

Customer Care Annual Report



Cambridgeshire
County Council

Annual management information regarding Compliments, Comments, Representations, MP Enquiries and Complaints

People and Communities / Adult Social Care

1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018

Report Purpose:

- To provide information about compliments, comments, representations. MP enquiries, informal and formal complaints, and to comply with the Department of Health's 'Regulations on Health and Adult Social Care Complaints, 2009'.
- To Identify trends and learning from complaints received during the report period.

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1.0 Context

- 1.1 This report provides information about compliments, comments, representations, M.P. enquiries and complaints made between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018 under the Adult Social Care Complaints Procedure and 2009 Department of Health Regulations on Adult Social Care Complaints. Cambridgeshire County Council has an open learning culture and a positive attitude to complaints, viewing them as opportunities for learning and for improved service delivery.
- 1.2 The scope of this report includes Adult Social Care services provided through Cambridgeshire County Council and those provided through a NHS Partner organisation, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust (CPFT).

2.0 Executive Summary

- 2.1
- 287 compliments were received across the year, which shows a decrease of 39% from the previous year.
 - 44 MP enquiries were received between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018. This is a decrease of 34% from the previous year 2016 to 2017.
 - 343 informal complaints were received in 2017-18. This is a 20% increase on the 285 informal complaints received in the previous year.
 - 163 formal complaints were received in 2017-18. This is a 16% increase on the 140 formal complaints received in the previous year.
 - 2.1% of people who receive adult social care services made a formal complaint in 2017-18.
 - 34 of the formal complaints, 21%, were about Assessments. This was the most common reason for complaining in 2017-18.
 - 28 of the formal complaints, 17%, were about care provided by Independent Providers.
 - 63 (39%) of complaints were Partially Upheld, while 39 (24%) were Upheld and 39 (24%) were Not Upheld. 10 (6%) of complaints required No Further Action, 9 (5%) are Ongoing, and 3 (2%) were Withdrawn.
 - There were 5 Senior Manager Reviews completed during 2017-18. This is a 71% decrease in the number of Reviews completed the previous year.
 - There were 3 final views issued by the Local Government Ombudsman during 2017-18. 2 complaints were not upheld and 1 was partially upheld.

3.0 Definitions

- 3.1 The terms: compliments, comments, representations and complaints are defined in Appendix 1 and an explanation of acronyms is provided in Appendix 2.

4.0 The complaints process and feedback

- 4.1 The complaints process has an emphasis on de-escalation and early resolution of complaints.

- 4.2 In order to ensure that the complaints process remains current, relevant and user friendly, questionnaires were sent to 31 complainants, whose complaints were received between 1 October 2016 and 30 September 2017.

- 4.3 Not all complainants from this period were contacted, such as where the service user has passed away, or where the complainant still had open complaints with the department.

- 4.5 12 responses were returned in total, which amounts to 39% of the questionnaires sent out. The statistics below relate solely to the 12 returned responses. 4 were returned anonymously, and 8 provided their name and address. The results of this survey are included in Appendix 3.

- 4.6 An example of the feedback received in the Customer Survey involved Mr and Mrs B who raised a complaint about their daughter's client contribution, and how this had been calculated. They also said they were struggling to find a suitable care provider using her direct payment.

In response to the concerns raised Mr and Mrs B received a full explanation of the financial assessment process, and a breakdown of how this had been calculated.

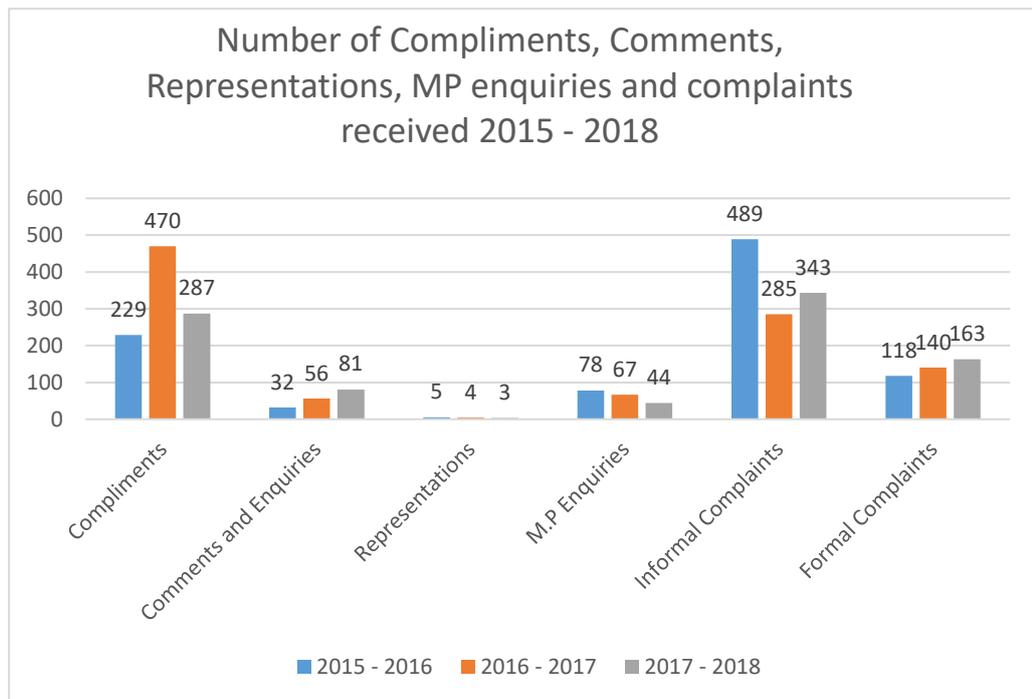
Regarding their difficulties finding staff, Mr and Mrs B were directed to the support available from Penderels Trust, direct payment support agency, to help recruit staff and advised how to access the Council's catalogue of local providers. In addition, their daughter's allocated Social Worker met with them to discuss their care options. While alternatives, like arranged provision, were agreed as unsuitable it was clear that their daughter's complex needs required a more specialist provider. In light of this the Social Worker agreed to offer additional support and work with Mr and Mrs B to identify and contact appropriate care providers.

After receiving the response and follow up meeting Mr and Mrs B contacted the Customer Care Team to confirm that they were delighted to have received this outcome, and that it had taken an enormous sadness off their shoulders.

5.0 Compliments, comments, representations and complaints

5.1 Details relating to compliments, comments, representations, M.P enquiries, informal and formal complaints are considered in the following sections. The total number for each category of feedback for the previous three financial years is shown in Figure 1. Comments on each type of contact received are given in the appropriate sections in this report.

