

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL

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| REPORT TO : | Corporate Scrutiny Committee |
| DATE: | 4/09/2017 |
| SUBJECT : | Annual Report – ‘Listening and Learning from Complaints’ |
| PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S): | Cllr Llinos Medi |
| HEADS OF SERVICE: | Children’s Services: Llyr Bryn Roberts (Interim) Adult Services: Alwyn Jones |
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1.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

R1- To note the views of service users received during 2016/17 regarding the services provided by Social Services.

R2- To note the performance of Social Services in implementing the Representations and Complaints Procedure and dealing with complaints.

R3- To note the Action Plan for developing the arrangements for dealing effectively with representations and complaints received from service users and their representatives.

2.0 REASONS

2.1 Social Services operate a statutory Representations and Complaints Procedure in Wales, under the Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Representations Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014. There is an obligation to produce an Annual Report on the operation of the Representations and Complaints Procedure and present it to the relevant Local Authority Scrutiny Committee to monitor the arrangements for dealing effectively with complaints received from service users and their representatives.

2.2 It is considered important that a record is kept of comments and complaints in order for Social Services to learn lessons from them, as part of improving service delivery. It is considered good practice to share the annual complaints report with council members to ensure transparency.

Author: Sophie Shanahan

Job Title: Customer Care Development and Designated Complaints Officer,
Social Services
Date: June 2017

APPENDIX 1- Annual Report: 'Listening and Learning from Complaints'

APPENDIX 2- Action Plan 2017/18

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn y Gymraeg / This document is available in
Welsh



Social Services – Children and Adults

‘Listening and Learning from Complaints’

SOCIAL SERVICES REPRESENTATIONS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

ANNUAL REPORT - 2016/17

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report refers to the way the Social Services Representations and Complaints Procedure was implemented within Children's and Adult Services during the period from April 2016 until the end of March 2017.
- 1.2 The Customer Care Development and Designated Complaints Officer works within the Social Services Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Team and was responsible for the administration of the Representations and Complaints Procedure during this reporting period. The Complaints Officer is accountable to the Director of Social Services (Assistant Chief Executive) and is managed on her behalf by the Service Manager for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance.
- 1.3 The Complaints Officer is responsible for:
- Co-ordinating the service arrangements in order to comply with the Representations and Complaints Procedure;
 - Recording complaints and positive and negative comments from service users and their representatives;
 - Monitoring the response to complaints within timescales specified in the Welsh Government regulations for dealing with complaints under Stage 1;
 - Co-ordinating investigations by independent investigators into formal complaints under Stage 2 of the procedure;
 - Ensuring that a formal written response together with a copy of the independent investigation report is sent to the complainant within the timescale of 25 working days under Stage 2 of the procedure, keeping the complainant informed if any delay is anticipated;
 - Co-ordinating responses by Social Services to inquiries held by the Office of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales into complaints in relation to Social Services matters;
 - Monitoring Action Plans to ensure that lessons are learnt from the process of investigating complaints in order to improve the quality of the services;
 - Developing the internal Representations and Complaints Procedure;
 - Ensuring that information is available in order to facilitate access to the Representations and Complaints Procedure for service users and their representatives;
 - Providing training and support to promote better understanding of the function of the Representations and Complaints Procedure amongst Social Services staff.
- 1.4 The main objectives of these arrangements are to:
- Record any comments, be they negative or positive, about the services provided;
 - Attempt to resolve concerns and complaints as near as possible to the point of delivery in order to avoid escalation;
 - Provide an opportunity for service users and other eligible people to present formal complaints under Stage 2 of the procedure.

2. Representations – Positive and Negative Comments

2.1 Positive Comments

2.1.1 A total of 202 positive comments were recorded during the year (46 for Children’s Services and 156 for Adult Services) – a slight increase on the previous year’s total of 197. Of the 46 positive comments received by Children’s Services in 2016/17, 26 were from other professionals, while 20 were from service users, their representatives or family members, or foster carers. Of the 156 positive comments received by Adult Services, 4 were from other professionals, while 152 were from service users or their family members. The positive comments were categorised as follows:

