

10 October 2017		ITEM: 7
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
2016/17 Annual Complaints and Representations Report		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key	
Report of: Tina Martin, Statutory & Corporate Complaints Manager		
Accountable Assistant Director: Sheila Murphy, Assistant Director for Care & Targeted Outcomes		
Accountable Director: Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children's Services		
This report is public		

Executive Summary

The annual report for Thurrock Council on the operation of the Children's Social Care Complaints Procedure covering the period 1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017 is attached as Appendix 1. It is a statutory requirement to produce an annual complaints report on children's social care complaints.

The report sets out the number of representations received in the year including the number of complaints, key issues arising from complaints and the learning and improvement activity for the department.

A total of 217 representations were received during 2016-17 as detailed below:

- 62 compliments
- 12 Initial Feedback
- 97 complaints received
- 13 MP enquiries
- 23 Member enquiries
- 8 MEP enquiries
- 2 Local Government Ombudsman enquiries

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That scrutiny committee consider and note the report.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 This is the annual report for Thurrock Council on the operation of the Children's Social Care Complaints Procedure covering the period 1st April

2016 – 31st March 2017. It is a statutory requirement to produce an annual complaints report on Children's Social Care complaints.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 This is a monitoring report for noting, therefore there is no options analysis. The annual report attached as Appendix 1 includes consideration of reasons for complaints, issues arising from complaints and service learning and improvement activity in response.

3.2 **The headline messages for this report are:**

3.3 Summary of representations received 2016/17

- 62 compliments
- 12 Initial Feedback
- 97 complaints received
- 13 MP enquiries
- 23 Member enquiries
- 8 MEP enquiries
- 2 Local Government Ombudsman enquiries

Further detail on compliments, complaints and enquiries is outlined in Appendix 1.

3.4 Local Government Ombudsman

There were two cases received from the Ombudsman's office for this reporting year.

Further detail on both cases is outlined in Appendix 1.

3.5 Learning from Complaints

Complaints and feedback provide the service with an opportunity to identify things that can be improved; they provide a vital source of insight about people's experience of social care services.

Upheld complaints are routinely analysed to determine themes and trends and services are responsible for implementing learning swiftly. Robust monitoring and evidencing of corrective actions is a key theme for the next reporting year.

3.6 Looking Forward

The Corporate Complaints Team continues to facilitate the customer feedback process for Children's Statutory Services. The team will be looking to provide further guidance and support to all services and the focus will be on improving the handling of complaints, the quality of responses and to increase learning

from complaints and compliments, to ensure that a robust mechanism is in place for sharing lessons learnt, best practice and potential development.

Further detail on work priorities is outlined in Appendix 1.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 It is a statutory requirement to produce an annual complaints report on children's social care complaints. It is best practice for this to be considered by Overview and Scrutiny. This report is for monitoring and noting.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 This report has been agreed with the Children's Social Care senior management team. Consideration of complaints issues and learning and improvement arising from them are identified as an ongoing priority in the report.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 All learning and key trends identified in the complaints and compliments reporting has a direct impact on the quality of service delivery and performance. The reporting ensures that valuable feedback received from service users and carers is captured effectively and regularly monitored with the primary focus on putting things right or highlighting and promoting where services are working well.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Laura Last**
Management Accountant

There are no specific issues arising from this report.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
Deputy Head of Legal & Deputy Monitoring Officer

There are no direct legal implications as the report is being compiled in accordance with regulation 18 of the Complaint Regulations.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
**Community Development & Equalities
Manager**

There are no specific diversity issues arising from this report.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

None

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – Children's Social Care Complaints and Representations Annual Report 2016/17

Report Author:

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