



17 January 2024

Title	Annual Complaints and Compliments Report 2022/23 for Adult Social Care
Purpose of the report	To note the report for information
Report status	Public report
Report author	Nayana George
Lead Councillor	Councillor Gittings, Lead Councillor for Adult Social Care
Corporate priority	Healthy Environment
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the contents of the report be noted. 2. That the action taken in response to learning from complaints, as described in the summary of Adult Social Care Complaints and Compliments 2022/23, attached at Appendix A to the report, be noted.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Adult Social Care recognises that there will be occasions when complaints are made. This report tells you how many complaints were received in 2022/23 and were dealt with using either the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure or the Statutory Complaints Procedure for Adult Social Care. It also summarises the main types of complaints we have received and provides some examples where we have improved as a result of learning from these complaints.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 require that Local Authorities operate a complaints procedure. In September 2009, the [Department of Health](#) introduced a [complaint procedure](#) to cover both adult social care and health services. This meant a 3 stage complaints procedure became a 1 stage complaints procedure. Following investigation of the complaint by the Council, if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome the complainant is advised to contact the Customer Relations & Information Governance Service Manager, to share their concerns with a view to possibly reviewing them with a senior manager or proceed to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman.
- 2.2. Complaints relating to Adult Social Care that fall outside of the scope of the statutory process are investigated in accordance with the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure. Reading Borough Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure gives an opportunity for those who are not 'qualifying individuals' under the social services legislation, to still be able to complain about Adult Social Care.
- 2.3. Qualifying individuals are defined in national guidance as the Service User or their appointed representative which can be a family member, friend, or Advocate. The timescale for responding to complaints is between 15 working days and three months, depending on the seriousness and complexity of the complaint. The guidance provides a risk matrix to assist the Customer Relations & Information Governance Service Manager, who is the designated Complaints Manager for the Council, to assess the complaint.

- 2.4. Compliments can be an indicator of when the Council has performed well and can highlight the positive outcomes for the public who are in contact with us or that we provide a service to.

3. The Proposal

- 3.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of complaints and compliments activity and performance for Adult Social Care for the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.
- 3.2. During this period the service received 89 statutory complaints, which is a 4.3% decrease over the 93 received in 2021/22, and 10 corporate complaints, which is a significant decrease of 50% over the 20 received in 2021/22. We also received one request for a corporate Stage 2 investigation during this period.
- 3.3. The main themes for the period 2022/23 for both corporate and statutory complaints are:
- Quality of Service Provided = 43 (43.4%)
 - Staff Conduct = 15 (15.2%)
 - Communication = 13 (13.1%)
- 3.4. A summary of Adult Social Care Complaints and Compliments 2022/23 is at Appendix A. This will also be made publicly available through the Council's website from 23 October 2023.
- 3.5. The Appendix highlights some examples of learning from complaints in the past year along with key service improvements as a result of the complaints received, which the Committee is invited to note.

4. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 4.1. The Complaints Service provided by the Customer Relations Team contributes to the Service's aims to enhance emotional wellbeing and deliver outstanding services for service users who may be dissatisfied with the Adult Social Care service and those needing protection through Adult Safeguarding. It does this by providing an impartial and supportive service to service users and their families who wish to complain or raise a concern and ensuring that there is learning from complaints.

5. Environmental and Climate Implications

- 5.1. There are no environmental and/or climate implications arising from this report.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1. Information about the complaints or compliments process is provided verbally to service users via the Social Care Teams as well as the Customer Relations Team. Leaflets on the procedures are also widely distributed by the Social Care Teams and available in a variety of formats and languages on request.
- 6.2. Service Users and their carers are reminded of their right to complain or make a compliment and a leaflet is given out when the social care worker first meets with them. Service users and/or their representative can also register a complaint via the web, email direct to the Customer Relations Team, in person, by phone, in writing or via an advocate.
- 6.3. Translation services are provided for complainants whose first language is not English and advocacy support is available for service users who wish to make a complaint.

7. Equality Implications

- 7.1. The Customer Relations & Information Governance Service Manager will ensure that the statutory complaints/compliments process is accessible to all customers regardless of their race, gender, disabilities, sexual orientation, age or religious belief.

- 7.2. The statutory complaints process is designed to ensure that any concern or issue faced by the service user, or their representative is addressed in a timely and impartial manner.
- 7.3. Due to the safeguards in process outlined above, there is no requirement to complete an Equality Impact Assessment in relation to this report.

8. Other Relevant Considerations

- 8.1. There are none.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. The Statutory foundations for the Adult Social Care Services Complaints Procedures are The Local Authority Social Services Act (1970), The Human Rights Act (1998), Statutory Instruments 2009 No.309 National Health Service, England Social Care, England, the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1. There are no Capital or Revenue implications arising from this report. The Council's Customer Relations Team provides value for money in effectively discharging the complaints process for the Council by attempting informal resolution of complaints. There are no specific financial risks arising from this report

11. Timetable for Implementation

- 11.1. Not applicable.

12. Background Papers

- 12.1. There are none.

Appendix A

1. A summary of Adult Social Care Complaints and Compliments 2022/23

