

Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 3 August 2021

10:00

Council Chamber, County Buildings, Stafford

NB. The meeting will be webcast live which can be viewed here -
<https://staffordshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

John Tradewell
Director of Corporate Services
26 July 2021

A G E N D A

PART ONE

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes of the Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny meeting held on 6 July 2021** (Pages 1 - 10)
4. **Customer Feedback and Complaints Service - Adult's Social Services Annual Report 2020-21** (Pages 11 - 38)

Report of the Cabinet Member for Health and Care
5. **Customer Feedback and Complaints Service - Children's Social Services Annual Report 2020-21** (Pages 39 - 68)

Report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
6. **Work Programme** (Pages 69 - 74)
7. **Exclusion of the Public**

The Chairman to move:-

“That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972 indicated below”.

Part Two

(All reports in this section are exempt)

nil

Membership

Gill Burnett (Vice-Chairman (Overview))	Gillian Pardesi
Janet Eagland	Kath Perry, MBE
Richard Ford (Vice-Chairman (Scrutiny))	Bob Spencer (Chairman)
Jason Jones	Jill Waring
Peter Kruskonjic	Mike Wilcox

Note for Members of the Press and Public

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Minutes of the Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 6 July 2021

Present: Bob Spencer (Chairman)

Attendance

Gill Burnett (Vice-Chairman (Overview))	Peter Kruskonjic
Janet Eagland	Gillian Pardesi
Richard Ford (Vice-Chairman (Scrutiny))	Kath Perry, MBE
Jason Jones	Jill Waring

Also in attendance: Mark Sutton and Victoria Wilson

Apologies: Mike Wilcox

PART ONE

15. Declarations of Interest

Vice-Chairman Gill Burnett declared an interest in minute number 19 with regard to her daughter, who is an Early Years Co-ordinator at a Children's Centre.

16. Minutes of the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 June 2021

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 June 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

17. Domestic Abuse

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had requested an update on Domestic Abuse services across Staffordshire, focusing on the impact of the pandemic. Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and the Staffordshire Commissioners Office (SCO) jointly commissioned Domestic Abuse (DA) services across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, with the SCO acting as lead commissioner. Services included the provision for victims, perpetrators, children and young people. The service contract for victims services had been awarded to Victim Support, with services for perpetrators awarded to the Reducing Reoffending Partnership. Both these services were provided under the brand name of New Era.

Members heard that the overall annual contract value for the Victims and Perpetrator provision was £2,157,000 with the County Council annual contribution being £670,490. This equated to a contribution of 31% of the value of the contract annually, with SCO contributing £1,015,483 (47%) and Stoke City Council contributed £544,997 (22%). The Tri-Partite Agreement for both Victim and Perpetrator services commenced in October

2018 and contained an option to extend the contract for each service for a period of two years from 30th September 2020 until 30th September 2023. The decision to action this extension had been mutually agreed by all parties and the extension was now in place. The Committee felt Staffordshire were getting good value for money from their contribution.

Since the contract began there had been 14,160 referrals/enquiries for support to the victim service across Staffordshire and Stoke, of which 62.9% (8,907) were from Staffordshire residents and Members heard details of the latest quarterly performance report (Q4 20/21). A breakdown of referrals by district for each service was also shared and Members queried why some districts had seen a more noticeable rise in referral numbers. Referrals were monitored on a quarterly basis with fluctuations in each district being fairly common. It was anticipated that districts with higher referral numbers in the last quarter were examples of this normal fluctuation, although this would be monitored.

Members had wanted to satisfy themselves that there were appropriate links between services provided for children and young people who are at risk of child exploitation and services which support victims of domestic abuse to ensure that information wasn't missed that may lead to individuals not receiving appropriate services. The Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Panels enabled information to be shared between services and partner agencies, enabling a joined-up approach to service delivery. New Era attended these Panels. Members heard that the Police also attended MACE Panels, with information governance arrangements in place to allow information to be shared amongst all MACE partners, enabling appropriate actions and support to be put in place.

Members had also queried the rationale behind the disparity in the number of referrals into Staffordshire's commissioned DA services and referrals to the Police. Staffordshire had seen a 30% increase in referrals for their DA services but the Police had not seen a corresponding rise. Analysis was underway to identify the reasons for this and detail of this would be shared with the Committee in due course.

The Committee had requested detail of the impact of the C19 pandemic on DA and heard that this had been seen on both those affected by DA and those delivering services nationally, regionally and locally. During the first lockdown, New Era had seen an immediate drop in the number of referrals to services and low figures were recorded for the end of March and April 2020. Referral rates started to pick up again in May and reached the level of the previous year (i.e. 2019) by the end of May/early June. After the first lockdown was lifted, numbers of referrals increased by approximately 5% on those recorded at the same point the previous year. Following the return to school in September 2020, demand for services increased further. Initially the increase was not unusual, as referrals tend to increase at the start of school terms. However, the number of referrals has continued to increase and had now reached volumes around 30% greater than the same period last year.

The Committee shared concerns that, given the considerable increase in demand, the impact of the restrictions on service delivery and the impact of Covid-19 on staff, there were now waiting lists for both victims and perpetrator services. However, they heard that the triage process in place allocated individuals to workers based upon a robust assessment of risk, meaning that waiting was kept to a minimum for those who were assessed as higher risk.

The victim service reported an increase in the number and complexity of incoming calls to the helpline resulting in increased duration of calls and increased time spent by the Initial Response Officers on triage and outgoing contact. Due to the national restrictions, routine face-to-face service delivery largely ceased. The Perpetrator Service stopped delivering groupwork sessions (which was the usual method of delivery for the programme) and instead delivered their programmes on a 1:1 basis. This had a significant impact on the number of individuals they were able to support at one time and in turn had increased waiting times.

Members asked for details of waiting times for perpetrator services. This information was not available at the meeting but would be shared with Members afterwards.

The Committee queried the lower Staffordshire take up of the Perpetrator programme, particularly in comparison to the higher number seen in Stoke-on-Trent. There was further work needed to increase referral numbers, partly through cultural change, understanding the importance of addressing perpetrator behaviours to support long-term change, and partly an awareness raising of the service. It was also necessary to acknowledge that involvement in this service was voluntary and to take part in the service there was a need for perpetrators to be motivated to change their behaviours.

DA support services had significantly adapted their service delivery to ensure continuity of service and Members gave credit to staff for their flexibility and dedication throughout this extremely challenging period. Services retained their 'front door' to victims and their families and the perpetrator programme had been adapted appropriately. For both victim and perpetrator services, availability of support and services had been maintained throughout the pandemic, largely via remote working arrangements and online delivery, but with some face-to-face support where appropriate and safe to do so. They also received details of the new Adult Specialist Worker provision which provided dedicated support to the whole family unit, focusing on helping and supporting parents and their children at the earliest opportunity. This new way of working had been piloted in Cannock and consideration was now being given to how it would be developed throughout the County. Members queried the funding for this and were informed this formed part of the investment in the Children's Transformation programme.

The Committee heard that the Domestic Abuse Act had now passed both Houses of Parliament and was signed into law on 29 April 2021. There were a number of provisions within the Act, including the creation of a statutory definition of domestic abuse with a recognition that abuse can be emotional, controlling or coercive and economic abuse, as well as physical violence; establishing the role of the Office of Domestic Abuse Commissioner; creating a statutory presumption that victims of domestic abuse are eligible for special measures in courts; prohibiting perpetrators of domestic abuse from cross-examining their victims in person in courts; and extending the controlling or coercive behaviour offence to cover post-separation abuse among other provisions.

Members wished to reassure themselves that DA services could be accessed by those who may have No Recourse to Public Funds. Officers will consult the DA Act and will forward information to Members after the meeting.

One of the key implications of the Act for Local Authorities was the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Duty. The Duty placed a legislative requirement on upper tier local authorities to ensure the provision of support for domestic abuse victims and their families within safe accommodation. This Duty covered a range of types of safe accommodation (including refuge accommodation, specialist safe accommodation, dispersed accommodation, sanctuary schemes, move-on accommodation and other forms of domestic abuse emergency accommodation). Members heard that Staffordshire had been allocated £1.5 million from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) towards this duty and work was underway, under the auspices of the Domestic Abuse Commissioning & Development Board, to ensure that Staffordshire was able to meet their requirements. On questioning whether the £1.5 million was a one off payment Members were informed that this figure had been allocated to support the new safe accommodation duty. It is anticipated that we will receive funding in future years, but the amount of this funding will be outlined in the Government's Autumn Spending Review.

Members noted that repeat offenders or victims weren't mentioned within the report. Evidence suggested that targeting services on the small number of repeat offenders and victims would have a significant impact. An analysis of repeat offenders was currently being undertaken by Staffordshire Police, lead by Chief Superintendent Mattinson. The findings from this work would be reflected in action plans for future service provision.

RESOLVED : That:

- a) the developments in delivery of both perpetrator and victims services be supported;
- b) the range of changes to service provision as mitigation for the difficulties created by the Pandemic be welcomed and staff be congratulated on their flexible approach to overcome these issues;
- c) results of the analysis into the rationale behind the disparity in the number of referrals into Staffordshire's commissioned DA services and referrals to the Police be shared with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- d) learning from the analysis of data regarding repeat victims and offenders currently being undertaken by Staffordshire Police be shared with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- e) details of waiting times for perpetrator services be shared with the Committee; and
- f) details of whether the Domestic Abuse Act addresses the needs of those with No Recourse to Public Funds be forwarded to the Committee after the meeting.