5.2 *Figure 1: Compliments, comments, representations, MP enquiries, complaints*



6.0 Compliments

6.1 287 compliments were received in 2017-18. This is a decrease of 39% from the 470 compliments received in the previous year. One reason for this is that Compliments for the Carers Trust are now recorded by the Trust, rather than the Council.

6.2 These compliments refer primarily to two distinct areas:

- The quality of service
- The helpful attitude of staff members

6.3 Compliments which show that the work of an individual staff member has been exceptional are included in the monthly communications email from Wendi Ogle-Welbourn (Executive Director, People and Communities) to all her staff.

6.4 Examples of compliments received:

- *“The Sensory Technician arrived early, was very pleasant, and so very helpful to my needs. He explained everything so I could understand clearly”* [Sensory Services]
- *“I am happy with the service.”* [Reablement Services]
- *“I just want to say how pleased we were with the meeting, your staff member was punctual, so friendly and professional and made the experience much less daunting than my parents feared. The Adult Support Co-Ordinator showed empathy... was patient and allowed them to talk about their concerns. Thank you.”* [Adult Early Help]
- *“Thank you for your and the LDP’s constant support to my brother, my family and myself. My parents and I are so grateful for what you all do.”* [Learning Disability Services]
- *“I recently had a visit about my wife’s care, and I am writing to ask you to pass on my thanks for their kindness and understanding... I am grateful they made me feel not so alone.”* [Older People’s Services]
- *“Just wanted to give an official thank you for the sensitivity and unfailing kindness shown towards my mother during her hospital stay, discharge and potential transfer to a care home.”* [Discharge Planning]

6.5 Currently CPFT do not report on the number of compliments received. However, the Section 75 agreement between the two agencies is currently being revised and details about what feedback is reported by CPFT will be included in the revised agreement.

6.7 2 compliments were received in relation to other services which do not have a base of clients; one related to the Assistive Technology team, and the other to the Financial Assessment Team.

287 compliments were received in 2017-18

7.0 Comments and Enquiries

7.1 81 comments and enquiries were received in 2017-18. This is an increase of 45% on the 56 comments and enquiries received in the previous year.

7.2 The comments and enquiries covered a number of issues, including:

- Requests for social care assessment
- Clarifying invoices
- Enquiries about Housing
- Enquiries about other Local Authorities
- Raising Data Protection concerns
- Comments from a care provider regarding their payment arrangements
- Enquiries making a complaint about independent external organisations
- Enquiries from a care provider regarding payment for commissioned services
- Safeguarding concerns
- Accessing a Food Bank
- Requesting copies of historic correspondence
- Council Tax enquiries

7.3 62 comments and enquiries were passed on to the relevant team within the Council for consideration; 19 comments and enquiries were passed on to external organisations.

8.0 Representations

8.1 3 representations were received in 2017-18. This is about the same as the previous year, when 4 were received.

8.2 These representations related to:

- Debt recovery letters
- The financial assessment process
- Community Transport

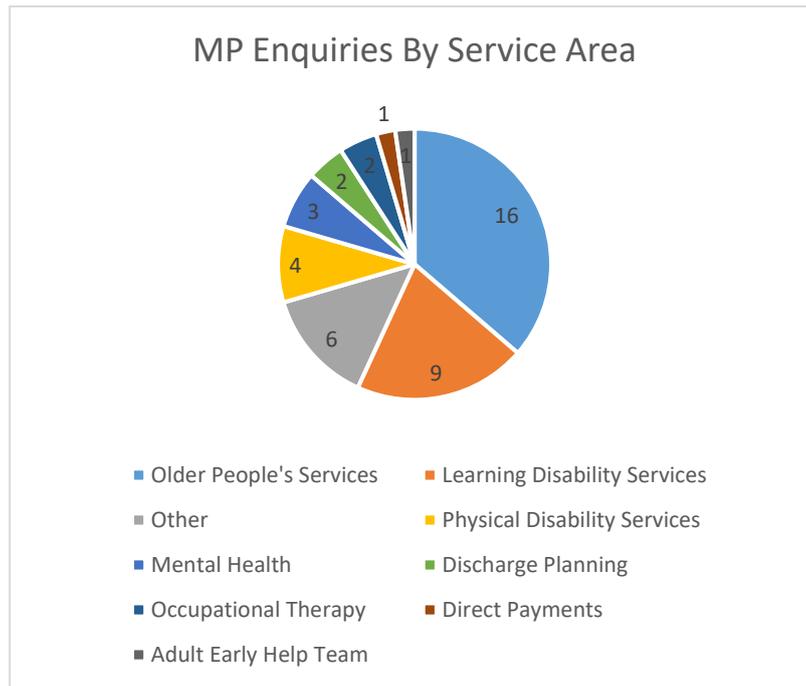
8.3 In one case the Service User was open to the Learning Disability Partnership, and in the other case the Service User was open to Older People's Services. The final representation regarding Community Transport did not relate to a specific Service User, and was about Disclosure and Barring Service checks for volunteer drivers.

9.0 MP Enquiries

9.1 44 MP enquiries were received in 2017-18. This is a decrease of 34% from the 67 MP enquiries received in the previous year.

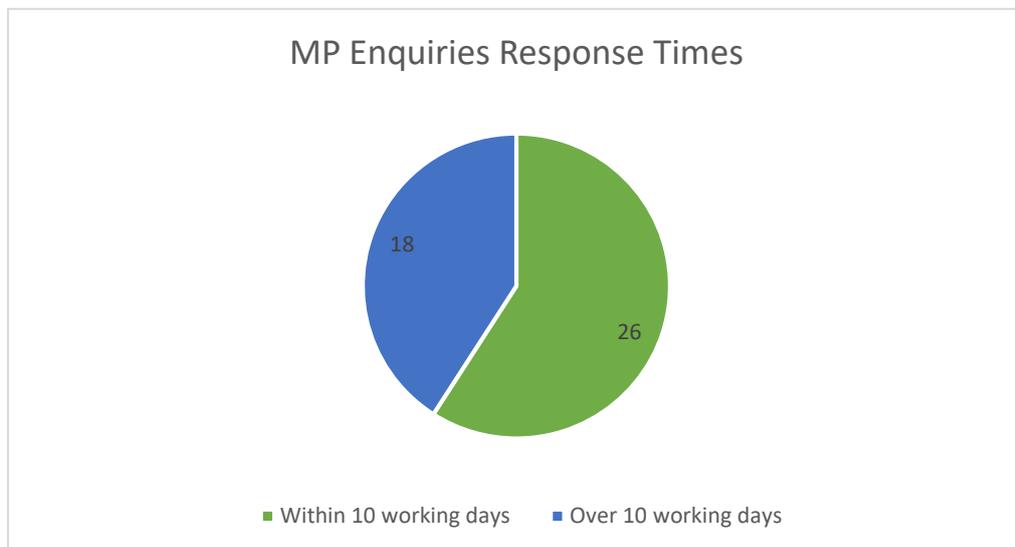
9.2 Figure 2 gives details of the service areas which the enquiries related to.

