



# Northumberland

## County Council

### HEALTH AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: 03 July 2017

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Customer Experience: Joint Children's and Adult Services Customer  
Experience: Compliments and Complaints Annual  
Report 2017/2018

Report of the Executive Director of Adult Care

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

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#### **Purpose of report**

To inform members of the Committee of:

- The activities of the Children's Social Care and Adult Services complaints service, including work on behalf of the Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group
- 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 2017/18
- 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 and Social Care Ombudsman and the Health Service Ombudsman in respect of complaints they received about children's and adult services
- Other feedback from people who use our services.

#### **Recommendations**

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

#### **Link to Corporate Plan**

This report is relevant to the "Living" priority in the Corporate Plan.

#### **Key issues**

1. Over 2017/18 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 and the statutory complaints process.

2. Over 2017/18 we have seen an increase in the number of complaints received for both Adult and Children's Services although the overall trend has been downward over recent years. As noted in last year's report this increase was anticipated following new administrative systems being put in place or adjusted.
3. Every complaint is 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 findings to improve services and people's experience.

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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 and/or the services they use. Overall we receive many more compliments than complaints.

**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 implications.

<b>Legal</b>	There are no direct legal implications although 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>Procurement</b>	There are no direct implications.
<b>Human Resources</b>	There are no direct implications.
<b>Property</b>	There are no direct implications.
<b>Equalities</b> (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There are no direct implications.
<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>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>Carbon reduction</b>	There are no direct carbon reduction implications.
<b>Wards</b>	All

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

### **Report sign off.**

*Authors must ensure that officers and members have agreed the content of the report.*

	Initials
Monitoring Officer/Legal	N/A
Executive Director of Finance & S151 Officer	N/A
Executive Director	VB
Executive Director of Children's Services	CM
Portfolio Holder(s)	VJ WD

### **Author and contact details**

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health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee 03 July 2017 page 3

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