18. Together4Children Regional Permanency Partnership Update Briefing

Members had previously requested detail of progress made with the regional Together4Children Permanency Partnership which, since going live on 28 September 2020, had been delivering the regional adoption service for Staffordshire County Council, Shropshire Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Telford & Wrekin Council. Partnership development activity had started in 2018 in response to the Government's 'Regionalising Adoption' agenda and brought together 4 Partner Council's to plan the delivery of adoption services regionally.

Through the development phase a vision had been created that went beyond the delivery of Adoption Services and focused on a broader range of activities to ensure that children entering care achieved permanency, working together to improve outcomes for those children who entered care and were not able to return to their birth parents. The Vision was to ensure that children achieved emotional, physical, and legal permanence; growing up in loving homes with adults who provided them with a strong sense of security, continuity, commitment, and identity. The Partnership aimed to:

- a) make best use of collective resources to recruit, assess and support prospective adopters across the region;
- b) improve the quality and speed of matching for children through better planning and by having a wider choice of adopters;
- c) provide high quality support to children and their families delivered through a combination of direct provision and effective partnerships;
- d) provide all children and their families with the right support at the right time through a consistent permanency support offer across the region.

The Committee heard about the delays resulting from the Pandemic and the work developed resulting from that. Whilst it was still early days for Together4Children there were already positive achievements in the effectiveness of encouraging enquiries from potential adopter families and in the number of successful adoptions.

One of the main aims for the new agency was to enable adoptive children to stay within their region of birth where possible. This enabled lifelong support to be offered to children and their adoptive families, through to support for adopted adults who may wish to explore their birth identity.

Members were aware that some children were more difficult to find adoptive families for, with the current most challenging groups to place being boys over 5 years and children in sibling groups.

The Committee were pleased to note that Together4Children was to be one of only two regional adoption agencies to be part of Adoption UK's innovative 'TESSA' support program for adoptive families. This was a pilot program, currently funded through the Big Lottery Community Fund, which aimed to create the conditions for healthy development and family wellbeing in adoptive families at risk of the effects of early childhood trauma. Since TESSA went live in October 2020 40 families across the Together4Children region had received this support.

The Committee were also informed that in addition to the delivery of Regional Adoption Services, other areas of regional practice were being developed, supporting children who came into care to achieve stability and permanence within foster or kinship care families. Together4Children were to be the first ever Local Authority Partnership to receive funding for, and jointly launch, the 'Mockingbird Family Fostering Model' by working together across the four fostering services. The launch of this first regional Mockingbird 'constellation' (a group of foster carers supported by an experience 'hub' carer) was in June/July 2021.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) developments with the regional Together4Children Permanency Partnership and the achievements since its launch be welcomed; and

- b) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be kept informed of developments with this initiative and the two pilot projects.

19. Developing Family Hubs in Staffordshire

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People shared details of the emerging development of the Family Hubs. This was part of the manifesto pledge to champion Family Hubs across England, bringing together a whole family approach enabling families access to early advice, information and support at a local level.

The Committee considered details of the emerging vision for the development of Family Hubs in Staffordshire, demonstrating how ambitions for Family Hubs would contribute to the delivery of the Families Strategic Partnership Children, Young People and Families Strategy, the Early Help Strategy and the development of the Place Based Approach for Children and Families. Members received details of the emerging thinking regarding the development of the Family Hub Model. They were reminded that evidence showed a child's experiences from conception to five played a critical role in their development. Measurable gaps in outcomes between disadvantaged and vulnerable children and their peers could emerge early before children were two years of age with these being difficult and costly to close. In particular, evidence showed that a child's home environment, and parent-child relationships, were central to early development and there was a strong financial case for providing Early Help at this age to prevent later more costly support.

Family Hubs were designed to overcome difficulties some families may face in understanding how to access support, improving the coordination of national and local services and their delivery to vulnerable and disadvantaged families with children aged from conception to nineteen. Members heard that whilst the pandemic provided a challenging backdrop, it had sharpened awareness of the risk faced by some disadvantaged and vulnerable families of being left behind and had encouraged local agencies to explore greater integration and enhanced partnership working.

Staffordshire has a well-developed existing network of Children's Centres which currently focused provision on the Early Years. This network of Children's Centres (operated through the Early Years Coordination Service) sought to deliver a seamless integrated service within communities in relation to the Early Years. The delivery of Staffordshire's Children's Centres was underpinned by the Children Centre Statutory Guidance. This statutory guidance stated that Local Authorities were required to consult with families if they planned to make changes to the delivery of the Children's Centre Services. With this in mind the Committee's support was sought to engage in a period of consultation with families to develop the Children's Centre's into Family Hubs with a broader age remit and offer of holistic placed based support working with partners.

Members heard that the aim was to develop a Staffordshire Family Hub model which:

- a) brought together a range of provision into a coherent, connected and accessible offer to families around a local place, supporting them to achieve and maintain positive outcomes and seek to prevent needs from escalating;
- b) placed a focus on early help and prevention with the communities of Staffordshire;

- c) took a whole-family approach and was available to families with children aged 0-19 (and up to 25 for those with SEND), providing services for the all, the some and the few;
- d) had physical presence within a community as well as an online offer and maximised the use of existing resources within a locality, as part of our Place Based Approach; and
- e) adopted a Restorative Practice Model, which seeks to build and maintain healthy relationships and a sense of community.

Developing the Family Hub Model would build upon the Early Help Systems Guide, developed by the MHCLG' which outlined their vision for the early help landscape. This had evidenced several factors which contributed towards delivering improved outcomes and preventing problems from worsening. Over the Summer 2021, the intention was to work together with stakeholders to further develop the approach to Family Hubs to reflect the Staffordshire local context and the needs of Staffordshire's children, young people and families which would inform a report to Cabinet in September 2021.

Members noted that access to the Family Hub would not be dependent upon a formal assessment. However, formal assessments would be undertaken where appropriate in relation to the level of need.

The Committee were informed that as a key component of Staffordshire's early help offer, Family Support was commissioned on a countywide basis, but with a locality footprint. In line with the Place Based Page Approach, commissioners worked with the Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector to develop the community and voluntary sector market in localities. This resulted in local community organisations being commissioned to deliver whole-family tier 2 support, which joined up services around the family to tackle root causes. The commissioned Family Support services made a significant contribution to achieving targets set by the MHCLG in relation to the Building Resilient Families and Communities (BRFC) programme.

Members were pleased to note that demand was monitored, and service delivery performance managed, by SCC. Monitoring indicated that there continued to be a need for this service provision across the county. Current investment into the Family Support Service contract was circa £2 million per annum. This included SCC investment of £700,000 and external funding from the BRFC budget. The intention was to invest BRFC money for 21/22, subject to an MHCLG decision regarding the continuation of this funding beyond March 2022.

Whilst it was anticipated that Children's Centres would form the foundation of the emerging Family Hub Model, the staffing model currently in place would need to be further developed to support the evolving role of the Family Hub. The management of Children's Centres was currently facilitated through a commissioned Early Years Coordination Service working together with the Internal Children and Families Business Support Service with contractual arrangements due to come to an end in March 2022. Prior to April 2022, it is proposed to work together with key stakeholders to undertake a review of the Early Years Coordination Service and the Internal Children and Families Business Support Service (in connection to Children's Centres) to develop a model which ensured the continued delivery of the Children's Centre Core Offer, whilst

developing an integrated infrastructure for the emerging Family Hub. Members received details of the phased approach to Family Hub development.

Members noted Children's Centres had been closed during the Pandemic and queried how services had been delivered and when the Centres would be reopened. Whilst the physical buildings had been closed the services had continued in a variety of ways, including a full on-line service provision. Government guidance would direct when the Children's Centres buildings re-opened. Some concerns were shared for those families unable to access on-line support and the importance of face to face support was emphasised. The Committee was pleased to note that face to face contact had been ongoing through a range of settings, including schools, parks, family gardens, to ensure support continued. Some families indicated they preferred on-line support, feeling less judged and more able to be open using on-line support.

Concerns were raised over a potential overreliance on voluntary sector for service delivery as well as the previous reductions in youth service, children centre and health visitor services when the evidence used for the concept of Family Hubs was the importance of early support. The right balance of service provision between in-house and the voluntary sector services was always considered. Many local volunteers working within Children Centres had previously received services themselves and wanted to add invaluable support from their own life experience at a local level. The Council was not unique in having to consider how to deliver services differently to accommodate financial pressures. Service delivery had changed and new and innovative ways to support Staffordshire residents had been developed.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) the emerging national context and local strategic vision for the development of Family Hubs across Staffordshire as well as the future commissioning intentions in relation to Family Hubs, specifically in respect of Family Support Services and the Early Years Coordination Service (Children's Centres) be supported;
- b) the proposed incremental development of Family Hubs across Staffordshire through the development of an integrated model of working be noted and further development of Family Hubs be considered by the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee within twelve months following public consultation.

20. Work Programme

The Committee noted that items from their 17 June planning meeting had been included on their work programme. There were several cross-cutting items proposed and consideration would be given to how these progressed, looking at whether joint work between Committees would be beneficial. In particular the item proposed on sexual harassment in schools had also been included on the work programmes for both Prosperous and Health, with a spot light piece of work proposed, to include one member from each Committee, who would then report back to their respective overview and scrutiny committees.

Further discussions were taking place to manage agenda planning, allocating proposed items throughout the calendared meetings. Discussions were also ongoing between the Chairmen of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel and this Committee to prevent duplication with this Committee's role as the Crime and Disorder Panel and the work of the Panel.

RESOLVED: That the update work programme be agreed.