9.3 **Figure 2: MP Enquiries by Service Area**



9.4 Figure 3 gives details of the response times for MP enquiries.

9.5 **Figure 3: MP Enquiry Response Times**



9.6 26 of 44 (59%) MP enquiries received in 2017-18 were responded to within timescale. This is a reduction from the previous year when 56 of the 67 (84%) MP enquiries received were responded to within timescale.

9.7 18 enquiries were delayed for various reasons, including:

- Complex case involving safeguarding.
- Complex case involving other organisations.
- Change in investigation manager.
- Waiting to speak to a worker on leave.

- Additional concerns raised by the MP while the investigation was in progress.
- Complex case involving several internal teams.
- Allow time to contact the individual raising concerns during the course of the investigation.

9.8 In cases where responses have been delayed a holding letter is sent to the MP to keep them informed.

10.0 Informal complaints

10.1 During the course of the year the number of formal and informal complaints varies slightly. This is because sometimes a complaint is initially dealt with informally and then the complainant states that they wish for the complaint to be escalated and dealt with formally. Similarly some complainants wish their complaint to be dealt with formally and when initial remedial actions have been completed they state that they wish to withdraw their complaint. In cases where the type of complaint changes, the complaints records are amended accordingly.

There has been a 20% increase in the number of informal complaints received in 2017-18 in comparison to previous reporting year.

10.2 In 2017-18, there were 343 informal complaints received. This compares to 285 received in the previous financial year, an increase of 20%.

10.3 Figure 4 shows the number of informal complaints in relation to the major service areas and the total number of people receiving services.

10.4 *Figure 4: Number of informal complaints*

Service Area	Number of people receiving service	Number of Informal complaints	Percentage of complaints per population receiving services
LDP	1652	18	1%
Physical Disabilities	844	15	1.7%
Older People (includes Adults Early Help and joint complaints)	4789	308	6.4%
CPFT includes Older People's Mental Health and OT	408	2	0.5%
Total	7693	343	4.5%

10.5 This year there were 58 more informal complaints in comparison to 2016-2017 when 285 were received. This is a 20% increase.

10.6 The reason for this increase could be due to improved recording of informal complaints. The Customer Care Team are working closely with Heads of Service to ensure that staff understand the importance of recording informal complaints. The Customer Care Team have also met with different service areas to provide briefings on informal complaints.

10.7 The Customer Care Team produced a practitioner fact sheet in January 2018 to improve awareness of what an informal complaint is and the importance of recording this data accurately.

10.8 The Customer Care Team are also meeting with teams across different service areas to discuss the formal and informal complaints processes. The Customer Care Team will monitor the impact of these recent changes against the number of informal complaints subsequently being received.

11.0 Formal Complaints

11.1 Emphasis is placed on ensuring that people wishing to make a complaint or provide feedback of any kind, can do so with ease and in a variety of ways. Guidance regarding how to provide feedback of any kind is provided on Cambridgeshire County Council's website (<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/complain>)

In addition how to make a complaint / provide feedback is explained by the Adult Support Coordinator / Social Worker during the assessment process and as part of that process the Service User is given a factsheet that explains the process.

11.2 There were 163 formal complaints received in 2017-18.

11.3 Figure 5 gives details of the number of formal complaints received in the last 3 years and the comparative percentage increase /decrease.

11.4 *Figure 5: Formal Complaints Received from 2015-2018*

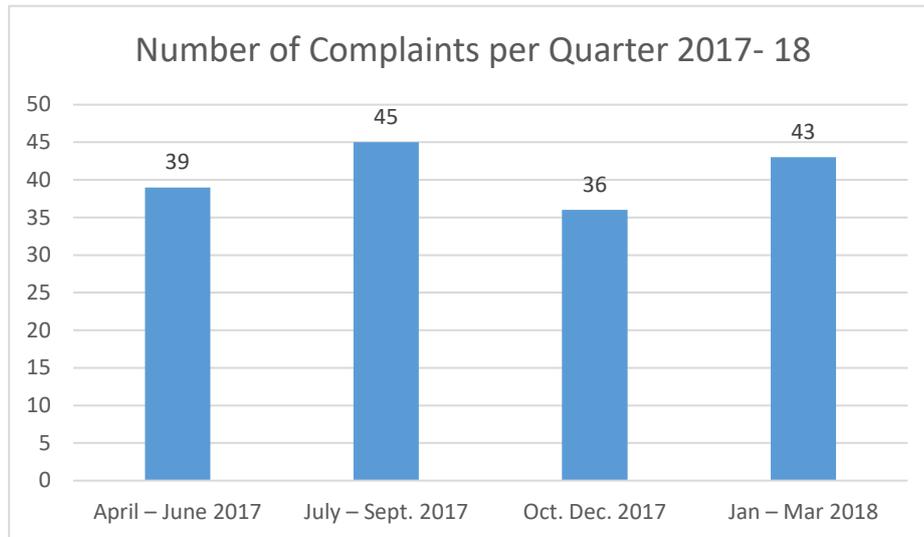
Financial Year	Number of complaints received	Percentage Rise from previous year
2015 – 16	118	
2016 – 17	140	19%
2017 – 18	163	16%

11.5 Figure 5 demonstrates that the number of formal complaints has risen year on year over the past 3 years. 163 formal complaints were received in 2017-18. This is an increase of 38% on the 118 formal complaints received in 2015-16.

11.6 23 more formal complaints were received in 2017-18 than in the previous year, a percentage rise of 16%

11.7 Figure 6 shows the number of Formal Complaints received for each quarter of 2017-18

11.8 *Figure 6: Number of Formal Complaints received per quarter 2017-18*



11.9 On average 41 formal complaints were received per quarter during 2017-18. This compares to an average of 35 per quarter received in 2016-17 an increase of 6 (17%). The reasons for complaining are varied (for more details see section 13.0)

12.0 **Service Area Complaints**

12.1 To give some perspective Figure 7 shows the number of complaints in relation to the major service areas and the total number of people receiving services.

