

APPENDIX 3

SECTION 1:

Children's Services, Adult Services and Public Health Complaints Activity 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021

1.0 Children's Services – Complaint Activity

1.1 Informal Complaints

The complaint regulations provide an opportunity for young people/children, parents, advocates and carers to raise issues of concern without those matters being treated as formal complaints, as long as they are effectively addressed and resolved in a timely manner. These are referred to as informal complaints; 20 informal complaints were received during 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 compared to 4 informal complaints received during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020; an increase of 16 cases. Out of the 20 informal complaints, no enquiries were received via an advocacy service.

1.2 Stage One Complaints

During 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 the council received 13 stage one Children's Services complaints compared to eight during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020, an increase of five cases. The 13 complaints received during this period refer to seven separate service areas. The highest figure of three cases referred to the SEND team. In some cases, this has followed extensive but unsuccessful attempts to resolve some of those complaints informally. The following customer groups submitted complaints to the council; seven parents/five foster carers and one relative. Out of the 13 complaints logged and investigated, 11 complaints were submitted via email, one complaint via an online form and one complaint via paper correspondence. No stage one complaints were received via an advocacy service. Out of the 13 complaints logged and investigated during this period, two cases were upheld (at fault), seven cases were partially upheld (partially at fault) and four cases not upheld (not at fault).

1.3 Timescales

Out of the 13 complaints logged and investigated during this period, one complaint was dealt with in accordance with the Children's Act with a response timescale of ten working days; the average timescale was eight working days. 12 complaints were dealt with in accordance with the corporate complaints policy and procedure (Non-Children's Act) with a response timescale of 21 calendar days; the average timescale was 20 days. The customer feedback team regularly reviews response times with Children's Services to improve these timescales and complainants are regularly updated on the progress of their complaint whilst providing realistic timescales.

1.4 Stage Two Complaints

During this period 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021, we have received no statutory stage two complaints; this is in comparison to no complaint cases received during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020.

The Council received one children's stage two complaint which was dealt with in accordance with our corporate complaints policy and procedure. This is in comparison to no cases received during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020. The corporate children's stage two complaint received is as follows:

APPENDIX 3

- One complaint received for Adoption@Heart in relation to process/procedure and actions of the service; outcome upheld; appropriate remedies and learning have been undertaken with the service

Several other complaints that could have proceeded down this route were resolved after significant intervention, mediation meetings and problem solving with Children's Services, the complainant and customer feedback team.

1.5 Stage Three Complaints

Where a statutory children's 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 statutory complaints procedure; a stage three Independent Complaint Review Panel. During 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 no complaints escalated to a stage three panel during this period; this is in comparison to no stage three cases during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020.

1.6 Complaint Category

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

1.7 Compliments

All compliments are recorded by the Customer Feedback Team and reported as part of the team's monitoring process. During this period nine compliments were received for Children's Services, compared to 13 during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020. Connecting Families received two compliments; Court Team received two compliments followed by Children and Young People in Care receiving two compliments.

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 a separate complaint process managed by Health Services. In relation to Public Health complaints, there has been no complaints received during 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021; this is in comparison to no complaints received during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020.

3.0 Adult Social Care Complaints

3.1 Informal Complaints

The complaint regulations provides an opportunity for adult complaints to be resolved informally utilising a number of resolution methods as long as they are effectively addressed and resolved in a timely manner. During 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 the council received 13 informal complaints which were resolved at service level without going through the formal route. This was compared to five informal complaints received during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020, an increase of eight cases.

APPENDIX 3

3.2 Stage One Complaints

During 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 the council received six formal complaints compared to 12 during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020, representing a decrease of six complaints during this period. The highest figure of two cases referred to Adult Community Team West. The six complaints received covered five separate service areas and were all received via email. In some cases, this has followed extensive but unsuccessful attempts to resolve some of those complaints informally. During this period, three complaints received were in relation to commissioned services – see Appendix 1. Out of the six cases logged and investigated during this period, one case was upheld, three cases partially upheld and two cases not upheld.

