

Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 25 November 2021

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Corporate Priorities:
Delivering better services;
Caring for the vulnerable;

Statutory Social Care Annual Report - Complaints and Customer Feedback 2020-2021

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

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Brief Summary

Lancashire County 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 social care complaints and one for adult social care complaints.

The Statutory Social Care Annual Report on Complaints and Customer Feedback is set out at Appendix 'A'. The report is divided into separate sections for both adult and children and young people's services.

Recommendation

The Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement is asked to note and comment on the statutory social care complaints annual report for children and young people and adult services for 2020/21, acknowledging the associated learning, so that the county council can meet its legal obligations.

Details

Complaints are used by the county council as an opportunity to learn and improve. As a direct result of complaints made in 2020-2021, the county council has learnt lessons and improved services as detailed within the annual reports.

Because complaints are an important tool to access customer satisfaction, the complaints team regularly reports on statistics and trends, attends management team meetings and also links in with managers 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.

Statutory Social Care Annual Report on Complaints and Customer Feedback: 2020/21

The Social Care Annual Complaints and Customer Feedback Report is a legal requirement for both children and young people and adult social care. It is therefore divided into separate sections for both adult and children and young people's services.

Complaints represented just 1% of all active adult social care and children's social care cases throughout Lancashire in 2020/21. This is therefore a very small percentage of overall total of activity. Complaints have mainly reduced, but this reflects a pause in complaints investigations between April 2020 and June 2020, to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. These reductions also apply to Ombudsman investigations and councils nationally.

The adult social care section in Appendix 'A' is covered on pages 7 to 13. People are more likely to compliment adult social care services rather than to complain and compliments have increased by 8%. When complaints are made, in about 57% of cases, an aspect is found to be justified.

The children and young people's section is covered on pages 14 to 20. There has been an increase in complaints for the inclusion service. However, it is thought that this is due to the new processes that are in place and better recording, reflecting better engagement with customers. The proportion of complaints being resolved early in the complaint journey (52%) is higher than in 2019/20 (45%), which is welcome news. There has been a big decrease in compliments by 44%, which may reflect the changed priorities brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lessons learnt mainly centre around making improvements to the way we communicate with everyone concerned and are detailed in Appendix 'A'. The statutory report is made publicly available on the council website and shared with other interested agencies such as Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission and Healthwatch Lancashire.

Consultations

Operational social care teams, managers and directors have been consulted on the annual report and the learning from complaints that has been identified.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

If an annual report on social care complaints and customer feedback is not published, the county council would be in breach of its statutory duties.

Equality and Cohesion and Human Rights

The extensive lessons learnt sections in Appendix 'A' outline improvements made to services, as a direct result of upheld complaints and listening to feedback from our most vulnerable customers and their representatives.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		