12.2 *Figure 7: Service Area Complaints*

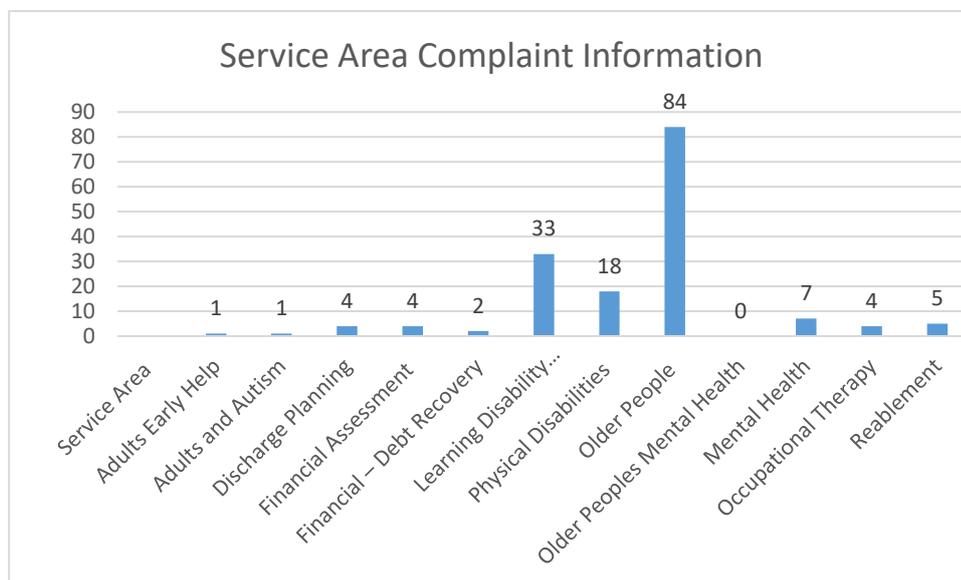
Service Area	Number of people receiving service	Number of complaints	Percentage of complaints per population receiving services
LDP	1652	34	2%
Physical Disabilities	844	20	2.3%
Older People (includes Adults Early Help and joint complaints)	4789	102	2.1%
CPFT includes Older People's Mental Health and OT	408	7	1.7%
Total	7693	163	2.1%

12.3 Figures for teams identified in Figure 8 have been included in numbers in figure 7 for the Service Area that the Service User receives their service from, for example, a complaint about the Adults and Autism team has been included in the numbers in Figure 8 with the complaints about LDP.

12.4 2.1% of those receiving Adult Social Care Services complained about the services they received. This is a marginal increase on the previous year when 1.5% complained.

12.5 Figure 8 shows the number of complaints received by each service area for the past 3 years.

12.6 *Figure 8: Complaints by Service Area*



12.7 Whilst the number of complaints (84) for older people in 2017-18 is higher than any other service, it is important to set this in the context of the population size of the service area. Figure 6 shows that 2.1% of older people receiving services complained. This is similar to the percentage for other service areas.

12.8 84 complaints about Older People's services were received in 2017-18. This is an increase of 29% on the 65 complaints about Older People's services received in the previous year. This reflects the general increase in the overall number of complaints received.

12.9 7 complaints about Mental Health services were received in 2017-18. This is a decrease of 42% from the 12 complaints about Mental Health services received in the previous year. However, looking further back to 2015-16, only 2 complaints were received. So the current numbers indicate that there has been a step increase during this 3 year period. Improved reporting and regular communication with the CPFT Complaints Team can partly account for this increase. Continued

monitoring and communication will give an indication of whether or not this is a sustained rise.

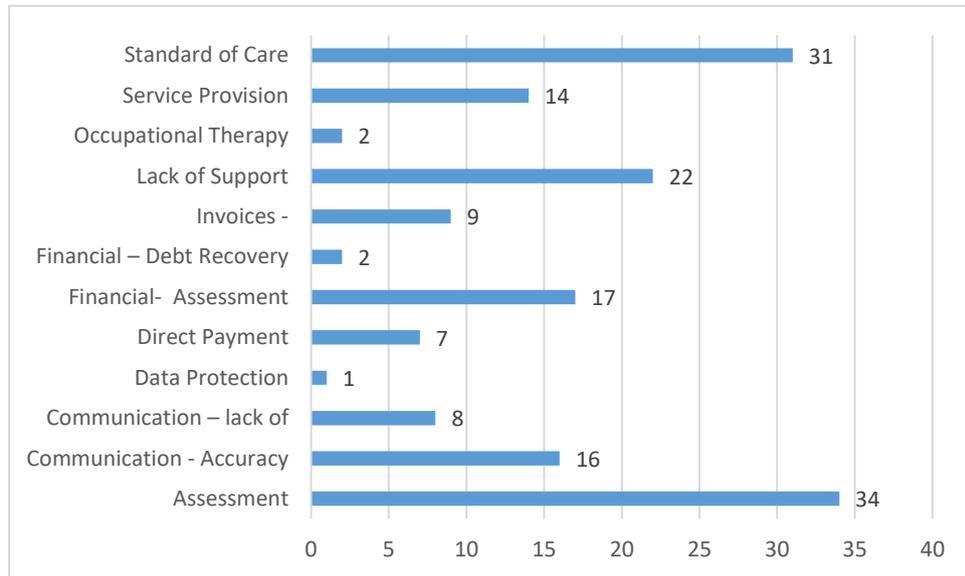
- 12.10 Once consent has been obtained, complaints involving Mental Health services and social care are discussed with the partner organisation and it is decided which organisation will lead. The complaint is then investigated and responded to using the lead organisation's complaints procedure. The CCC Customer Care Team and the CPFT Complaints Team meet on a quarterly basis to discuss issues such as information sharing, consent and individual complaints.
- 12.11 Currently the Section 75 agreement between CPFT and CCC is being reviewed and the revised complaints schedule specifies the complaints data that should be shared. This will mean that more information about Social Care/Mental Health feedback will be available to include in future Customer Care Reports
- 12.12 The number of social care complaints (Adults) reported by CCC that relate to mental health and Occupational Therapy (OT) services occasionally differ slightly from the number reported by CPFT. These variations are due to the different ways in which some complaints are categorised.
- 12.13 33 complaints about Learning Disability services were received in 2017-18. This is an increase of 22% on the 27 complaints about Learning Disability services received in the previous year.
- 12.4 The LDP more than any other service area has complainants who make more than one complaint about different issues over the course of a year. In 2017-18, 4 complainants made more than 1 complaint. This could be due in part to the complex needs that some Service Users with Learning Disabilities have, and the complex arrangements required to meet their needs.
- 12.15 18 complaints about Physical Disability services were received in 2017-18, a small increase on the 17 complaints received the previous year.
- 12.16 There are relatively few complaints solely about Discharge Planning services. In 2017-18, 3 of the 4 complaints involved other agencies and/or teams.
- 12.17 2 of the 4 complaints received about OT services were about services provided to HM Prisons. This is the first time we have received complaints from prisoners and it demonstrates that there may now be a wider awareness of how to complain about Adult Social Care Services

The number of complaints about Physical Disabilities Services is very similar to last year.

