

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

1. Meeting:	Self-Regulation Select Commission
2. Date:	8 March 2012
3. Title:	Adult Social Care Complaints – Annual Report 2010 – 2011
4. Directorate:	Neighbourhood and Adult Services

5. Summary

This report presents information about complaints made between 1 April 2010 and 31 March 2011 under the complaints and representations procedures established through the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 (Making Experiences Count).

The report explains the details and trends in complaints experienced by the Directorate over the year and the improvements that have been made both in the NAS Complaints service and the Directorate as a whole.

The figures in the report include details of the number of customers and the number of complaints they have made. The information is presented by Service Area, by resolution category and by escalation stage, including Local Government Ombudsman.

100% of all complaints were responded to within the statutory timescales, the number of complaints received has reduced from **169** to **113** and the number of complaint escalating from Stage 1 to Stage 2 of the complaint procedure has reduced from **26** in 2009/10 to **9** in 2010/11.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet Member:

- Note the content of the report

7. Proposals and Details

In 2010-2011 Adult Social Services have provided excellent performance in terms of complaints dealt with in target time. The service is committed to reducing the number of complaints received, reducing the number of escalations through the complaint procedure and improving the experience of customers.

Overall 100% of all complaints were responded to within the statutory timescales for the second year in a row, compared to 94% (2008/09) and 88% (2007/08). This performance is the best in the Council for services who have received more than 10 complaints. This performance also benchmarks the best against the regional Yorkshire and Humberside Local Authority Social Services complaints group based on numbers received (15 Local Authority areas).

Headline Results 2010/11

- Number of comments (informal complaints or service requests) increased from **57 to 73**
- Number of complaints (at all levels) reduced from **169 to 113**
- Complaints regarding Locality Teams Older People reduced from **55 to 32**
- Complaints regarding Commissioning reduced from **15 to 6**
- Total number of complaints upheld reduced by **21** compared to 2009/10
- Reduction in the number of complaints escalating reduced:-
 - From **26 to 9** for Stage 1 complaints escalating to Stage 2
- Complaints about quality of service reduced from **57 to 29**
- Complaints about actions of staff reduced from **28 to 15**
- No compensation awards made in 2010/11
- External complaint investigation costs reduced from £15,000 2008/9 to zero in 2010/11

The Adult Social Services complaints team has continued to make significant improvements in the following areas:

- Improving the timeliness of responses to customers
- Improving the quality of responses
- Improving satisfaction of the complaint management process
- Learning from all Complaints to identify service improvements
- Promoting and increasing accessibility of the complaints procedure through the development of the internet, information packs and campaigns in our reception areas.
- Training in complaint handling which is delivered on a rolling programme to all managers.
- Personalisation of the complaint service.
- Learning from complaints workshops with staff.
- Maintaining our Customer Service Excellence accreditation and contributing to the Council attaining Customer Service Excellence where NAS Complaints was identified as good practice.
- Reduction in the amount of compensation paid.
- Reduction in cost of responding to complaints, investigations (no external investigators were procured in 2010/11).

The Directorate has used information from complaints, utilising the direct feedback from customers and the learning issues to inform a number of service improvements in 2010/11, as follows;

Community Occupational Therapy Service. *Waiting times have reduced from over 6 months to 6 weeks since July 2011 and the number of cases waiting over 4 weeks has reduced from 304 in July 2011 to 70 in November 2011. Service improvements have been implemented that include; advising customers of current waiting times at the first point of contact, increasing the number of items that can be issued at the first point of contact and streamlining back office processes.*

End to end review. *Development of new enablement service ensures that a customer's independence is maximised in the community reducing the need to access social care services. Every customer is issued a statement of their needs advising them of the outcome of their assessment. All customers receive an annual planned review of their needs using improved personalised documentation.*

Enablement. *The new enablement service merges the existing home care and warden services into one team. The team supports customers to increase their independence and remain in the community for as long as possible reducing their dependence on home care and residential type services. Over 300 customers have been supported by this service since April 2011. The Community Rehabilitation Team has now joined the enablement service creating a more holistic service.*

Personalisation. *All customers are advised of their personal budget and given the choice and control over the services they access. Every customer is supported to develop their own support plan and advised of the benefits having a direct payment and accessing local community based services.*

Rothercare Direct. *Implemented a new telephony system which has reduced missed calls from 27.3% to 7%, streamlined out of hours procedures to maximise customer experience and efficiency, merged the Rothercare and Assessment Direct services to improve access and staff skill set. Implemented a first point of contact proportionate assessment to increase the accuracy of contacts, increased the allocation of assistive technology and equipment and fixings at the first point of contact increasing prevention services and reducing customer waiting times.*

8. Risks and uncertainties

Although positive management of complaints can be achieved, the number and type of complaints received is determined by circumstances beyond the control of the service. Regardless of any external factors the service is required to maintain a high level of performance and excellent customer care.

The current financial decisions the Authority is making will also affect the number of complaints received, changes to services drive the level of complaints received.

9. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Adult Social Care report on complaints reflects the policy and performance agenda requirements of both national government (Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 (Making Experiences Count). and Rotherham's local plans including corporate and service plans.

Adult Social Care complaints are included in the new Local Account performance publication scheme, 'Rotherham people calling the shots'.

Adult Social Care complaints are also part of the ongoing Corporate Complaint Review, looking at complaint handling processes across the Authority.

10. Background Papers and Consultation

- Appendix 1 Adult Social Care Complaints Annual Report 2010-2011 (in full)

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