Chairman

Local Members Interest
N/A

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday 03 August 2021

Customer Feedback and Complaints Service, Adults Social Services Annual Report 2020/21

Recommendation

I recommend that the Committee:

- a. Consider the Annual Report of the Customer Feedback and Complaints Service, Adults Social Services 2020/21, taking the opportunity for any comments on the content of the report.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Health and Care

Summary

What is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being asked to do and why?

1. The Committee is being asked to consider the Annual Report of the Customer Feedback and Complaints Service, Adults Social Services 2020/21, taking the opportunity for any comments on the content of the report.

Report

Background

2. The appended report fulfils the Council's duty to publish an Annual Report on the activity of the Statutory Complaints and Representation Service on behalf of the Council. The operation of the Statutory Complaints Procedure was established under the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 and the Local Authority Act 1970. The report provides information about activity during twelve months between April 2020 and March 2021 in respect of statutory complaints relating to Adult Social Care.
3. The Annual Report, Customer Feedback and Complaints Services, Adults Social Services 2020/2021 is being submitted for scrutiny and endorsement.
4. The report contains information about the nature of complaints received, together with responses provided and their handling by the Council.
5. Organisational Learning remains at the heart of the legislation. This is reflected in the function of the Responsible Person and Actions Plans that ensure steps are taken to improve, where services may have failed to deliver to an acceptable standard.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Customer Feedback and Complaints Service, Adults Social Services
Annual Report 2020/21

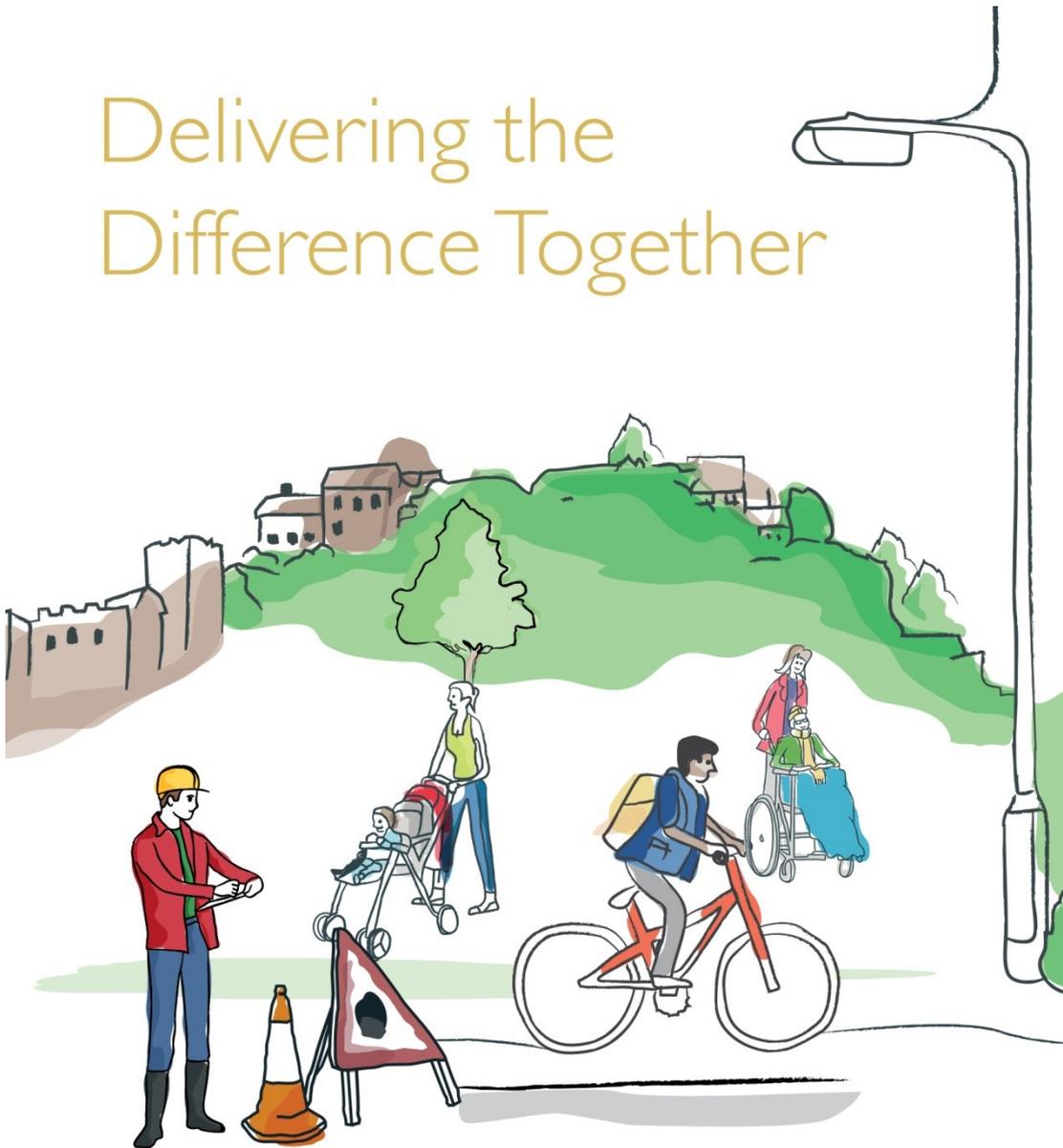
Contact Details

Assistant Director: Tracy Thorley, Assistant Director for Corporate Operations

Report Author: Kate Bullivant
Job Title: Complaints, Access to Information and School Appeals Manager

Telephone No.: 01785 277407
E-Mail Address: kate.bullivant@staffordshire.gov.uk

Delivering the Difference Together



Putting the people of Staffordshire first



COMPLAINTS TEAM
STATUTORY ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21
ADULT SOCIAL CARE

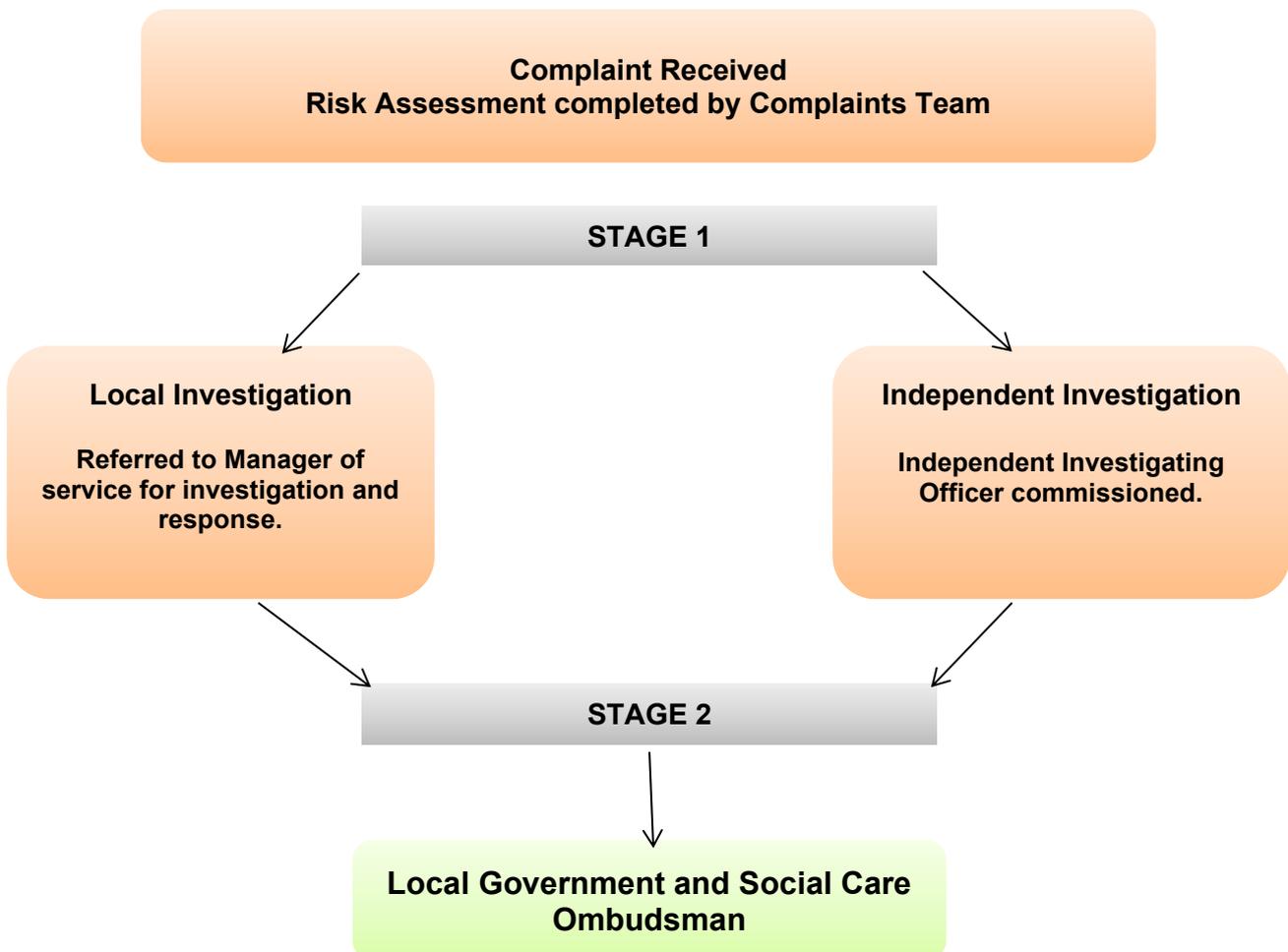
Introduction

This report provides information about complaints made during the twelve months between the 1 April 2020 and the 31 March 2021 under the complaints and representations procedures established under the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 and the Local Authority Act 1970.

