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SECTION 1:

Children's Services, Adult Services and Public Health Complaints Activity 1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019

1.0 Children's Services – Complaint Activity

1.1 Informal Complaints

The complaint regulations provide an opportunity for children/young people, parents and carers to raise issues of concern without those matters being treated as formal complaints as long as they are speedily and effectively addressed. These are referred to as informal complaints; 14 informal complaints were received during quarter two (1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019) compared to 12 received during quarter two 2018/19; an increase of two.

1.2 Stage One Complaints

During quarter two (1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019) the Council received 11 stage one Children's Services complaints compared to 21 during quarter two for 2018/19, a decrease of 10.

The 11 complaints received during this second quarter refer to 9 separate service areas. No service area received a disproportionate amount of complaints, the highest figure of two referred to Children and Young People in Care, Team 1 and 2.

1.3 Timescales

Overall, 13 complaints were responded to and concluded during this second quarter. Four complaints were responded to within ten working days, six within 11-20 working days, and the remaining three in just over 21 working days. Cases responded to 21 days or over timescale are due to various reasons for example, complex cases, availability of resources. In these circumstances, complainants are regularly updated on the progress of their complaint.

1.4 However, it should be noted that of the 13 complaints resolved during this period four were dealt with in accordance with the Children's Act and the average timescale was 11 days. Nine complaints were dealt with in accordance with the Corporate Complaints Procedure (Non-Children's Act) which states complaints should be responded to within 21 calendar days; the average timescale was 19 days.

1.5 Stage Two Complaints

During this period, we have received no stage two complaints and, therefore, there were no financial implications for Children's Services.

1.6 Stage Three Complaints

Where a stage two complaint investigation has been carried out and the complainant remains dissatisfied, they have the right to request matters proceed to the final stage of the complaint's procedures, a stage three Independent Complaint Review Panel. There were no complaints escalated to stage three during this quarter.

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1.7 Complaint Category

These are the headings under which we register the complaint against, based on the complaint details received – see attached Dashboard.

1.8 Compliments

All compliments are recorded by the Customer Feedback Team and reported as part of the team's quarterly monitoring process. During this second quarter, a pleasing 33 compliments were received for Children's Services, compared to 19 in quarter two 2018/19. Children's Safeguarding Team and Children and Young People in Care Team 2 received four compliments each. Followed by the Disabled Children and Young People Team and Fostering Team who received three compliments each.

2.0 Public Health Complaints

2.1 Regionally and nationally, Councils receive very few complaints in relation to Public Health Services. A typical complaint would be where a Council has commissioned a service for local people through a Clinic or GP practice. Complaints in relation to GP's and Hospitals are dealt with through an entirely separate complaint process managed by Health Services.

In relation to Public Health services, there have been no complaints received in quarter two (1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019).

3.0 Adult Social Care Complaints

3.1 Informal Complaints

During quarter two (1 July to 30 September 2019) the Council received eight complaints which were resolved at service level without going through the formal route. This was compared to 24 informal complaints received during quarter two 2018/19, a decrease of 16.

3.2 Stage One Complaints

During quarter two (1 July to 30 September 2019) the Council received 11 formal complaints compared with 14 in quarter two 2018/19; representing a decrease of 3 complaints this quarter. Out of the 11 formal complaints received, there was one complaint received in relation to the Independent Providers. This is where Adult Social Care commission an independent agency to deliver a service on its behalf, such as a domiciliary care service. No service area received a disproportionate amount of complaints. The 11 complaints received covered eight separate service areas; the highest figure of two complaints referred to the Adult Community Team East, Adult Community Team West and the Health and Social Care Team.

3.3 Complaint Category

These are the headings under which we register the complaint against, based on the complaint details received – see attached Dashboard.

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3.4 Timescales

Overall, 12 complaints were responded to and concluded during this second quarter. Seven complaints were responded to within 10 working days, four within 11-20 working days and one complaint was responded to over 21 working days. The average number of days to respond and close all complaints over the term significantly was nine days. Cases responded to 21 days or over timescale are due to various reasons for example, complex cases, availability of resources. In these circumstances, complainants are regularly updated on the progress of their complaint.

3.5 Compliments

All compliments are recorded by the Customer Feedback Team and reported as part of the team's quarterly monitoring process. Sixty-nine compliments were received during this second quarter relating to Adult Services. Thirty-one compliments were received for Welfare Rights, including 19 Customer Satisfaction Cards returned. This was followed by ten compliments received for the Bradley Resource Centre.

3.6 Areas of Learning from Complaints

See Appendix 4 for stage 1 learning.

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SECTION 2: Corporate Complaints Activity, Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman Complaints Activity 1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019

4.0 Corporate Complaints Activity, Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman

4.1 Informal service requests/enquiries

The customer feedback team works alongside the person complaining and the service involved, to resolve the complaint informally, preventing it becoming a formal complaint. It should be noted that 270 service request enquiries were logged with the customer feedback team during quarter two, compared to 303 received during quarter one. These types of enquiries are varied, for example, litter, missed bin collection, parking, appeals; all enquiries were logged and resolved informally or sign posted to the correct process without going through the corporate complaints procedure, therefore providing a better outcome and resolution for the customer.

