

## **Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement**

Meeting to be held on Tuesday, 12 September 2017

### **Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services**

Electoral Division affected: (All Divisions);
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### **Annual Reports on Complaints and Customer Feedback 2016/17**

(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

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#### **Executive Summary**

The Council has a legal obligation to publish a complaints and customer feedback report on social care statutory complaints on an annual basis. There are two statutory procedures, both different: one for Children and Young People's (CYP) social care complaints and one for adult social care complaints. Details of these are set out at Appendix 'A'. The corporate process is non-statutory and forms part of the [County Council's constitution](#) (Appendix K), and details are set out at Appendix 'B' to this report.

#### **Recommendation**

The Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement is recommended to:

- (i) note the statutory social care complaints annual report (Adults and CYP) 2016/17, acknowledging the associated learning, so that the County Council can meet its legal obligations.
  
- (ii) note the corporate complaints annual report 2016/17, acknowledging the associated learning.

#### **Background and Advice**

There is an established pathway for sharing intelligence from complaints. Every quarter, performance information from customer complaints and feedback is published by the complaints and appeals team, and is shared with all council heads of service and directors. This information is also used by the Business Intelligence Team and is incorporated into their quarterly Quality of Service Reports under Start Well, Live Well and Age Well along with the two Highlight Reports. In addition, a summary of the number of complaints for each quarter, along with comparisons to previous quarters, is included in the quarterly Corporate Performance Overview

report. These reports are also discussed at respective management team meetings across the council. Because complaints are an important tool to access customer satisfaction, the complaints team regularly attends management team meetings and links in with principal social workers to ensure that complaints which are upheld, result in continuous improvements for the Council. It is, of course, vital to learn the lessons from complaints, and spot early trends if service delivery is going wrong. This is particularly important in order to embed learning if new council processes are being implemented which impact negatively on the public.

### **A: Statutory Social Care Annual report**

Complaints are used by the council as an opportunity to learn and improve. They represented just over **one percent** of active adult social care and children's social care cases with an open referral in 2016/17. Statutory complaint totals have increased overall by almost 11% (628 in 2015/16 to 699 in 2016/17). Just under half of social care complaints were about social work practice, including complaints about assessments, which has risen in both adults and children's' social care.

- Complaints in adult social care (ASC) have risen by almost 15% (from 417 complaints in 2015/16 to 479 in 2016/17). Included in this figure there were 33 complex joint complaints with the NHS, which is a rise of 57% in the number of such complaints from 2015/16.
- Statutory children's social care (CSC) complaints increased by 4% (from 211 complaints in 2015/16 to 220 in 2016/17).
- Non Statutory CSC complaints decreased by 11% (from 105 complaints in 2015/16 to 93 in 2016/17). Statutory complaint totals have however increased overall by 54% (480 in 2014/15 to 735 in 2015/16).

As a direct result of social care complaints, the council has made improvements to processes and procedures, has improved communication with the NHS, customers and their families, and commissioned extra training for staff and managers. Improvements have also been made to individual social work practice, with increased staff awareness through training, and learning themes have been embedded via senior management teams.

The annual report for Children and Young People and Adults social care complaints is set out at Appendix 'A'.

### **B: Corporate non-statutory complaints and customer feedback**

In 2016/17, the council dealt with 934 corporate related expressions of dissatisfaction (including third party claims). Although this was a 16% rise over the previous year, it should be noted that 99% of these were resolved early in the complaint pathway and 'nipped in the bud', as part of ongoing business matters and by proactive management action. As a direct result of corporate complaints, the Council has made improvements to public information, and internal processes and procedures.

The majority of expressions of dissatisfaction were about highways, due to the considerable size of this service, and the fact that roads impact on every Lancashire citizen. However, Highways also attracts a large volume of enquiries and, as a result, is also the most complimented community service.

Further details of the corporate, non-statutory complaints are set out at Appendix 'B'.

### **Consultations**

Heads of Service, Directors and the Management Team have all commented on, amended and approved the complaint reports.

### **Implications:**

There are no financial, personnel, Human Rights or data protection issues or legal implications arising from this report

### **Risk management**

The contents of the reports may be of interest to the press, and the Communications Team should be made aware of its contents.

### **List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
<a href="#">The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009</a>	2009	Angela Esslinger/ 01772 533950
<a href="#">The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006</a>	2006	As above
<a href="#">Getting the best from complaints</a> 2006		As above