From April 2012 Adult Social Care, Older People’s front line services were transferred over to Midland Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (formally Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent NHS Partnership Trust). From April 2017 the Trust co-ordinates all statutory complaints which relate to Adult Social Care services provided by the Trust.

The Statutory Complaints Procedure

The Council has a statutory obligation to operate a complaints procedure concerning statutory provision for adults. This is in accordance with the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009. These regulations set expectations for the handling of complaints by Councils, NHS bodies, Primary Care providers and independent sector providers responsible for the provision of NHS and Social Care.



Criteria for Accessing the Statutory Complaints Procedure

Who can Complain?

The NHS and Community Care Act 1990 and the Local Authority Act 1970 places the following restrictions on who can access this procedure:

- Complaints under these procedures must be made by or on behalf of an eligible person and must be in respect of that person
- An eligible person is anyone for whom the Council has a power or duty to provide, or secure the provision of a service, and this need or possible need has come to the attention of the Council
- Complaints can be made on behalf of an eligible person where the eligible person lacks capacity to make the complaint themselves (In accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2008 or has given explicit and verified consent for the Complainant to act on their behalf

Time Limit:

Section 12 of the statutory regulations advise that the complaint must be made no later than 12 months after the date in which the matter which is the subject of the complaint came to the notice of the complainant, unless the complainant has good reason for not making the complaint within this time limit.

Overview

Careful consideration is given to the operation of the Complaints Procedure to ensure an appropriate and proportionate response is provided. Communication, coordination and information sharing are critical and ensure that safeguarding measures are applied where necessary. In addition, liaison with the Council's Care Commissioning and Midland Partnership Foundation NHS Trust ensures a coordinated response to concerns about commissioned services. Similarly, dialogue with the office of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman ensures that the Local Authority is able to take steps to resolve complaints locally where possible.

'Lessons Learnt' from complaint investigations remain a key feature for the service and are always fed back to services and performance groups for action within the Council and Partnership Trust.

Key Numbers



145

**Statutory Stage 1
Complaints**



23

**Local Government
and Social Care
Complaints**



1

**Statutory
Independent
Investigations**



146

**Complaints
handled informally**

TOP 5 areas of complaint

Financial Assessment /
Contribution - 22
Poor Communication – 18
Case Management – 16
Charges not discussed –
14
Delay in receiving - 11

The total amount of monies
paid to complainants as an
outcome of an

Ombudsman

investigation is **£700** in
recognition for the time and
trouble in raising the
complaint and any distress
caused

Comparison with Preceding Year

In comparison with the previous years, we have seen a reduction in Stage 1 complaints recorded for this financial year, however there has been an increase in complaints which have been resolved informally with support from the Complaints Team.

The Complaints Team takes into account that for this reporting year some clients may have chosen / or not been able to receive some services as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent lock-down restrictions. Such as home care, direct payments for support and respite services.

The Complaints Team has continued to be operational during this time, however the availability of staff within the service areas has impacted on the response timescales due to staff resource being targeted towards providing essential services and supporting communities.

SCC Adult Social Care Services			
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Local Investigation	176	187	145
Independent Investigation	2	0	1
Local Government Ombudsman	27	35	23

Staffordshire County Council Adult Social Care Services

Stage 1 – Local Investigation – Breakdown

The complaints procedure aims to resolve complaints at a local level within 20 days. This is not a statutory time limit but a goal for effective complaints management. According to the complexity and needs for an effective investigation, this timescale can be extended by agreement with the complainant.

The current guidance suggests that the majority of complaints should be resolved locally, and frontline managers are encouraged to meet with complainants and attempt to address complaints in a swift and effective manner.

145 complaints were recorded under Stage 1 – Local Investigation during 2020-21

Service	District (if applicable)	Number
Adult Learning Disability Team		
	<i>South Staffordshire</i>	17
	<i>North Staffordshire</i>	5
	<i>Young Adults Team</i>	6
	TOTAL	<u>28</u>
Adult Social Care First Contact		<u>27</u>
Brokerage Service		<u>7</u>
Commissioning Service - All Age Disability & Mental Health		2

- Older People & Physical Disabilities		9
- Carers Hub		1
- Care Provider – Home Care agency		8
- Care Provider – Residential / Nursing		2
	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>22</u>
Community Mental Health Team (NORTH)		1
Contact Centre		2
Financial Services;		
- Debt Recovery		2
- Direct Payments Team		1
- Non-Residential		9
- Residential		5
- Welfare Benefits & Fairer Charging		38
	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>55</u>
Fixed Equipment Team		1
Adult Safeguarding		2
	Total	<u>145</u>

It is important to note that some complaints concern more than one service area and therefore require a joint response. However, each service area is recorded separately in the table above in order to capture all areas of complaint.

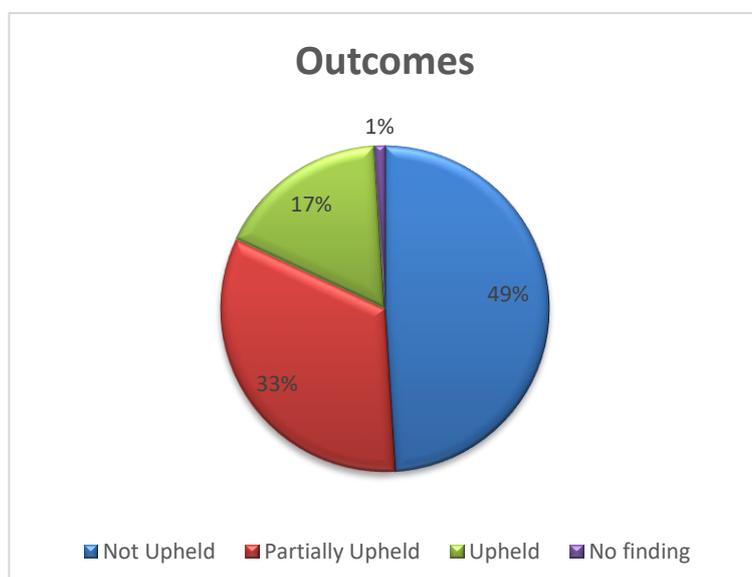
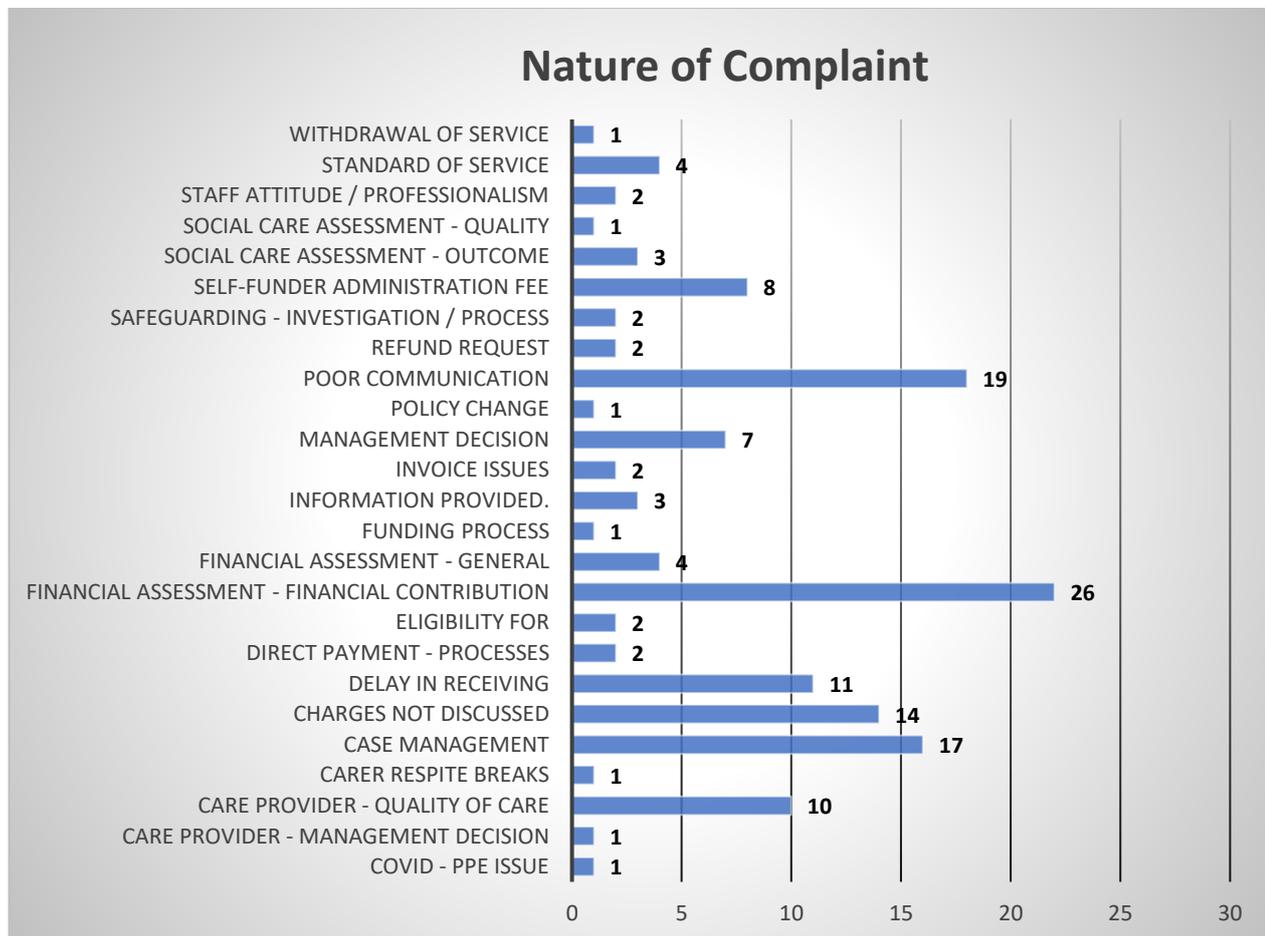
39 % of the Stage 1 Complaints received were in respect of the Fairer Charging Service (including residential / non-residential). This was mainly concerning the outcome of a financial assessment and the client contribution figure. This figure is consistent with previous years and continues to be an area of concern for the client and / or their representation.