13.0 Reasons for Complaints

13.1 Figure 9 gives details about the reasons why people complain.

13.2 *Figure 9: The Reasons Why People Complain*



13.3 The most common reason for complaining was about Assessments. 34 complaints about an Assessment were received in 2017-18. This is an increase of 162% on the 13 complaints about Assessments received in the previous year. The 34 complaints break down as follows:

- 13 complaints about delays in carrying out the assessment
- 10 complaints about the content of the assessment
- 11 complaints about the assessment process

13.4 It is difficult to explain the reason for the large increase in the number of complaints about assessments, other than to say that in some operational teams there are capacity issues that will impact on the assessment process and the time Service Users are waiting for an assessment.

13.5 31 complaints about Standard of Care were received in 2017-18. This is an increase of 82% on the 17 complaints about Standard of Care received in the previous year.

13.6 28 complaints about Standard of Care referred to the care provided by independent providers and the remaining 3 were about care provided by Reablement teams. For more details on complaints about independent providers please see section 14.

13.7 12 complaints about Service Provision were received in 2017-18. This is a decrease of 56% from the 27 complaints about Service Provision received in the previous year.

The term 'Service Provision' covers a number of issues. For example:

- Lack of support regarding specialised needs
 - The amount of support provided
 - Who the support is provided by
 - Withdrawal of support
- 13.8 2 complaints about Service Provision referred to a reduction in service.
- 13.9 28 complaints about financial issues were received in 2017-18. This is a decrease of 10% from the 31 complaints about financial issues received in the previous year. The 28 complaints break down as follows:
- 9 complaints about Invoices
 - 2 complaints about Debt Recovery
 - 17 complaints about Assessment
- 13.10 22 complaints about lack of support were received in 2017-18. 21 of these complaints referred to lack of support from a social care team. This is an increase of 90% on the 11 complaints received in the previous year.
- 13.11 The 21 complaints about lack of support from the social care team often refer to a lack of communication or delays.
- 13.12 17 complaints were about financial issues. These referred to the outcome of the financial assessment process, such as delays in completing the process.
- 13.13 The automatic issuing and tone of debt recovery letters was a theme for some time. The issues regarding invoices primarily related to soft reminder letters being received when the account had been settled, and the tone of recovery letters. However, following previous feedback received through complaints, changes in the process were made and this year there were no complaints about the tone of debt recovery letters.
- 13.14 In 2013-14 there was a high number of complaints (21) about confusing and hard-to-understand invoices. Details of these complaints were given to the Adult Social Care Practice Development Manager and this information was used in developing a revised contributions policy.
- 13.15 Following these changes the number of complaints about hard-to-understand invoices has decreased steadily. In 2016-17 there were 12 complaints about confusing invoices; in 2017-18 the number had decreased to 9, a decrease of 25%.
- 13.16 24 complaints were about communication issues. The issues varied from a complaint about lack of communication about the temporary nature of care provision, to a family feeling that they were not being listened to.

14.0 Complaints about Independent Providers

14.1 Complaints that refer to Independent Sector Providers are investigated by the Locality Team Manager. The responses to the complaints about practice are copied to Heads of Service.

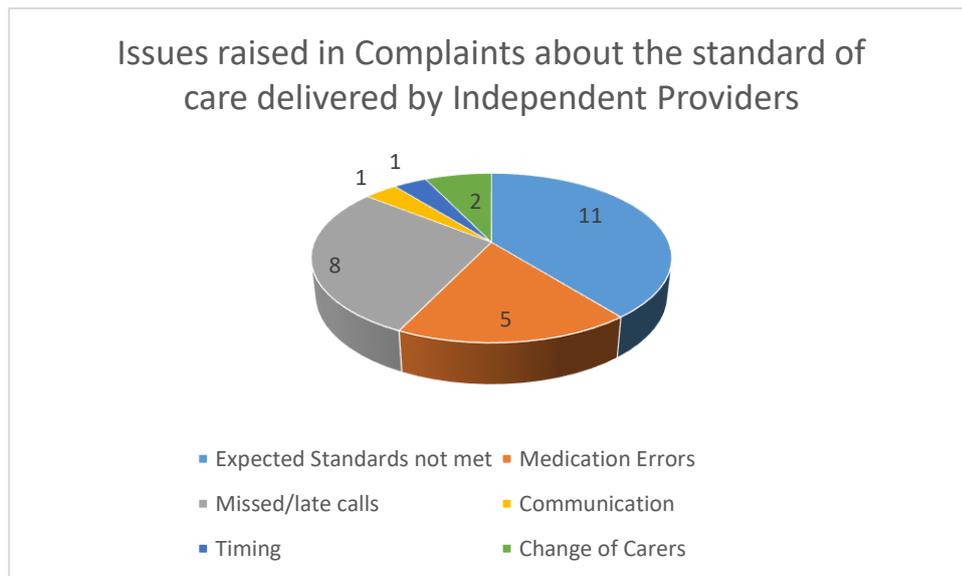
14.2 Complaints and response to complaints involving independent care providers are copied as a matter of routine to the appropriate Contracts Monitoring Manager.

14.3 28 complaints referred to the provision of care by an independent provider. This is one less complaint about independent providers than was received the previous year.

14.4 All of the complaints about independent providers referred to the standard of care.

14.5 Figure 10 gives details of the specific standard of care issues in complaints about the service provided by independent providers.

14.6 *Figure 10: Complaints about the standard of care delivered by Independent Providers*



14.7 The most common reason for complaining was the expected standards not being met. This refers to a number of different issues such as hygiene and lack of support with food.

15.0 Comparative Data

15.1 Information about Complaints received by similar Local Authorities is coordinated and disseminated by the Customer Relations Team, Adult Social Care, Surrey County Council. This information is received approximately half way though the course of the following year. It is expected that the data for 2017-18 will be published later in 2018.

15.2 Comparing the 140 complaints received in 2016 -17 by Cambridgeshire with the average number of complaints (292) received by comparator councils, Cambridgeshire's complaints are 52% (152) lower. 140 complaints were received in 2016-17 by Cambridgeshire. This is 52 % lower than the average of 292 complaints received by comparator councils in the same year.