Table 1

| POSITIVE COMMENTS | | | |
|---|----|--|-----|
| Children’s Services | | Adult Services | |
| Looked After Children Team | 8 | Residential Care | 107 |
| Family Intervention Team | 15 | Môn Care | 29 |
| Duty Team | 7 | Adults North Team | 2 |
| Child Placement Team | 4 | Adults Duty Team | 3 |
| Community Support Service | 5 | Physical and Sensory Disabilities Team | 4 |
| Specialist Children’s Services | 1 | Learning Disabilities Team | 2 |
| Integrated Family Support Service | 1 | Client Finance Team | 1 |
| North Wales Adoption Service (Anglesey-based staff) | 1 | Management | 1 |
| Positive comments regarding more than one team | 4 | Transformation Team | 1 |
| | | Adults South Team | 1 |

| | | | |
|--|--------------|---|--------------|
| | | Business Support Team | 1 |
| | | Community Mental Health Team (comment about Local Authority employee) | 1 |
| | | Positive comments regarding more than one team | 3 |
| | Total | 46 | Total |
| | | | 156 |

2.1.2 Examples of positive comments received are as follows:

“Sincere gratitude for all the guidance and support. It has been an absolute pleasure to meet with you all.” – Looked After Children Team

“Genuinely cares about our views and the placement. Very dedicated... very knowledgeable when it comes to Attachment issues. He is very approachable and willing to discuss contentious issues with us and helps to negotiate ways in which these issues can be resolved. We just wanted to let you know what a professional but also friendly and caring person he is.” – Looked After Children Team

“The social worker has been of great assistance. I am confident that if I needed any guidance or assistance, I could pick up the phone.” – Integrated Family Support Service

“Thank you for a course like this, we have learned a lot from it and will try and use all you have taught us at every opportunity we get.” – Community Support Service, Children’s Services

“Thanks for the very efficient and caring service. All the personnel were extremely courteous and well-informed. We feel our needs were promptly identified and efficiently met.” – Physical and Sensory Disabilities Team

“You have all shown such warmth, such skill, such professionalism. Put simply, you are first class people.” – Residential Care

“Truly excellent standards of care. The ladies concerned were not only professional but also sympathetic and understanding.” – Môm Care

“The work done has been nothing below excellent. She has established a good therapeutic relationship. She demonstrates professionalism to the highest standard and is an asset to your support team.” – Community Mental Health Service

In summary, the positive comments received suggest that individuals value services that are delivered by individual practitioners / staff, and value guidance, support, care, dedication, accessibility and warmth shown by staff.

2.2 Negative Comments

2.2.1 A total of 27 negative comments / concerns were received by the Complaints Officer during the year.* 13 of these were for Children’s Services and 14 for Adult Services. Sometimes it is possible to resolve a concern within 24 hours, in which case it does not need to be logged under Stage 1 of the procedure; or the service user may state that they do not wish to make an official complaint under Stage 1 or Stage 2 of the Social Services Representations and Complaints Procedure. Sometimes concerns are received which relate to historical matters, and therefore are not eligible for investigation under the complaints procedure, though a response of some kind may still be made if appropriate. The 27 negative comments are categorised in Table 2 below.

* In creating this statistic, cases where individuals have made more than one negative comment about the same situation/case have been counted as one negative comment, due to the difficulty of quantifying the amount of negative comments in situations where a large amount of contacts are received about one case.

Table 2

| NEGATIVE COMMENTS | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| Children’s Services | | Adults’ Services | |
| Duty Team | 3 | Physical and Sensory Disabilities Team | 2 |
| Specialist Children’s Services / Occupational Therapy for Children | 1 | Learning Disabilities Team | 2 |
| Family Intervention Team | 5 | Residential Care | 3 |
| LAC Team | 3 | Adults North Team | 1 |
| Community Support Service | 1 | Adults South Team | 1 |
| | | Community Mental Health Team | 2 |
| | | Môn Care | 1 |

| | | | |
|--------------|-----------|--|-----------|
| | | Negative comments about more than one team | 2 |
| Total | 13 | Total | 14 |

A comparison with the figures in Table 1 shows that the total number of positive comments outweighs that of the negative comments received.

3. Stage 1 Complaints – Local Resolution

3.1 Table 3 below summarises the number of complaints received over the last eight years concerning Adult and Children’s Services under Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the Representations and Complaints Procedure.