4.2 Corporate stage 1 complaints received

During this quarter (1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019) the Council received 35 stage one corporate complaints compared to 73 during quarter two for 2018/19, a decrease of 38 cases. No service area received a disproportionate amount of complaints. The 35 complaints covering ten separate service areas, the highest figure of 11 complaints referring to Revenues and Benefits, Waste Management received seven and Licensing received five. In some cases, this has followed extensive but unsuccessful attempts to resolve some of those matters at service level.

4.3 Corporate Complaint Category

During this quarter (1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019) the main issue of complaint involved failure to provide a service (14), followed by failure to achieve standards/quality (6), dissatisfaction of council policies (5), conduct of employees (4), failure to consider relevant matters (4) and delays in responding or administrative (2).

4.4 Corporate Timescales

The average response time for responding to each complaint is 13 days for quarter two. This figure has improved from the previous quarter of 16 days; the Customer Feedback Team will continue to monitor this average response time with service groups to ensure a reduction is achieved. The response timescale for stage 1 complaints responding within 21 calendar days is 99%, we have therefore achieved our target of target 95%.

4.5 Stage 2 corporate complaints in quarter one

During this quarter (1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019) the Council received seven stage two corporate complaints; out of the seven cases received, two cases were upheld (at fault).

Stage two complaints received as follows:

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- City Environment - One complaint received for Customer Services in relation direct debit incorrectly set up for customer; outcome upheld; appropriate learning, recommendations and remedies have been undertaken with the service
- City Environment – One complaint received for Waste Management in relation to changes in refuse collection; outcome not upheld
- City Environment – One complaint received for Licensing in relation to unclear guidelines on website in relation to renewing a vehicle plate; outcome upheld; appropriate learning, recommendation and remedies have been undertaken with the service
- City Environment – One complaint received for Environmental Protection in relation to fly tipping and rubbish on the highway; outcome not upheld
- City Environment – Environmental Services (Arbor) in relation to maintenance/health and safety of tree at the front of a property; outcome not upheld
- Finance – One complaint received for Revenues and Benefits in relation to council tax liability; outcome not upheld
- Regeneration – One complaint received for Planning Department in relation to new development site; outcome not upheld

4.6 Corporate Compliments

All compliments are recorded by the Customer Feedback Team and reported as part of the team's quarterly monitoring process. During this quarter (1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019) the Council has received 69 compliments, an increase from the previous quarter. Bereavement received 25, followed by Planning receiving 20 and Customer Services receiving 6.

4.7 Area of Learning for Corporate Compliments

See Appendix 4 for stage one learning.

5.0 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman/Housing Ombudsman

5.1 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Enquiries

During this quarter (1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019) the council received one Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman enquiry as follows:

- Children's Services received one enquiry for Children and Young People in Care in relation to the Council failing to fully implement the recommendations made by the stage three panel in a timely manner; outcome upheld; maladministration and injustice; an action plan has been compiled and appropriate remedies and learning has been carried out by the service

5.2 Housing Ombudsman Enquiries

During this quarter (1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019) the council received two enquiries from the Housing Ombudsman for Wolverhampton Homes as follows:

- One complaint received in relation to communal garden upkeep and tree maintenance; outcome no maladministration
- One complaint received in relation to landlord's response to a complaint concerning damp and cold in a property; awaiting outcome

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5.3 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) assessment enquiries

During this quarter (1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019) the council received eight Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman assessment enquiries.

Wolverhampton Homes received two complaints as follows:

- Homeless Team – one complaint in relation to the Council's failure to support complainant and two children with their housing situation; outcome premature complaint escalated through complaints procedure
- Homeless Team – one complaint in relation to homeless application and advice provided to the complainant in relation to her tenancy; awaiting outcome

Finance received two complaints as follows:

- Revenues and Benefits – one complaint in relation to complainant not received overpayment decision and therefore could not appeal; outcome closed after initial enquiries, out of jurisdiction
- Revenues and Benefits – one complaint in relation to service received in relation to complainant's council tax; outcome closed after initial enquiries, no further action

City Housing received one complaint as follows:

- Facilities – one complaint in relation to charging for toilet facilities in park; outcome closed after initial enquiries, no further action

City Environment received two complaints as follows:

- Environmental Services – one complaint in relation to work carried out at a property due to asbestos in the soil; outcome closed after initial enquiries, no further action
- Licensing – one complaint in relation to handling of private hire licence; outcome, Ombudsman has passed to investigation team for further consideration

Governance received one complaint as follows:

- Democratic Support – one complaint in relation to an appeal against the refusal of a school place; outcome closed after initial enquiries no further action

5.4 Housing Ombudsman assessment enquiries

During this quarter (1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019) the council received four Housing Ombudsman assessment enquiries for Wolverhampton Homes.

- One complaint in relation to delays with fixing a leak at complainant's property and issues with the repairs; outcome premature complaint; complaint has been logged and is under investigation
- One complaint in relation to not receiving a response to concerns in relation to anti-social behaviour; awaiting outcome

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- One complaint in relation to hot water being disconnected, concerns with disrepair of barrier and installation of security cameras; outcome premature complaint; complaint has been logged and is under investigation
- One complaint in relation to right of access to shared pathway; awaiting outcome

6.0 Action Plans/Learning

6.1 See attached dashboard.