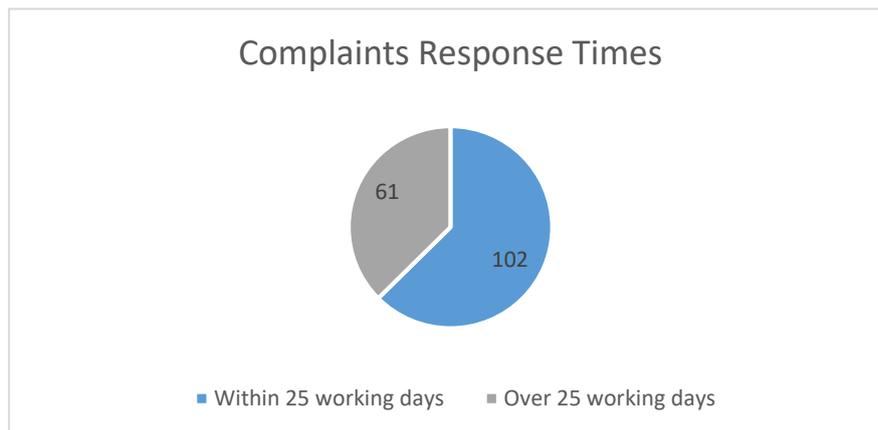
15.3 However, this simple comparison cannot be considered valid. There is a range of different arrangements for dealing with complaints within the Local Authority comparator group, which affects how received complaints are recorded and reported. For example some Local Authorities record and report Adult and Children's social care complaints together, whilst others who deal with Adult and Children's complaints separately have provided a figure solely for Adult complaints. Other authorities have included corporate complaints and/or MP enquiries in the numbers they provide.

16.0 Complaint responses

16.1 The Adult Social Care complaints process specifies that complaints should be responded to within 25 working days. If there are mitigating circumstances for exceeding this time frame then a written explanation is sent to the complainant.

16.2 Figure 11 shows that 102 of 163 complaints (63%) were responded to within 25 working days in 2017-18. 61 complaints required an extension, leading to the response taking longer than 25 working days.

16.3 *Figure 11: Complaint response times*



16.4 Extensions were agreed for a number of reasons, including:

- Complex case involving a number of historic issues
- Delays in receiving information from external organisations
- Complex cases involving other organisations, or multiple teams within the Council

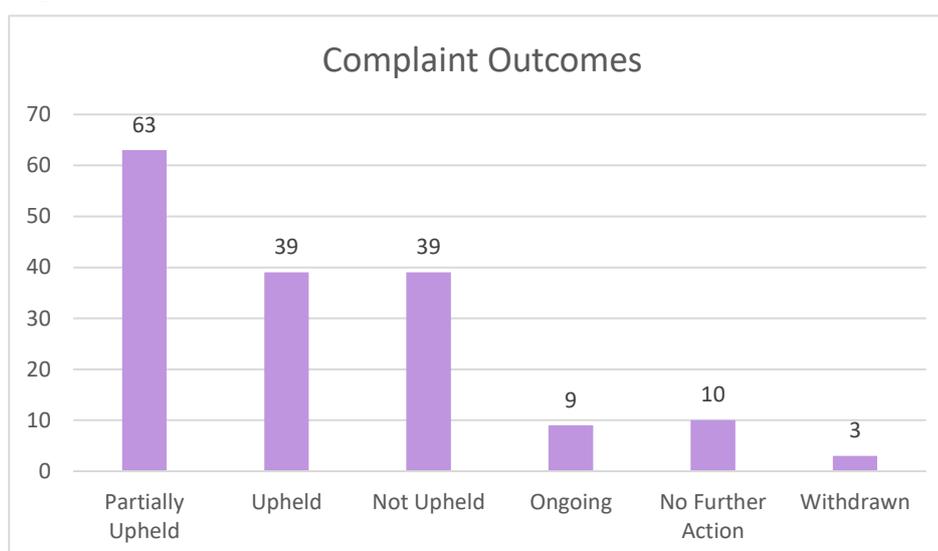
- Difficulties obtaining consent and engagement from the family
- Time needed to include a meeting with the Service User
- Needed to interview staff member who was absent from work
- Complaints involving safeguarding enquiries
- IT problems
- Seeking legal advice before responding
- Change in investigator during the course of the investigation

16.5 Complaint outcomes are recorded using the following definitions:

- Upheld – all issues raised in the complaint required remedial action to rectify the situation and prevent a similar issues arising in the future
- Partially upheld – at least 1 issue in the complaint required remedial action
- Not upheld – none of the issues raised required remedial action

16.6 Figure 12 gives details of the number of complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld.

16.7 *Figure 12: Complaint outcomes*



16.8 63 (39%) complaints were Partially Upheld, while 39 (24%) were Upheld and 39 (24%) were Not Upheld.

16.9 102 (63%) complaints were either Upheld or Partially Upheld in 2017-18. This remains consistent with the previous year, when 85 (61%) of complaints were either Upheld or Partially Upheld.

17.0 Senior Manager Review

17.1 Where complainants are not satisfied with the first response, a complaint may be reviewed by a Senior Manager.

- 17.2 For consistency, the Customer Care Team report on *completed* Senior Manager Reviews rather than those requested or those that are on-going within a reporting year.
- 17.3 In 2017 -2018, 5 Senior Manager Reviews were completed. This is a significant decrease to the last reporting year where 17 Senior Manager Reviews were completed, which is a 71% decrease.
- 17.4 Of the 5 Senior Manager Reviews completed this reporting year, 4 were partially upheld and one was not upheld.
- 17.5 One Senior Manager Review related to a decision to stop funding for transport to a day care centre. The complaint was not upheld as it was found that the Physical Disability Team involved had provided alternative options for the Service User. This would enable them to maintain their level of mobility whilst using more local community resources
- 17.6 Another Senior Manager Review related to direct payments and the services provided by care agencies. The complaint covered 29 different issues, one of which was upheld due to delays in renewing and processing the Carer's budget. The other aspects were not upheld as the representative had been provided with information and directed towards support and assistance.
- 17.7 A further Senior Manager Review related to confusion around the financial assessment process. Although it was found that the Council had followed the due financial assessment process, it was acknowledged that a lack of providing clear explanations and information at the time resulted in distress for the family. An apology was issued for the distress caused and lessons relating to the request of and follow ups of financial assessments were shared with the team.
- 17.8 Another Senior Manager Review involved a delay in providing respite care. This was partially upheld as it was acknowledged there was a delay in sourcing immediate respite care. The social care team had offered an alternative temporary solution in the interim period, however this offer of support was declined. It was also acknowledged that there had been a delay in authorising the Carers support grant and an apology was issued.
- 17.9 The fifth Senior Manager Review was partially upheld as it identified that a re-assessment of needs for a Service User had not been carried out in a timely manner by the Learning Disability Partnership. The failings of the service were acknowledged by the Council along with an apology and a one off payment was issued as a gesture of good will for the delays. As a result of the complaint changes were made to the service to

The number of Senior Manager Reviews completed this reporting year has decreased by 71%.

avoid similar delays occurring again which include a weekly reporting process to Senior Managers. In the event of a waiting list being required, cases are reviewed on a weekly basis to determine the level of risk and priority. Other areas of the complaint relating to historical social care records were not upheld.