Table 3

| Year | Stage 1 Adults | Stage 1 Children | Stage 1 Total | Stage 2 Adults | Stage 2 Children | Stage 2 Total |
|---------|----------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|
| 2008/09 | 45 | 13 | 58 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| 2009/10 | 29 | 23 | 52 | 4 | 1 | 5 |
| 2010/11 | 37 | 20 | 57 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2011/12 | 25 | 40 | 65 | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| 2012/13 | 32 | 24 | 56 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| 2013/14 | 24 | 26 | 50 | 5 | 6 | 11 |
| 2014/15 | 17 | 20 | 37 | 2 | 5 | 7 |
| 2015/16 | 24 | 29 | 53 | 4 | 1 | 5 |
| 2016/17 | 8 | 46 | 54 | 2 | 3* | 5 |

*of which 1 was withdrawn after the Independent Investigator was appointed.

3.2 Table 3 shows that the number of complaints recorded under Stage 1 of the procedure has increased compared with previous years for Children’s Services, but has decreased for Adult Services. Despite the higher number of Stage 1 complaints received by Children’s Services, the comparatively low proportion of these which were escalated to Stage 2 indicates a focus on customer care and resolution when Stage 1 complaints were received.

3.3 Of the 54 Stage 1 complaints received, 50 of them received an acknowledgement within 2 working days (the timescale within which an acknowledgement should be sent under the regulations).

3.4 The table below illustrates the services’ performance in relation to responding to Stage 1 Complaints within statutory timescales. Complainants are offered meetings / telephone discussions within 10 working days of the complaint

being acknowledged, followed by a response letter to confirm the terms of the resolution of their complaint within 5 working days of the discussion.

Table 4

| | Children's Services | | Adult Services | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|
| | Discussion | Written response | Discussion | Written response |
| Percentage within timescale | 74% | 65% | 75% | 38% |

3.5 The above percentages show a slight decrease in the proportion of discussions held within timescale for Children's Services (compared to 77% the previous year), but an increase in the proportion of written responses sent within timescale (compared to 55% the previous year). For Adult Services, the proportion of discussions held within timescale was the same as for the previous year, while the proportion of written responses sent within timescale decreased (from 62% the previous year). It can be challenging to complete a written response within 5 working days of the discussion with the complainant, particularly if the complaint is very complex, the complainant has raised new matters during the discussion, or full investigation requires that we seek information from other agencies. However, the proportion of responses provided within timescale is an area for improvement, particularly in relation to the written responses. Where information is required from other agencies, an interim written response could be sent.

3.6 Table 5 illustrates a breakdown of the service areas for complaints received under Stage 1 of the Social Services Complaints and Representations Procedure in Children's and Adult Services.

Table 5

| STAGE 1 COMPLAINTS | | | |
|---------------------------|----|--|---|
| Children's Services | | Adult Services | |
| Duty Team | 14 | Physical Disabilities Team | 1 |
| Community Support Service | 1 | Out of Hours Team (Anglesey based staff) | 1 |
| Family Intervention Team | 17 | Adults South Team | 4 |
| LAC Team | 7 | Adults North Team | 2 |
| Child Placement Team | 4 | | |
| Specialist Children's | 1 | | |

| | | | |
|---|-----------|--------------|----------|
| Services | | | |
| Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Team | 1 | | |
| Complaints relating to more than one team | 1 | | |
| Total | 46 | Total | 8 |

3.7 An analysis of the nature of the complaints to Children’s Services shows that some themes found in the Stage 1 complaints were:

- Communication matters / information from Children’s Services practitioners
- Insufficient support or intervention
- Numerous changes in social worker
- Delays in necessary or agreed actions being carried out

3.8 Within Adult Services, some themes found in the Stage 1 complaints were:

- Delays in relation to arranging services
- Unclear, insensitive or inadequate communication

These need to be seen as themes arising from a very small number of complaints, and as such caution must be exercised in concluding these to be significant issues. However, they are issues that impacted on individuals and attention to achieving consistency is required.

4. Stage 2 Complaints

4.1 Overview of Stage 2 Complaints

4.1.1 Stage 2 of the Procedure involves an investigation by an Independent Investigator. Although we aim to resolve complaints at Stage 1, there are occasions when this cannot be achieved. Examples are in cases of more complex complaints or when the complainant has insisted on going straight to Stage 2. Complainants have the right to bypass Stage 1 and request to proceed directly to Stage 2 should they so wish.

