

12 October 2021		ITEM: 7
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
2020/21 Annual Complaints and Representations Report – Children's Social Care		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non Key	
Report of: Lee Henley, Strategic Lead, Information Management		
Accountable Director: Sheila Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services		
This report is public		

Executive Summary

The annual report on the operation of the Children Social Care Complaints Procedure covering the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021 is attached as an appendix.

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.

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 Social Care Complaints Procedure covering the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021. It is a statutory requirement to produce an annual complaints report on Children Social Care complaints.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 This is a monitoring report for noting, therefore there are no options analysis. The annual report is attached as an appendix and includes consideration of reasons for complaints, issues arising from complaints and service learning.

3.2 Summary of representations received for the reporting period

3.2.1 The following representations were received during 2020/21:

- 29 Compliments
- 42 Initial feedback
- 8 Complaints
- 3 Ombudsman Enquiries
- 11 MP Enquiries
- 30 Members Enquiries

Further details are summarised within the appendix.

3.3 Learning from Complaints

Complaints and feedback provide the service with an opportunity to identify areas 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. Further details are outlined within the appendix.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 It is a statutory requirement to produce an annual complaints report on children 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 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 have 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: **Jonathan Wilson**

Assistant Director Finance

There are no specific financial implications arising from the report.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Judith Knight**
Interim Deputy Head of Legal

The complaints and representations process is governed by The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006. Regulation 13 requires the Council to produce an annual report as soon as possible after the end of each financial year on the operation of the process.

The report must be prepared in light of the statutory guidance 'Getting the Best from Complaints: Social Care Complaints and Representations for Children, Young People and Others'.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Smith**
Strategic Lead Community Development and Equalities

There are no specific diversity issues arising from this report.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder or Impact on Looked After Children

- 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 Social Care Complaints and Representations Annual Report 2020/21

Report Author:

Lee Henley

Strategic Lead, Information Management