- 17.10 Four of the Senior Manager Reviews were completed within the three months allotted timeframe. The other review exceeded the timeframe and an apology was issued to the complainant.
- 17.11 The decrease in the number of Senior Manager Reviews carried out this reporting year may be as a result of additional training and support being offered to responding managers carrying out the initial complaint investigation. However, the Customer Care Team will continue to monitor this and report on the findings.

18.0 Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) complaints and enquiries

- 18.1 Whereas Senior Managers and the Customer Care team always strive hard to resolve a complaint there are times when the complainant chooses to go to the LGO.
- 18.2 Complaints that include health as well as social care issues are investigated by a joint Parliamentary Health Services Ombudsman (PHSO) and LGO investigation team. Any such complaints will be reported on in this section of the annual report.
- 18.3 LGO complaint investigations can span more than one reporting period. In order to provide consistency the Customer Care Team report on *completed* investigations only, not those that have been referred or are still in progress.
- 18.4 The LGO are unable to investigate every complaint that goes to them. As such the LGO will occasionally decide to carry out 'initial assessments' with the Council in the first instance to determine if they will proceed further with a full and detailed investigation.
- 18.5 During this reporting year the LGO carried out 5 initial assessments which were not taken further. 1 was where the LGO determined that they would not be able to add further or find fault with the Council's complaint response which had already been issued. 3 complainants were referred back to the Council by the LGO as they had not yet used or completed the Council's complaint procedure. 1 was not investigated due to consent not being received by the Service User.
- 18.6 There were 3 final decisions issued between 01 April 2017 and 31 March 2018. This is one less in comparison to the last reporting year where 4 final decisions were issued.

- 18.7 2 complaints were not upheld and 1 was partially upheld.
- 18.8 The partially upheld complaint was investigated by the PHSO and LGO joint working team as it crossed over with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust (CPFT). The joint working team upheld the first aspect of the complaint about the failure to provide support and adequate respite arrangements for a Service User and their Carer. The Trust and the Council agreed with the Ombudsmen's recommendations and issued an apology along with a total of £900 redress for the distress and frustration caused to the Service User and their Carer. The second aspect of the complaint about the care and treatment which had been provided for several years was not upheld.
- 18.7 The Customer Care Team arranged for the LGO to provide a bespoke one-day skills course for Service Managers and Heads of Service investigating and responding to Adult Social Care complaints which was held in March 2018. The course was received well and the Customer Care Team will monitor the impact of the workshop over the coming year.

19.0 Specific learning from complaints

- 19.1 Emphasis is placed on learning from complaints. This section highlights the learning from specific complaints received in the first quarter of 2016-17.
- 19.2 A complaint about debt recovery letters identified that incorrect contact details for a staff member had been given. This had caused the complainant further inconvenience. The error has now been amended and staff in the Debt Recovery Team are aware of the importance of ensuring that the correct staff contact name is included in any correspondence with the Council.
- 19.3 The Financial Assessment team agreed to review the way Notional Capital listings are detailed and set a standard template for this for future use. This was agreed following issues raised in a complaint about the assets that should be included in the financial assessment for someone who was receiving residential care.
- 19.4 The investigation into a complaint about safeguarding practice in a social care team led to the shortcomings in practice being addressed directly with staff and work beginning on improving the tracking of safeguarding enquiries within the team.
- 19.5 A complaint investigation about the quality and quantity of communication with a family resulted in the inaccuracies being amended and a plan for improved communication with the family.
- 19.6 The mother of a woman with learning disabilities complained about the slow progress made regarding the provision of supported living accommodation. The investigation into the complaint showed that progress had been impeded because the person responsible for

authorising the application to the funding panel was unavailable. The response to this complaint included changes to increase the flexibility of the panel application process.

- 19.7 An investigation into a complaint about the amount of care provided showed that the assessment documentation had not been sent out. In addition there were communication issues involved in this complaint. These issues related to lack of involvement of a Power of Attorney in the discussions about care and support. The team manager has addressed these issues with the team.
- 19.8 A complaint about the standard of domiciliary care delivered showed that there was no clear care and support plan informing support staff of their duties. Actions taken to avoid a similar situation arising in the future include:
- Training of senior staff in relation to care and support plans and risk assessments
 - Regular monitoring home visits carried out
 - Learning reinforced with the team
- 19.9 A complaint about the delays in receiving a direct payment identified errors in the way in which the payment was processed. This has been addressed with staff by the Service Manager in supervision sessions.
- 19.10 The LGO investigation into a complaint about lack of support resulted in the LGO recommending that the Council:
- Contact the Independent Provider to ensure that it is aware of the importance of alerting the Council if it decides to stop supporting a Service User
 - Review their commissioning strategy for social care (within six months)
 - Consider whether training should be provided to officers about contingency planning for complex cases

In response to these recommendations:

- The Council, in addition to contacting the Independent Provider involved in the complaint, also revised the terms and conditions for Independent Providers. This now includes a reference to the need to alert the Council should the Provider decide to terminate the service it is providing to a Service User. This commissioning strategy has been reviewed which resulted in a new Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for Home and Community Support. This new arrangement will ensure services can be commissioned in a timely manner to meet all Service User's needs
 - A learning event was held for Council and CPFT staff to consider the issues in the complaint, the LGO recommendations and the practice implications
- 19.11 An investigation was made into a complaint about the support offered to someone who decided to move to Cambridgeshire during a weekend

visit to her family. It showed that there should have been clearer signposting to other agencies in the early stages of contact. In addition emails had not always been responded to promptly. Staff were reminded about the importance of signposting and responding to emails in line with the Council's policy.