4.1.2 During the year, a total of 5 complaints were registered under Stage 2, one of which was withdrawn before the investigation was completed; this is the same total as the previous year. One of the Stage 2 complaints to Adult Services had already received a Stage 1 response, while one went straight to Stage 2 at the complainant’s request. Of the three Stage 2 complaints to Children’s Services, two had received a Stage 1 response, while one went directly to Stage 2. Reasons given for wishing to escalated to Stage 2 included:

- that dissatisfaction had been acknowledged but not dealt with;
- dissatisfaction that Stage 1 had not delivered the desired outcome;
- feeling that the case had not been thoroughly investigated at Stage 1;
- feeling that discussions with the Service were not moving matters forward.

4.1.3 One of the Stage 2 investigations regarding Adult Services was completed within the statutory 25 days timescale. One Stage 2 investigation did not progress to the point of response as it was withdrawn, while the other three Stage 2 responses were sent outside of the timescale. The reasons for the delay in sending out these responses were the availability of staff and independent investigators. In cases where there have been delays, complainants have been updated and kept informed of the expected date for a response to be sent.

4.1.4 Action Plans are created following Stage 2 investigations if there are recommendations in the Independent Investigator’s report. Stage 2 investigations into complaints to Children’s Services involve discussion with the Independent Person regarding the contents of the Action Plans. The Action Plans are signed off by the Head of Service and are then monitored on a monthly basis until all the actions are completed.

4.2 Stage 2 Complaints to Children’s Services

4.2.1 During 2016/17, three complaints to Children’s Services were registered under Stage 2 of the Procedure. Table 6 examines these complaints in more detail:

Table 6

| NUMBER | NATURE OF COMPLAINT | LESSONS LEARNED |
|--------|---|--|
| CS021 | <p>Complaint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay in being informed of the outcome of assessment • Correspondence not responded to • Incorrect / unfounded information included in letter • Assessment flawed in relation to money counted • Complainant’s expenses not mentioned in letter • Same questions repeated on different visits • Documentation alleged to | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Children’s Services staff to be aware that if they do not receive a timely response to a request for legal advice, this should be discussed with internal legal services to see if an acceptable timescale for providing the advice can be agreed. If internal legal services do not have the capacity to provide advice within an acceptable timescale, advice should be sought |

| | | |
|--------------|---|--|
| | <p>have been lost then found</p> <p>COMPLAINT WAS WITHDRAWN BEFORE STAGE 2 INVESTIGATION COULD BE COMPLETED.</p> | <p>from an external legal advisor.</p> |
| CS023 | <p>Complaint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent messages given • Contact by North Wales Adoption Service never took place • “Concerns” were never explained • Social worker did not know the child well enough to give an opinion • Local Authority made inaccurate statement • Opinions of Health professionals ignored • LAC Nurse not consulted • Mishandling of case not conducted in best interests of the child • Financial costs unnecessarily incurred due to poor handling of the case <p>Outcome: Four points of complaint upheld. Four points of complaint not upheld. One point of complaint partially upheld.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When foster carers express a wish to adopt a child in their care, a full adoption assessment should be carried out. • Placement team to ensure assessment of suitability to foster and a copy of the latest foster care review is available prior to any placement. • Social workers to read the assessment of suitability to foster and latest foster care review document before any placement. • Service to explore completing end of placement reports when fostering placements end. • Need to record issues that influence decision making, recording their source and evidencing information. |
| CS024 | <p>Complaint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to act in good time to address the behaviours that a child presented with, before the placement was finally sourced. <p>Outcome: 1 point of complaint partially upheld</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where there is a need for a respite placement, this should be provided in a timely manner. • There is a need for sufficient available placements for children with a range of behavioural needs. |

4.3 Stage 2 Complaints to Adult Services

4.3.1 During 2016/17, two complaints were received under Stage 2 of the Procedure. Table 7 below examines the two complaints in more detail:

Table 7

| NUMBER | NATURE OF COMPLAINT | LESSONS LEARNED |
|--------|---|---|
| OP009 | <p>Complaint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Government guidance not followed with regards deprivation of assets in completing a financial assessment • Date of commencement of the Council's contributions to the service user's care not as it should be • Welsh Government guidance not followed regarding top-ups • Financial contribution to costs of service user's care not acceptable <p>Outcome: 4 points of complaint not upheld.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authority to make more detailed enquires at the outset to determine a fuller picture of the financial position. |
| OP010 | <p>Complaint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient enquiries made regarding why service user's physical condition had deteriorated • Authorities and family not alerted to the fact that service user's condition had deteriorated • Medical professionals not contacted when appropriate <p>Outcome: Two points of complaint upheld. One point of complaint partially upheld.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social workers to agree proportionate and clearly documented actions as part of all care reviews. |