Last financial year, the Brokerage Service investigated 24 Stage 1 Complaints. This financial year has seen the figure vastly reduced to 7 Stage 1 complaints. This is due to more concerns being resolved outside of the complaints process this financial year.

There has been a 33% reduction in formal complaints received during 2020 / 2021. This is due to the significantly reduced numbers of complaints for the Brokerage Service this financial year.

Stage 1 – Local Investigation Adults Social Care (Council) – Overview of Nature of complaint and Outcomes

The charts below provides an overview of the nature of complaints received during 2020-21 and the outcome of the complaints investigated.



18% of complaints received were regarding the outcome of a financial assessment.

10% of complaints were regarding charges for services and not being advised by Council staff that a service is chargeable.

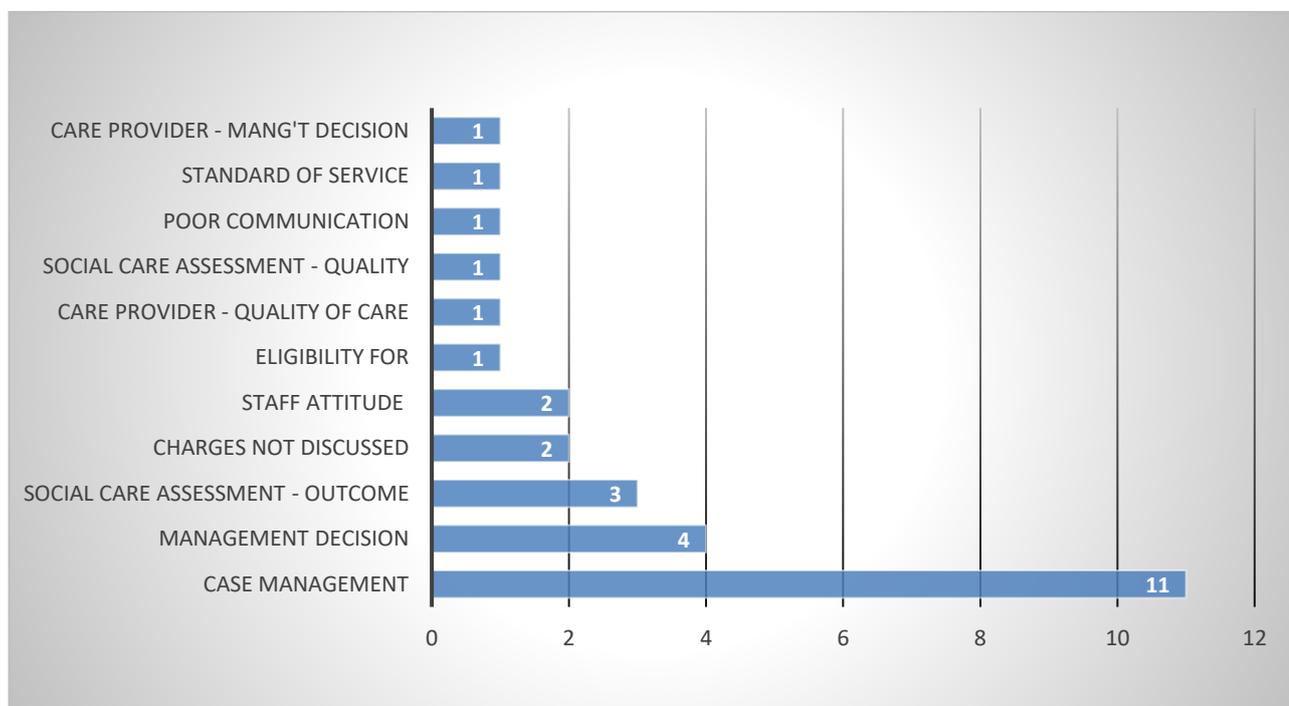
Stage 1 – Local Investigation Adult Social Care (Council) – Breakdown by service

The charts below show the nature of complaint and outcome for services areas within Staffordshire County Council during 2020/21.

Adult Learning Disability Team

The number of complaints received for Adult Learning Disability Team's this reporting year is consistent in comparison with the previous year. 27 complaints were registered last financial year compared to **28** this year. The service carried out 248 assessments of new people and 1,382 reviews of people who are already receiving care 2020 / 21

Nature of Complaint



39% of complaints were regarding

Case

Management

from staff. This includes the management of an individual person's case by the allocated worker.

14% of complaints were regarding **Social Care**

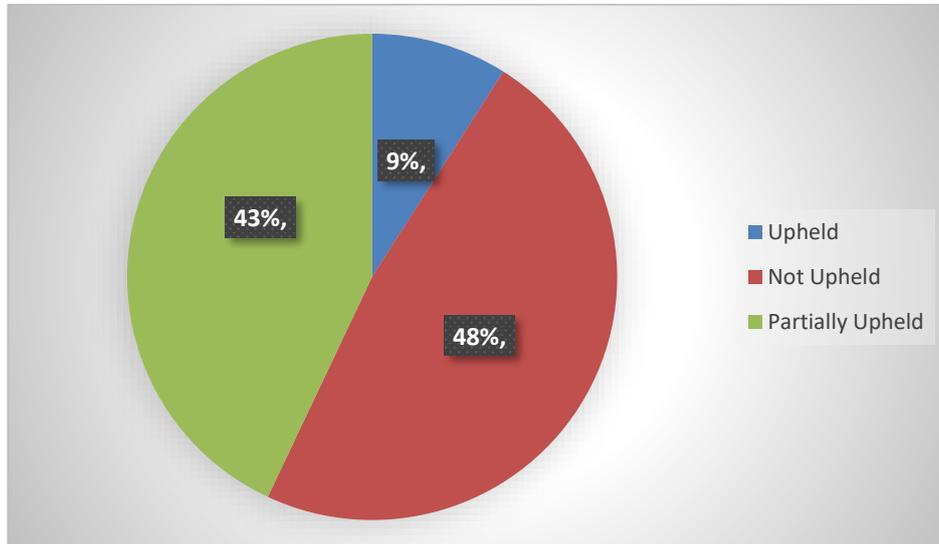
Assessments – this

includes the quality of an assessment and / or the outcome which has resulted in a reduction in services.

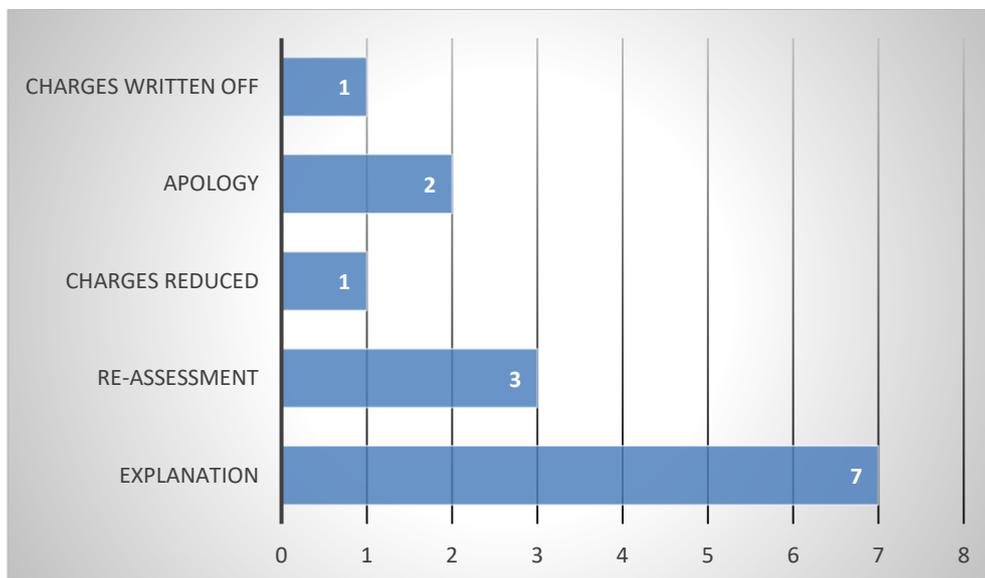
Outcome of Complaint

The data below show the outcome of the complaints investigated for the Adult Learning Disability Teams during 2020/21.

Finding



Recommendation / Learning Action



Organisational Learning and Recommendations

- Apology provided where complaints were Upheld.
- Explanation of events provided to complainant.
- For two separate complaints a full re-assessment and review of placement was recommended.
- For two separate complaints it was agreed that family can use the direct payment to pay a relative to support with care due the restrictions due to Covid.
- For two separate complaints an invoice was reduced.

