

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: 3 October 2017

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Customer Experience: Joint Children's and Adult Services Customer Experience: Compliments and Complaints Annual Report 2016/2017

Cabinet Members: Cllr Veronica Jones, Adult Wellbeing and Health  
Cllr Wayne Daley, Children's Services

### **Purpose of report**

To inform members of the Committee of:

- The activities of the Children's and Adult Services complaints services, including work on behalf of the clinical commissioning group – Northumberland.
- How customer experiences are sought and to provide an overview of what people have said about our services
- How complaints are handled and statistical information from 2016/17
- Matters of general note arising out of those complaints including some examples where action has been or is to be taken in order to improve services
- Decisions made by the Local Government Ombudsman in respect of complaints they received about children's and adult services
- Other feedback from people who use our services.

### **Recommendations**

**The Committee is recommended to note the content of the report and comment as appropriate.**

### **Key issues**

1. Over 2016/17 Adult and Children's Services gathered a variety of information about customer experience collected through a variety of different arrangements such as surveys, user forums or the statutory complaints process.
2. Over 2016/17 we have seen a significant reduction in the number of complaints received. We have undertaken a careful analysis of this situation and have found that two main factors have contributed to this.
3. Complaints are handled in a person centred way, taking into account risk, seriousness, complexity or sensitivity of events.
4. In particular and when it is appropriate we are using issues to improve services and people's experience.

# Customer Experience: Compliments and Complaints Annual Report 2016/2017

## Background

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Adult and Children's Services want local people who use social services to have a strong voice in helping to monitor, develop and improve the way we work. Customer experience information helps us understand how our services affect the lives of people who use our services, their carers and families and in turn this helps inform our service development. Complaints handling is a statutory function governed by the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 for Adult Services; and The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 for Children's Services.
- 1.2 In respect of adult social services, the complaints procedure is for a person who receives or has received services from us; or for a person who is affected, or likely to be affected, by any of our actions, omissions or decisions. In respect of children's social services, the complaints procedure is for a child or young person to make representations, including complaints, about the actions, decisions or apparent failings of a local authority's children's social services provision; and for any other appropriate person to act on behalf of the child or young person concerned or to make a complaint in their own right.
- 1.3 People who use our services are encouraged to give feedback about their experiences and many choose to compliment our staff or the services they use.

## Background Papers

There are no background documents for this report within the meaning of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

## Implications arising out of the report

<b>Policy</b>	Complaints contribute to monitoring the impact of the Council's policies and the effectiveness with which they are being implemented.
<b>Finance and value for money</b>	There are no direct financial implications.
<b>Human Resources</b>	There are no direct HR implications.
<b>Property</b>	There are no direct property implications.
<b>Equalities</b>	The equalities profile of complainants is in the main body of the report.

<b>Risk Assessment</b>	Individual complaints are risk-assessed on receipt, and appropriate actions are taken if someone is at immediate risk of harm.
<b>Sustainability</b>	No direct implications.
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder</b>	Arrangements are in place to ensure that if complaints suggest that someone is being abused, or a crime may have been committed, there is an appropriate response.
<b>Customer Considerations</b>	Complaints are one of a range of methods by which we receive feedback on the quality and consistency of our services. They are also invaluable for learning lessons and quality improvement.
<b>Consultation</b>	The Policy Board Members for Adult Care and Public Health and Children's Services have been consulted about this report.
<b>Wards</b>	All

### Report sign off.

Finance Officer	N/A
Monitoring Officer/Legal	N/A
Human Resources	N/A
Procurement	N/A
I.T.	N/A
Interim Director of Children's Services	Andy Johnson
Director of Adult's Services	Vanessa Bainbridge
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Wayne Daley / Cllr Veronica Jones

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