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5. Independent Investigators List

- 5.1 Social Services for the 6 counties across North Wales maintain a list of Independent Investigators to investigate Stage 2 complaints. Continuous attempts are made to identify and recruit qualified and experienced staff for this panel. In the light of the Welsh Language Standards, the Local Authority is anxious to recruit individuals who have skills in both Welsh and English.
- 5.2 Independent Persons have to be appointed to supervise investigations into Stage 2 complaints about the discharge of specific functions under the Children Act 1989 and the Adoption and Children Act 2002. An Independent Person was appointed for two of the Stage 2 investigations into complaints to Children's Services during 2016/17.

6. Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

- 6.1 The Ombudsman did not conduct any investigations into either Children's or Adult Services complaint in 2016/17. One complaint was referred to the Ombudsman, but the Ombudsman did not investigate it as the complaint had not yet been made to the Local Authority.

7. Professional Advocacy Services

- 7.1 Independent advocacy services for children are provided by Tros Gynnal Plant as part of a regional advocacy service. All children who make complaints to Social Services are asked if they would like an advocate to support them with making their complaint, and a referral is made to the advocacy service if they consent to this. In 2017/18, the active offer will be introduced. Monitoring reports from the provider show that positive use is being made of professional advocacy for children, with 96 young people referred by Isle of Anglesey County Council in 2016/17.
- 7.2 Social Services has a service level agreement with the North Wales Advice and Advocacy Service to provide advocacy for service users with learning disabilities. People accessing primary or secondary mental health services can receive advocacy support through the Gwynedd and Môn Mental Health Advocacy Service, which is funded via BCUHB but is available to all mental health service users, including older people with dementia. People detained under the Mental Health Act and those receiving hospital in-patient care and treatment can access the IMHA (Independent Mental Health Advocacy) service, and those detained under the Mental Health Act can also access free legal representation. Other adults may be signposted to 3rd sector organisations such as Citizens Advice Bureau or Age Cymru. Adult Services have reviewed their procurement of advocacy services in 2016/17. During

2017/18, the way Adult Services commissions advocacy services will change based on the findings of this review.

8. Complaints in relation to services provided jointly with the Health Board

8.1 A joint complaints protocol, the 'North Wales Multi-agency Protocol on the Handling of Complaints between Health and Social Services', was approved by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and the six North Wales Local Authorities in 2017. It is intended that this will improve co-ordination when complaints are made which involve both the Health Board and the Local Authority.

9. Information Strategy

9.1 An information leaflet for children regarding the Representations and Complaints Procedure should be given to all children who receive a service from Children's Services, and a leaflet for adults also given to their family. Relevant staff have recently been reminded of the importance of this. A complaints leaflet is also given to children when they become Looked After Children. Adult Services are currently reviewing the provision of information to service users at the point of commencing care and support assessments, and this will include information about the complaints procedure. Service users are reminded of their right to make a complaint when they have their Annual Reviews. They are also given a copy of the complaints leaflet when they go into a residential or nursing home. Service users and their family members are sent a copy of the complaints leaflet when complaints from them are received, along with the written acknowledgement for their complaint, within two working days of the complaint being received.

9.2 Information regarding the Representations and Complaints Procedure is published on Isle of Anglesey County Council's website.

10. 2016-17 Expenditure

10.1 In maintaining and implementing the Social Services Representations and Complaints Procedure under the statutory guidance, the main costs to the Service (other than staffing costs) are:

- Costs of work undertaken by Independent Investigators on Stage 2 investigations;
- Costs of work undertaken by Independent Persons on Stage 2 investigations;
- Costs of attending meetings and/or training;
- Costs relating to publicity and publishing information leaflets.

10.2 Table 8 below shows expenditure on work by Independent Investigators and Independent Persons during the period 01 April 2016 – 31 March 2017

(excluding costs for investigations not invoiced 2017/2018, but including costs for investigations from 2015/2016 which were invoiced in 2016/17). These costs are lower than they were the previous year, due partly to some of the investigations not being invoiced until the following financial year.