Adults and Children's Financial Services (ACFS)

The detail below includes the following services;

- **Welfare Benefits and Fairer Charging Services;**
- **Residential and Non-Residential Finance Team;**
- **Debt Recovery;**
- **Direct Payments.**

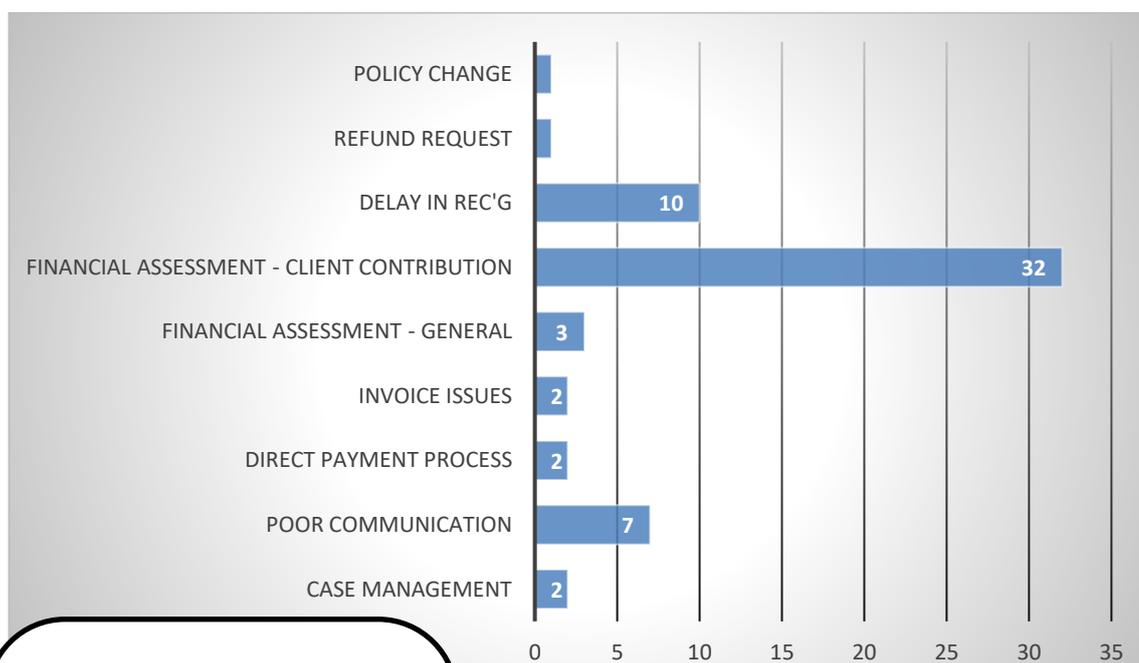
ACFS completed 5633 financial assessments this financial year annually. This has been broken down as below;

- Non-Residential full assessments: 2194
- Non-Residential re-assessment: 1448
- Non-Residential Self Funders: 443

- Residential full assessments: 166
- Residential re-assessments: 760
- Residential interim assessments: 622

The number of complaints received for ACFS this reporting year has reduced by **31%** in comparison to last financial year. **83** complaints were registered last financial year compared to **57** this year

Nature of Complaint

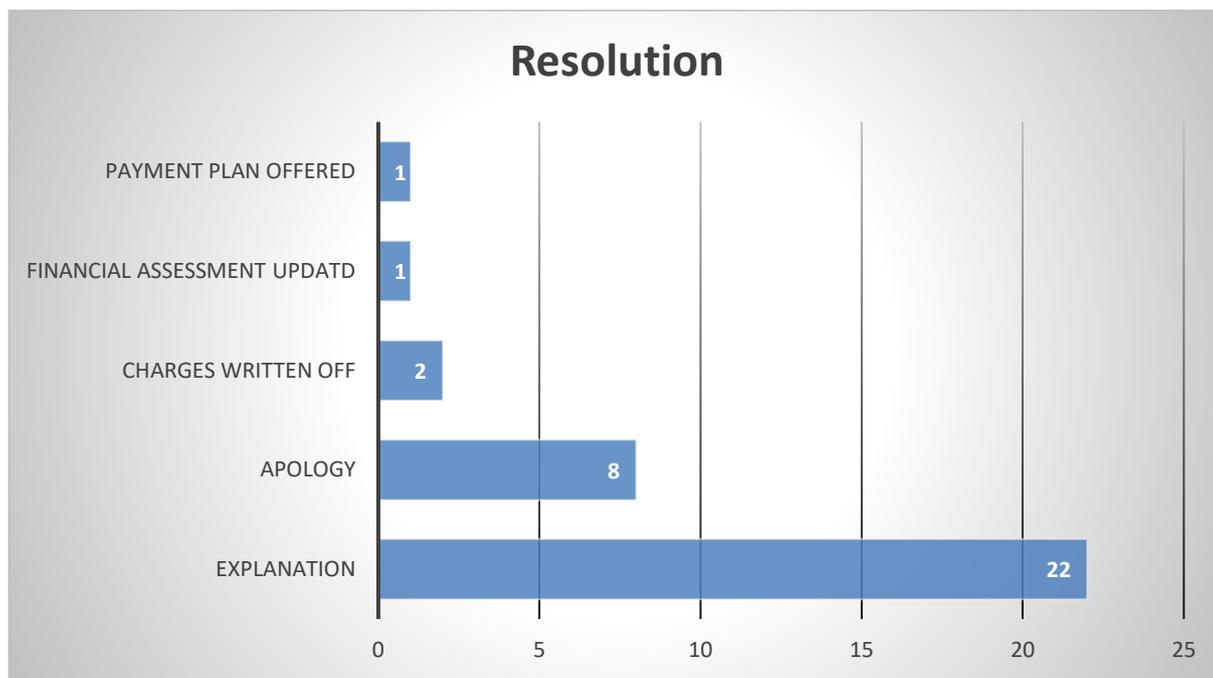
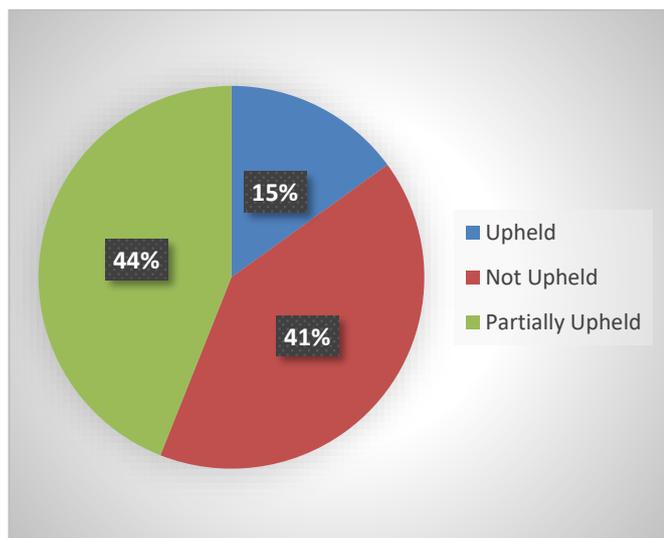


28% of complaints were regarding **poor communication** and **delay in receiving** a service. This also includes length of time for contact to be made with the citizen.

53% of complaints were regarding the **assessed weekly client contribution**. This was due to the weekly charge increasing following an assessment / re-assessment in line with the Care Act.

Outcome of Complaint

Finding



Resolutions and Organisation Learning;

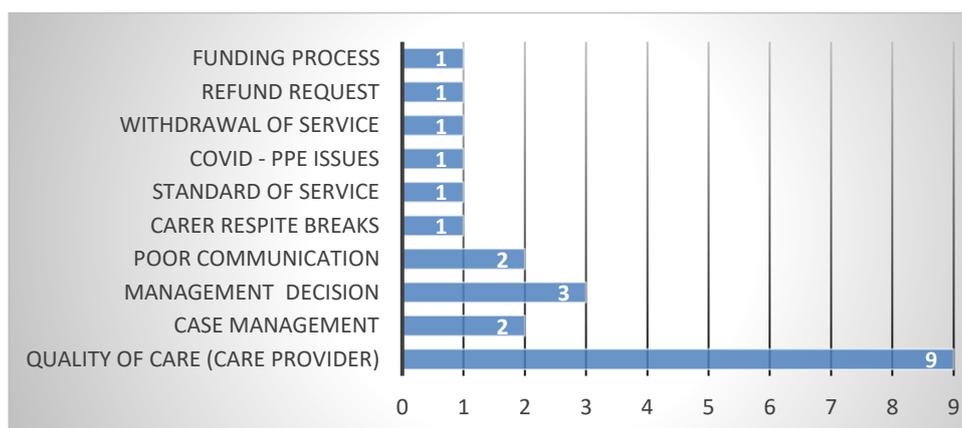
- Apology provided where complaints were Upheld
- Explanation of events provided to complainant.
- Explanation of financial assessment process and DRE that is included.
- Explanation of invoice and charges.
- Explanation of charges for respite care.
- 2 complaints resulted in charges being written off
- DRE appeal offered.

Care Commissioning

The detail below includes the following services:

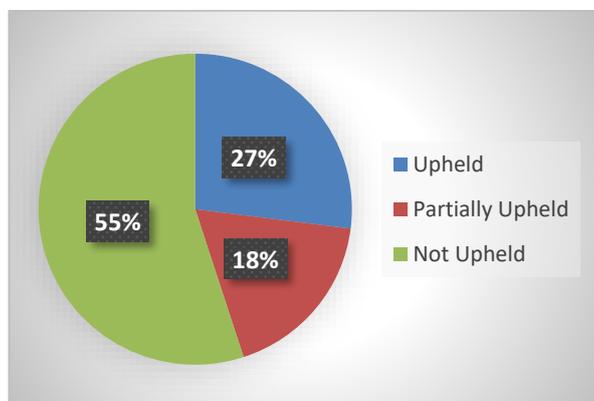
- Older People and Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment
- All Age Disability & Adult Mental Health (AD&AMH)
- Care Providers e.g. Home Care Agency and Residential Homes
- Supported Living / Extra Care
- Carers Hub

Nature of complaint



45% of complaints received for Care Commissioning were regarding the **service provided by a Care Provider**. The Council becomes involved with the complaint if the complainant is unhappy with responses previously received by management.