- 19.12 A complaint about the standard of domiciliary care delivered resulted in the care agency being asked to address record keeping with their staff and to ensure that all related tasks required were carried out to an acceptable standard.
- 19.13 The investigation into a complaint about a direct payment and the direct payment monitoring agency showed that communication could have been improved and the following actions were taken:
- Additional IT resources were purchased by the direct payment agency
 - A new direct debit process was developed by the direct payment agency
 - A missed call back was addressed with the staff member
 - The above were highlighted with the Contracts team who monitor the service delivered by the Council's contracted providers
- 19.14 A complaint about the financial assessment process and disability related expenditure resulted in an agreement that examples relevant to Mental Health would be included on the checking sheet.
- 19.15 A complaint made by someone receiving care from Children's services about their mother's care had the outcome of forging a closer working relationship between adult and children's Social Workers to ensure that the complainant received regular updates about their mother's social care.
- 19.16 A complaint about the insufficient information in the social care assessment following discharge from hospital and the care provided by a care home brought about the following learning:
- Management commitment to improve case recording, and there is now a Case Recording Factsheet for staff
 - Training for the care home management
 - Communication training for the social care team
- 19.17 A complaint about the Council reclaiming a direct payment, and the work carried out to explore alternative options to fund transport resulted in:
- The staff team being made aware of the need for written confirmation to be sent informing the person that the direct payment would be ending.
 - The staff team being made aware of the importance of clear communication when exploring alternative transport options

20.0 Complaint Themes

- 20.1 Although not the primary reason for complaining, communication issues are raised in many complaints. These issues include, not returning calls or providing information on progress at regular intervals. Other issues include the explanation of complex information. This is particularly the case for financial information.
- 20.2 Similarly, although the main reason for complaining is different there are often issues raised about delays in processes. This refers to both financial and social care processes.
- 20.3 It was expected that there may be a theme about a reduction in service following on from policy changes made in 2015. However monitoring has shown that this is not the case and the number of complaints about a reduction in service has remained relatively low.
- 20.4 There has also been an increase in number of complaints that make reference to the care that is being provided by care agencies. The Customer Care team are monitoring this and in discussion with the relevant service areas highlight any themes for appropriate action to be taken as necessary.
- 20.5 Complaints about the assessment process have risen throughout the year. These complaints cover a number of issues such as not being listened to, family not being consulted, factual inaccuracies and disagreement with the outcome.
- 20.6 There has been an increase in the number of complaints about the support provided by the social care team. These complaints often refer to a lack of communication or delays.

21.0 Conclusions

- 21.1 Compliments decreased this reporting year.
- 21.2 MP enquiries have decreased by 34%
- 21.3 The number of formal complaints continues to increase year on year.
- 21.4 The most common reason for complaining during 2017-18 has been concerns about social care assessments and the standard of care provided by independent providers.
- 21.5 Only 3 complaints were investigated by the LGO and one was partially upheld.

21.6 The number of Senior Manager Reviews and Local Government Ombudsman decisions has decreased although the number of formal complaints has increased. There continues to be an emphasis on ensuring that the initial investigation is thorough.

22.0 **Recommendations**

22.1 Adult Committee to approve this report for publication on the external website in line with the 2009 DOH Regulations.

22.2 Customer Care Team to continue to work towards ensuring that the number of upheld or partially upheld LGO investigations remains very low.

Appendix 1

The definitions for compliments, comments, representations and complaints are set out below.

Compliment: a formal expression of satisfaction about service delivery by a Service User or their representative.

Comment: any suggestion or remark made formally by a Service User, their representative or a member of the public.

Representation: a comment or complaint about County Council or Government resources or the nature and availability of services.

Complaint: A concern or complaint is 'any expression of dissatisfaction that requires a response'. It is how the person raising a concern/complaint would like it addressed that helps define whether the expression of dissatisfaction requires an 'informal' or 'formal' response. It is therefore not always the complexity or severity of a concern/complaint that defines its formality or informality.

Informal Complaint: It is how the person making the complaint/concern would like it addressed that helps to define whether the expression of dissatisfaction requires an 'informal' or 'formal' response. It is therefore not always the complexity or severity of the complaint/concern that defines its formality or informality.

Formal Complaint: any formal expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet about service delivery by a Service User or their representative.

Corporate Complaints: Corporate complaints are outside the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009, and refer solely to the behaviour of a named County Council employee. A corporate complaint is investigated and responded to by the line manager of the person who is being complained about.

Appendix 2

Explanation of Acronyms

ASCMT	Adult Social Care Management Team
AAT	Adult and Autism Team
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CCS NHS Trust	Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust
CPFT	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust
CCT	Customer Care Team
DOH	Department of Health
EDT	Emergency Duty Team
FABA	Finance and Benefits Assessor
G.P	General Practitioner
HSO	Health Services Ombudsman
LDP	Learning Disability Partnership
LGO	Local Government Ombudsman
MCA	Mental Capacity Assessment
M.P.	Member of Parliament
NFA	No Further Action
OP	Older Peoples Services
OT	Occupational Therapy
PD	Physical Disabilities
PDSS	Physical Disabilities and Sensory Service
SS	Sensory Service

Appendix 3

User Experience Survey Results

(Period 1 October 2016 to 30 September 2017)

Questionnaires were sent to 31 complainants, whose complaints were received between 1 October 2016 and 30 September 2017. Not all complainants from this period were contacted, for example cases where the Service User has passed away, or where the complainant still has open complaints with the department.

12 responses were returned in total, which amounts to 39%. The statistics below relate solely to the 12 returned responses. 4 were returned anonymously, and 8 provided their name and address.

As we carry out the survey several months after their complaints were logged, in order to allow time for the complaints to be fully closed, it may be that complainants are unable to remember some details. This would account for some of the unanswered questions and responses which conflict with our records.

1 Which service area was your complaint about?

Service area	Number of responses received	Percentage %
OP	5	42
LDP	5	42
PD	1	8
Other: MH	1	8

2 Did you make the complaint as the Client, or Client's representative?

	Number of responses received	Percentage %
Client	1	8
Client's Representative	11	92

3 Did you receive acknowledgement of your complaint?

	Number of responses received	Percentage %
Received within 3 working days.	11	92
Not received within 3 working days.	1	8

One complainant said their complaint was not acknowledged within 3 working days, however, on checking the complaint file they were contacted within 3 working days.

4 If 'Yes' to Q3 – Was this contact helpful?

	Number of responses received	Percentage %
Yes	8	67
Not Sure	3	25
Not Answered	1	8

5 Did you receive a full written response in 20-25 working days?

	Number of responses received	Percentage %
Yes	10	84
No	1	8
Not Sure	1	8

Two complainants said they did not, or were not sure, they received a response within timescale. On checking their complaint files the responses were issued within 25 working days.

6 If 'No' to Q5 – Did you receive an explanation for the delay?

	Number of responses received	Percentage %
Not Answered	10	84
Yes	1	8
Not Sure	1	8

7 Was the complaint resolved to your satisfaction?

	Number of responses received	Percentage %
Yes	8	67
No	2	17
Some of it	1	8
Not Answered	1	8

8 Were you told how to take your complaint further?

	Number of responses received	Percentage %
Yes	10	84
No	2	17

Two complainants said they were not told how to take their complaint further. On checking their complaint files their responses did include the usual guidance for taking the complaint further.

9 Overall, how satisfied were you with the way your complaint was dealt with?

	Number of responses received	Percentage %
Very Satisfied	6	50
Satisfied	2	17
Fairly Satisfied	1	8
Not Satisfied	3	25