



Northumberland County Council

Health and Wellbeing OSC

Tuesday, 7 November 2023

Complaints Annual Report 2022-23: Adult Social Care and Continuing Health Care Services

Report of Councillor(s) Councillor Wendy Pattison, Cabinet Member for Caring for Adults

Responsible Officer(s): Neil Bradley, Executive Director for Adults, Ageing & Wellbeing

1. Link to Key Priorities of the Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the 'Tackling Inequalities' priority. It reflects some of the ways in which we listen to what people with a disability or illness and their carers tell us about how we can best support them to live the life they choose.

2. Purpose of report

To inform members of the Committee of:

- The activities of the complaints service where this relates to adult social care, including work on behalf of the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System (ICS);
- 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 2022/23;
- Matters of general note arising out of those complaints including some examples where action has been or is to be taken 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; and
- Other feedback from people who use our services.

3. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to note the content of the report and identify any additional areas for scrutiny.

4. **Forward plan date and reason for urgency if applicable**

The report does not require a key decision and is not urgent.

5. **Background**

- 5.1 Adult social care wants local people who use their 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. For adult social care, complaints handling is a statutory function governed by the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009.
- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 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.

6. **Options open to the Council and reasons for the recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to note the content of the report, which meets the standard required by stature, but can identify any additional areas for scrutiny for future reports, as appropriate.

7. **Implications**

Policy	Complaints contribute to monitoring the impact of the Council's policies and the effectiveness with which they are being implemented.
Finance and value for money	There are no direct implications.
Legal	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.
Procurement	There are no direct implications.
Human resources	There are no direct implications.
Property	There are no direct implications.

The Equalities Act: is a full impact assessment required and attached?	No - no equalities issues identified Not applicable. There are no direct Equalities Act implications.
Risk assessment	Individual complaints are risk-assessed on receipt, and appropriate actions are taken if someone is at immediate risk of harm.
Crime and disorder	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.
Customer considerations	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.
Carbon reduction	There are no direct carbon reduction implications
Health and wellbeing	There are no direct health and wellbeing implications.
Wards	All wards

8. Background papers

Not applicable

9. Links to other key reports already published

Not applicable.

10. Author and Contact Details

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