3.3 Complaint Category

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

3.4 Timescales

Out of the six complaints logged and investigated during this period five complaints were dealt with in accordance with the Statutory Adults procedure with a response timescale of ten working days; the average response timescale was 14 days. One complaint was dealt with in accordance with the corporate complaints policy and procedure with a response timescale of 21 calendar days; the average response timescale was 14 days. Cases responded to outside of the 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 monitoring process. 100 compliments were received during 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 relating to Adult Services compared to 35 during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020. 93 compliments were received for Welfare Rights, followed by three compliments received for the ILS and Locality West, Personalised Support Team, Community OT Team and Commissioning Services received one compliment.

3.6 Areas of Learning from Complaints

See Appendix 4 for stage 1 learning.

APPENDIX 3

SECTION 2: Corporate Complaints Activity, Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman Complaints Activity 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021

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

4.1 Informal complaint enquiries/service requests

The customer feedback team works alongside the service involved and the customer complaining to resolve the complaint informally, preventing it becoming a formal complaint. It should be noted that 249 informal complaints and service request enquiries were logged with the customer feedback team during 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021, compared to 310 received during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020. These types of enquiries are varied, for example, missed bin collection, contaminated bins, appeals, parking, litter or enquiries that fall outside of the complaints procedure jurisdiction. All enquiries were logged and resolved informally or sign posted to the correct process without going through the corporate complaints procedure; this provides a swift outcome and resolution for the customer by resolving concerns at service level.

4.2 Corporate stage 1 complaints

During 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 the council received 29 stage one corporate complaints compared to 74 received during 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020; a decrease of 45 cases. Out of the 29 cases logged and investigated, 11 were upheld (at fault) and 18 not upheld (not at fault). The 29 complaints cover 8 separate service areas, the highest figure of 17 complaints refer to Waste Management, followed by Planning receiving three and Arboriculture receiving three. Out of the 17 complaints referring to Waste Management, two were received for Household Waste and Recycling Centre sites (one case re: access to the site; one case re: assistance during a site visit), seven received for general waste (one case re: lack of response for waste collection timetable; two cases re: bins not provided; four cases re: missed bins) and eight received for garden waste (four cases re: replacement bins not provided; two cases re: missed bins; two cases re: charges/refund). In some cases, this has followed extensive but unsuccessful attempts to resolve some of those matters at service level. Out of the 29 stage one complaints received, 23 cases were submitted via email, four cases via webform, one case via written correspondence and one case via telephone.

4.3 Corporate Complaint Category

During 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 the main issue of complaint involved failure to provide a service (17), followed by dissatisfaction of council policies (7), failure to achieve standards/quality (2) and conduct of employees (3).

4.4 Corporate Timescales

The average response time for responding to each complaint is 18 days for this period; this is in comparison to 17 days for 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020. The response timescale for stage 1 complaints responding within 21 calendar days (corporate complaints policy and procedure) is 90%. Out of the 29 cases logged and investigated during this period, 26 cases were responded to within 21 calendar days and 3 cases responded to

APPENDIX 3

outside of this timescale. The target of 95% response time has therefore not been achieved; the Customer Feedback Team will continue to monitor this response time and work with service groups to improve this timescale. Cases responded to outside of the 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.

4.5 Stage 2 corporate complaints

During 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 the council received five stage two corporate complaints compared to five cases for 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020, which is consistent. Out of the five cases received, two cases were partially upheld (partially at fault) and three cases not upheld (not at fault).

Stage two complaints received as follows:

City Environment received three cases as follow:

- Waste Management received one complaint in relation to officer conduct, Covid guidelines and customer experience at a refuse site; outcome not upheld
- Grounds Maintenance received one complaint in relation to damage to shrubs and bushes during maintenance work; outcome partially upheld; appropriate remedies and recommendations have been carried out with the service
- Grounds Maintenance received one complaint in relation to maintenance of shrubs and bushes; outcome not upheld

Regeneration received two cases as follows:

- Planning Department received one complaint in relation to council's actions in relation to planning application; outcome partially upheld; appropriate remedies and recommendations have been carried out with the service
- Planning Department received one complaint in relation to planning application and concerns over record of plans on the planning portal; outcome not upheld

4.6 Corporate Compliments

All compliments are recorded by the Customer Feedback Team and reported as part of the team's monitoring process. During 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 the council has received 56 compliments, which is consistent in comparison to 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020. Planning received 19 compliments, Skills and Employment received six following by Fly Tipping/Rubbish on the Streets receiving five.