Outcome



20% of complaint's received by the Commissioning Service were in respect of decisions in relation to the services a client receives following a social care assessment

Resolutions and Organisation Learning

- Council agreed to set the personal budget at the placement that was identified as meeting the needs of the citizen.
- The Council has referred the Care Home to Infection Prevention and Control Colleagues who will review practice and guidance with the Care Home in more depth to ensure continual adherence to guidance. In addition, these concerns have been shared with the Staffordshire County Council's Quality Assurance Team for further review.
- Direct payments arranged to enable citizen can remain with provider of choice
- Apology / Explanation provided following contact with the home care agency in respect of the complaint raised.

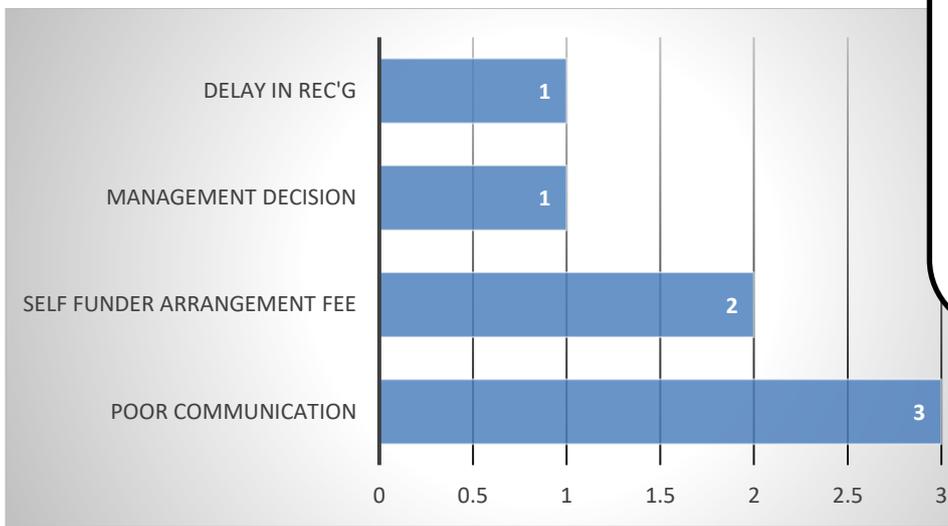
Brokerage Service

The Brokerage Service are responsible for sourcing a provider for home care and residential establishments for service users following a social care assessment when a service has been identified. It is important to note that some complaints investigated by Brokerage also required input from MPFT in order to provide a full answer to the complaint raised. This is because MPFT undertake the social care assessment.

During 2020-21, the Brokerage Service actioned / sourced 9,110 care packages and placement requests

The number of complaints received for Brokerage this reporting year has significantly reduced by **71%** in comparison to last financial year. 24 complaints were registered last financial year compared to **7** this year

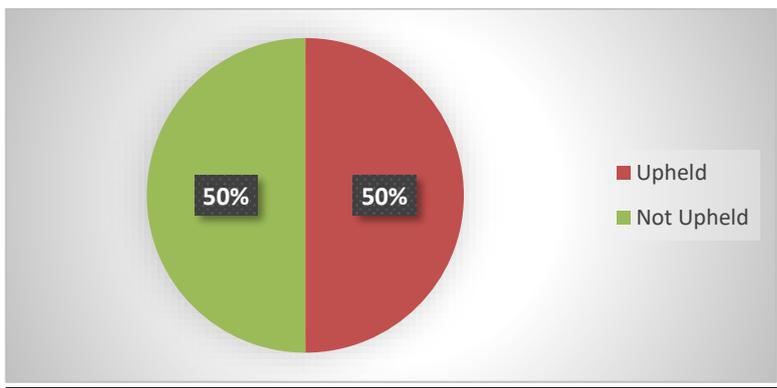
Nature of complaint



29% of complaints were regarding the **'self funder arrangement fee'**.

43% of complaints were in relation to **Poor Communication** from the Brokerage Service. This includes telephone calls not returned and lack of updates provided to families.

Outcome



Resolutions and Organisation Learning

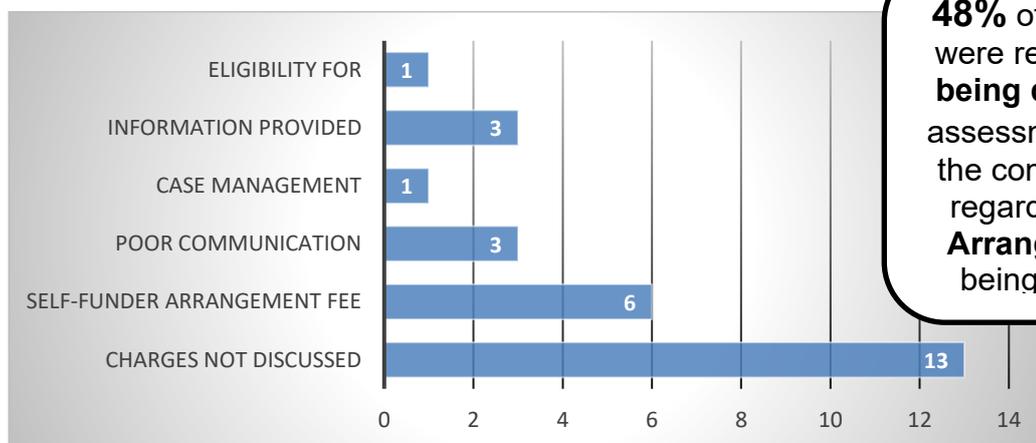
- Explanation of events provided, and processes followed by Brokerage.
- 1 complaint resulted in charges being reduced as an outcome of the complaint and the £400 Self Funder arrangement fee written off.

Adult Social Care First Contact Team

The service is point of contact for citizens who wish to request social care assistance and initial assessments are undertaken in order to establish whether a referral is made to MPFT or sign-posting to other services. During this financial year the service undertook 9130 assessments.

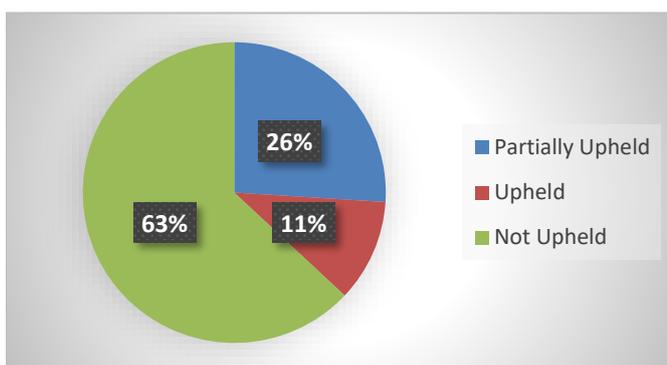
The service received **27** complaints which were investigated under Stage 1 of the complaints process. There has been a **37%** increase in complaints received for the First Contact Team in comparison to last financial year.

Nature of complaint



48% of complaints received were regarding **charges not being discussed** during the assessment process. **22%** of the complaints received were regarding the **Self Funder Arrangement Fee** and not being advised of this fee.

Outcome



22% of complaints are regarding **Poor Communication** from the service. This includes the **quality of information provided**

Resolutions and Organisation Learning

- Explanation of events provided.
- Apology provided to those complaints upheld and partially upheld.
- The £400 Arrangement Fee written off for 5 complaints.
- Explanation provided in respect of whether charging was discussed with the service user.
- Start date for the client contribution of a home care package amended and invoice amended.

Stage 1 – Independent Investigation Adults Social Care

Independent investigation is initiated in circumstances where a complaint is complex and / or a level of seriousness is identified. This is often in circumstances of multi-agency involvement. The independent investigation is conducted by a commissioned external Investigating Officer.

A report of investigation is produced that details conclusions reached and recommends action to both resolve the complaint and make improvements for the organisation. The relevant Senior Officer adjudicates the report and provides the Council's formal response to the complainant.

The timescale under this part of the procedure is 25 days, although there is facility to agree with the complainant an extension up to 65 days. (Again, this is not a statutory requirement but an operational goal that may be subject to negotiation)

There have been 1 complaint independently investigated during 2020/21.

This complaint was in relation to the assessments carried out, the provision (and lack of provision) of full and accurate information relating to these assessments, the delays and failure to reply to the complainants correspondence, and the failure to take reasonable steps to reach a Deferred Payment Agreement (DPA) to support his brother in funding his care.

This complaint was predominately in relation to services carried out by members of staff from the Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT) which has been commissioned by Staffordshire County Council (SCC) to provide adult social care services integrated with NHS community-based health services in Staffordshire. However, the complaints were directed to Staffordshire County Council as the public body with statutory responsibility for adult social care provision.

Recommendations;

- **It is recommended that a Senior Officer be asked to carry out a review, working with colleagues at the First Contact Centre, the Finance Team and the Area Teams, to assess the efficiency of the existing systems to see whether the process from application for support through to an assessment can be carried out in a timelier manner.**

Arrangements are now in place to prevent these types of delays accruing and the Council closely track the exceptional cases that take longer. Financial Services also have processes in place to send out financial assessments within 24 hours following receipt of a referral.