Table 8

| Children's Services | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Nature of Spend | £ |
| Independent Investigator | £90 |
| Total | £90 |
| Adult Services | |
| Nature of Spend | £ |
| Independent Investigator | £1494.71 |
| Independent Investigator | £839.10 |
| Total | £2,333.81 |

11. Monitoring and evaluating the operation of the Complaints and Representations Procedure

- 11.1 Quarterly monitoring reports are presented to the Adult Services Senior Management Team and Children's Services Quality Assurance Panel, which evaluate the number of complaints and compliments received against each service under each stage of the procedure and the lessons learnt from complaints. We also monitor how effective Social Services is in dealing with complaints within the required timescales.
- 11.2 Discussion has taken place regarding how the Service evidences implementation of learning from Stage 1 complaints (which, unlike Stage 2 complaints, do not usually involve the creation of formal Action Plans). A new template has been created for Stage 1 response letters, which includes a section on actions taken to address any issues which have come to light as a result of the complaint. Within Children's Services, it has been agreed that these actions will be discussed once a quarter at the Children's Services Operational Management Team meeting in order to ensure that the actions have been carried out. Such actions include, for example, sharing learning points with relevant staff, along with reminders of the importance of carrying out certain actions.

11.3 During the year, the North Wales Complaints Officers' Group met on a quarterly basis and discussed arrangements for implementing the Complaints and Representations Procedure.

12. Training

12.1 The Designated Complaints Officer delivers training for Social Services staff in order to raise awareness of the Complaints and Representations Procedure, as well as customer care issues. One such training session was held in 2016/17.

12.2 The Designated Complaints Officer now meets with staff as part of their inductions to raise staff awareness of the Complaints and Representations Procedure, Customer Care Standards and the Welsh Language Standards.

12.3 The Designated Complaints Officer also did a presentation on key messages from complaints, customer care issues, the Welsh Language Standards and More Than Just Words at a Children's Services Staff Conference in February 2017.

12.4 A conference, 'How to Turn Public Sector Complaints into Services Improvements', was attended by the Designated Complaints Officer in 2016.

12.5 Written guidance is provided by the Designated Complaints Officer to managers regarding Stage 1 response letters and meetings. The Designated Complaints Officer circulates internal protocols to new managers, as necessary.

**Sophie Shanahan,
Customer Care Development and Designated Complaints Officer**

Date: June 2017

Action Plan 2017/18

| Area | Action | Steps by Whom | By when |
|--|--|---|---------|
| 1. Strengthen the operation of the Representations and Complaints Procedure | i) Continuously ensure that all Social Services staff follow the Guidance and record positive and negative comments and complaints so that the Complaints Officer can keep accurate statistics. | Heads of Service / Service Managers / Team Managers | Ongoing |
| 2. Deal with complaints in an effective and timely manner under Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the Procedure | i) Conduct a thorough investigation of complaints at Stage 1 of the Procedure to ensure a comprehensive response in an effort to allay dissatisfaction and avoid escalation to Stage 2 | Heads of Service / Service Managers / Team Managers | Ongoing |
| | ii) Ensure timely responses to complaints within the set timescale of 10 working days to hold a discussion with the complainant and 5 days from the discussion to send out the written response. | Heads of Service / Service Managers / Team Managers | Ongoing |
| | iii) Ensure timely responses to complaints within the set timescale of 25 working days under Stage 2 of the | Designated Complaints Officer | |

| | Procedure. | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 3. Learn lessons from investigations into complaints | i) Form action plans in response to recommendations in Stage 2 investigation reports into complaints | Heads of Service / Service Managers / Designated Complaints Officer | Within 20 working days of providing the complainant with a formal written response and a copy of the investigation report |
| | Clearly record in Stage 1 responses any actions to be taken in response to learning points identified | Service Managers / Team Managers | Ongoing |
| 4. Provide information regarding the operation of the Representations and Complaints Procedure | i) Ensure that the information regarding the Representations and Complaints Procedure is circulated to every child who receives a service from the Service | Children's Services Team Managers | Ongoing |
| | ii) Provide information to Adult Services service users about the Representations and Complaints Procedure at the point of commencement of care and support assessments; remind service users of complaints procedure at Annual Reviews | Adult Services Team Managers | Ongoing |
| 5. Raising awareness of the Representations and Complaints Procedure | Raise awareness of the Representations and Complaints Procedure as part of the staff induction process | Designated Complaints Officer | Ongoing |
| | Circulate reminders of the need to forward complaints, negative comments and compliments to the Designated Complaints Officer | Designated Complaints Officer | Every 6 months |