSCO uphold rate for Cambridgeshire County Council was 64%, which is 8% lower than their overall average uphold rate of 72%. The average uphold rate for similar authorities was 71%.

2.16 440 compliments were received in 2021-2022 which is a significant 75% increase from the 252 recorded in 2020-2021. Compliments continue to account for the highest volume of feedback received by the Customer Care Team for adult social care over the last three reporting years.

3. Alignment with corporate priorities

3.1 Environment and Sustainability

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.2 Health and Care

The following bullet point sets out details of implications identified by officers:

- The effective management of complaints identifies learning, promotes service improvements which supports people to live as independently and safely as possible.

3.3 Places and Communities

See 3.2 above

3.4 Children and Young People

There are no significant implications for this priority

3.5 Transport

There are no significant implications for this priority

4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

Complaints that raises concerns about independent providers are shared with the Contracts and Commissioning team.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

The investigation of complaints can help to recognise areas where there 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.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

- 4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications
All feedback is welcomed and offers opportunities for learning to be identified and action to be taken that can contribute towards service improvements and is seen as an important part of engagement with the people we support and their families/representatives.
- 4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement
There are no significant implications within this category.
- 4.7 Public Health Implications
There are no significant implications within this category
- 4.8 Environment and Climate Change Implications on Priority Areas
There are no significant implications within this category
- 4.8.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.
There are no significant implications within this category
- 4.8.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.
There are no significant implications within this category
- 4.8.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats and land management.
There are no significant implications within this category
- 4.8.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.
There are no significant implications within this category
- 4.8.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability and management:
There are no significant implications within this category
- 4.8.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.
There are no significant implications within this category
- 4.8.7 Implication 7: Resilience of our services and infrastructure and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change.
There are no significant implications within this category

5. Source documents guidance

- 5.1 LGO Cambridgeshire County Council Annual Review letter 2020-2021
[Councils' performance - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)
- 5.2 LGO Data Sheet – Councils 2020-2021
[Adult social care complaint reviews - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)