4.7 Area of Learning for Corporate Complaints

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 (LGSCO)

During 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 the council received three Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman enquiries.

APPENDIX 3

Children's Services received one complaint as follows:

- Strengthening Families in relation to failure to act on reported concerns and safeguarding issues; outcome; not upheld, no maladministration

Adult Services received two complaints as follows:

- Adults Services/Commissioning Services received one complaint in relation to actions of care provider; outcome upheld maladministration and injustice. An action plan has been compiled and appropriate learning, remedies and recommendations as outlined in the final report have been put in place
- Adult Services and Health Partnerships received one enquiry in relation to a specialist chair; outcome awaiting Ombudsman's draft decision

During 1 April 2021 to 31 June 2021 Adoption@ Heart, Children's Services received one published report from the LGSCO. The complaint was in relation to a request to register a potential adopter; the council accepted the findings of the LGSCO and in line with recommendations has reviewed its adoption recruitment procedure to ensure it adheres to the Department of Education's 2013 statutory guidance on adoption.

5.2 Housing Ombudsman Enquiries

During 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 the council received one enquiry from the Housing Ombudsman for Wolverhampton Homes as follows:

- One enquiry received in relation handling of reports of antisocial behaviour concerns; outcome awaiting decision from the Housing Ombudsman

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

During 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 the council received six Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman assessment enquiries as follows:

- City Environment received one enquiry for Commercial Regulation in relation to a fixed penalty notice received for opening a shop during a lockdown due to the Covid19 pandemic; outcome closed after initial enquiries out of jurisdiction
- Finance received one enquiry for Revenues and Benefits in relation to housing benefit overpayment; outcome closed after initial enquiries, out of jurisdiction
- Adult Services received one enquiry for Adult Services and Communities in relation to specialist chair; outcome passed to the Ombudsman's investigation team for further consideration
- Adult Services received one enquiry for Adaptions Team in relation to service received; outcome premature complaint
- Wolverhampton Homes received one enquiry in relation to a house move; outcome premature complaint
- Wolverhampton Homes received one enquiry in relation to work carried out to a private property; outcome premature complaint

APPENDIX 3

5.4 Housing Ombudsman assessment enquiries

During 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 the council received six Housing Ombudsman assessment enquiries for Wolverhampton Homes as follows:

- One enquiry in relation to how the landlord has handled the resident's reports of outstanding repairs; outcome premature complaint
- One enquiry in relation to whether complainant has exhausted complaints procedure; outcome premature complaint
- One enquiry in relation to how the landlord has handled the resident's reports of antisocial behaviour from their neighbour; reports for repair to damp and mould within the property and the council's housing allocation scheme; outcome premature complaint
- One enquiry in relation to the landlord's handling of outstanding repairs to the fence; outcome premature complaint
- One enquiry in relation to how the landlord has handled the resident's reports of antisocial behaviour from his neighbour; outcome premature complaint
- One enquiry in relation to the customer remaining unhappy with the landlord's response and establish whether the complaint letter is the landlord's final report; outcome awaiting response from the housing ombudsman

6.0 Learning/Action Plans

Where complaints highlight that things have gone wrong, heads of service, managers and the customer feedback team are required to identify these areas, implement remedies and review processes/procedures where necessary. Customer Feedback Team and Directorates are committed to learning and require the completion of a tracking form/learning log from each complaint investigated at all stages. When a complaint is upheld/partially upheld (council at fault) and the findings of a subsequent investigation is for a financial remedy, change to policy or service delivery, the Customer Feedback Team produce an action plan report. Recommendations within these reports are agreed with appropriate Heads of Service and shared with the relevant Service Manager/Director to ensure appropriate remedies and changes to policy/service delivery are implemented. The Customer Feedback Team also attend regular quality assurance meetings for Adults and Children's Services and Waste Liaison Meetings to ensure they use the learning from complaints to drive service improvements.

See attached Appendix 4, Learning dashboard