- **Customer Feedback and Complaints Manager carry out a review to satisfy herself that the systems in place to record receipt of correspondence from MPs and complainants and ensure these are acted upon are effective.**

Review has taken place. There has been a couple of new appointments within the Complaints Team to support with representations receive by the team.

- **It is recommended that the systems for processing assessments be reviewed to include a check to confirm that the completed assessment has been sent to the client for signature/comment and records the date this was sent.**

Practitioner's to be reminded of the importance of this. The Council can then verify whether this is happening during quality audits.

Stage 2 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Complaints (to include Staffordshire County Council and Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust - MPFT)

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) is empowered to investigate where it appears that a Council's own investigations have not resolved the complaint. Whilst anyone can approach the Ombudsman at any time, the Complainant is usually required to first take up their complaint with the relevant Council to allow a local response. However, if the Complainant remains dissatisfied following local or independent investigation by the Council they then have the right to pursue the matter with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

The Local Authority has received **23** complaints which have been referred to the LGSCO, **18** complaints were fully investigated by the LGSCO and **3** were referred back to the local authority for investigation. **2** complaints were closed after enquiries were made with the Council and it was concluded that the Council was not at fault.

Compared to last financial year, the numbers of complaint considered by the Ombudsman have reduced from **23** to **18** investigations.

Summary of Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Complaints

Out of the 23 complaints which were received by the LGSCO, the Council has received **6** outcomes where the complaint was **Upheld and maladministration and injustice** was found. A total of £700 'time, trouble and distress caused' payments was awarded to complainants following referral to the Ombudsman.

The Council is currently awaiting the outcome of **11** complaints. Of the **11**, **5** are awaiting allocation to an investigating officer, **3** complaints are currently awaiting a Draft Decision and **4** remain under investigation at the time of writing this report.

Further details of the investigations can be found in the table below;

Staffordshire County Council Services			
Service	Nature	Outcome	Recommendation
Adult Learning Disability Team (South)	<p>LGSCO previously dealt with a complaint from Mrs X and found fault by the Council.</p> <p>That complaint resulted in a permanent residential placement for her son. However, that placement has now broken down and her son has now returned to live with her.</p> <p>Mrs X is again complaining about the lack of support from the Council.</p>	Premature complaint	Council to investigate via Stage 1 of the Complaints Process.

Adult Learning Disability (North)	The Council has failed to deal properly with the charges for his daughter's care during the COVID-19 pandemic and has failed to take a sufficiently flexible approach to meeting his daughter's needs during the pandemic.	Upheld – Maladministration and Injustice	The Council to reconsider its decision not to allow the direct payments to fund support from within the family while they were shielding Miss Y; The Council writes to Mr X apologising for its failings and pays him £250 for the time and trouble it has put him to in pursuing the complaint.
Care Provider – Home Care Agency	Complaint about home care agency and alleged neglect of two occasions. Concerns raised about the time that the carers arrived for the care visits in comparison to the times that they recorded in the log book. This resulted in client paying for care which was not provided.	Awaiting allocation to investigator	Awaiting allocation to investigator.
Care Provider – Home Care Agency- Bees Care Ltd	The complaint is regarding the care provided by Bess Care (home care agency) to which Ms X used her Direct Payments to fund the care.	Awaiting Draft Decision	Awaiting Draft Decision
Care Provider – Residential Care – Oldbury Grange	Complaint about lack of action regarding a complaint made by Mr Y in March 2020 about the care his Father received in a care home funded by SCC. The Council had referred the complaint back to the care home, who had not responded to a complaint made directly to the home in November 2019.	Decision not to investigate	Decision not to investigate
Care Provider – Residential Care – The Firs	Safeguarding issues regarding a relatives care and failure to release any medical records and other documentation that has been requested several times over the last 7 months we require to proceed with a legal case.	Awaiting allocation to an investigating officer	Awaiting allocation to an investigating officer
Commissioning Service – Older People & Physical Disabilities	I wrote to the complaints dept expressing dissatisfaction with the provision of respite care for my father over the past few years. No response to complaint received.	Premature complaint	Council to investigate via Stage 1 of the Complaints Process and provide a response .
Commissioning – Lifeways	Complaint about staff member at Lifeways during visit to a relative.	Decision not to investigate	Decision not to investigate

Financial Services – Residential	<p>The Council had:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Failed to properly set up a deferred payment arrangement <input type="checkbox"/> Did not provide her with sufficient information to understand her options in relation to the deferred payment arrangement. <input type="checkbox"/> Significantly delayed sending the final invoice so Mrs X could settle the debt. <input type="checkbox"/> Used the wrong address and failed to send correspondence. 	Under investigation	Under Investigation
Financial Services – Welfare Benefits & Fairer Charging Team and; Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	<p>Dr X complains about Staffordshire County Council (the Council) and Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (the Trust). In particular she complains about Council and the Trust's failure to consider referral for Continuing Healthcare (CHC) funding for her father, after he was discharged from hospital in May 2019.</p> <p>Dr X also complains about the time it took for the Council and the Trust to respond to her complaint. This has added to her frustration.</p>	Awaiting Draft Decision	Awaiting Draft Decision
Financial Services – Welfare Benefits & Fairer Charging Team and; Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	<p>Complaint about outcome of financial assessment and the lack of communication regarding the process / procedure. Miss X can not afford the assessed charge.</p>	Awaiting allocation to investigating officer	Awaiting allocation to investigating officer
Financial Services – Welfare Benefits & Fairer Charging Team	Dispute outcome of financial assessment.	Premature complaint	Council to investigate via Stage 1 of the Complaints Process and provide a response .
Financial Services – Welfare Benefits & Fairer Charging Team	Mrs X states that the Council has failed to consider her son's property related expenses when assessing the contribution he should make towards his care costs.	Upheld – Maladministration and injustice	The Council has agreed to review its policy to recognise that it has discretion to consider PRE in exceptional circumstances where the disabled person is not liable for rent or mortgage. The policy should provide some examples of what might constitute exceptional circumstances.

			The Council has also agreed to reconsider Mrs X's request for PRE for her son.
Financial Services – Welfare Benefits & Fairer Charging Team	Miss X complains that the Council did not correctly consider her brother's expenses and disregards when it calculated the contributions he must make towards the costs of his care. For this reason, she says he is having to make a contribution towards his care costs when he should not have to causing him financial hardship.	Not Upheld – No Maladministration	No recommendations
Financial Services – Welfare Benefits & Fairer Charging Team	Mr X, who complains on behalf of his wife, Mrs X, says the Council is at fault because it took too long to complete her financial assessment and made errors when it did so. He also says the Council's view that Mrs X deprived herself of capital to avoid paying care costs is wrong.	Upheld – Maladministration and injustice	The Council has agreed to reconsider its decision on deprivation of Mrs X's capital addressing the issue of whether avoiding care costs was a significant factor in the timing and disposal of the capital. It should consider any information that Mr X provides to it in support of his argument including the details of any advice he received from the OPG and his solicitor. The Council should also pay Mr X £200 in recognition of the time and trouble he has been put to in clarifying matters relating to the Council paying Mrs X's care fees for longer than necessary.
Financial Services – Welfare Benefits & Fairer Charging Team	Mrs X complains that the Council took three months to complete a financial assessment of her father's care costs and, had they known about the high charge from the outset, her father would not have agreed to the care package. She also complains the Council did not take into account her mother's income in the financial assessment.	Upheld – Maladministration and injustice	The Council has agreed to reduce the invoice by £100 Agree an affordable repayment plan with the client.
Financial Services – Welfare Benefits & Fairer Charging Team	Complaint about the date from which Mrs X's capital fell under the £23500 threshold, thus impacting on the Council financially contributing to her care.	Awaiting allocation to an investigating officer	Awaiting allocation to an investigating officer

	<p>Failure to inform Mr X about the Appeals process – it is important that where people feel an incorrect decision may have been made in relation to their care and support they have an effective means to have the decision reviewed.</p>		
<p>Financial Services – Welfare Benefits & Fairer Charging Team</p>	<p>The Council is at fault in how it assessed Mrs X's contributions towards her care costs. Of particular concern is the Council's failure to carry out annual reviews of Mrs X financial assessments (including prior to Mrs X's care needs increasing) and its view that Mrs X intentionally deprived the Council of assets to avoid paying care costs</p>	<p>Awaiting Final Statement</p>	<p>Awaiting Final Statement</p>
<p>Financial Services – Welfare Benefits & Fairer Charging Team</p>	<p>Mr and Mrs X complain about the way the Council has calculated the financial contribution that their son has to make towards the costs of his care package. They say the Council has not properly assessed the affordability of the package and has not properly considered the disability related expenditure. Mr X also complains about a telephone call with a Council officer as he says the officer was rude and put the phone down on him.</p>	<p>Awaiting Draft Decision</p>	<p>Awaiting Draft Decision</p>
<p>Midland Partnership NHS Foundation Trust</p>	<p>Mr B, complains the Council carried out a reassessment that reduced his direct payments. Mr B says the reduction in support will affect his health. Mr B also complains the Council has accessed his medical records without his consent and it has not arranged a home visit so he can show the financial assessor receipts from his Disability Related Expenses (DRE).</p>	<p>Upheld – Maladministration and injustice</p>	<p>The Council should reach a decision about the Direct Payments either based on the March 2020 assessment, or carry out a fresh assessment if there is any indication of a change in need; The Council should tell Mr B of his assessed financial contribution. The Council should confirm to Mr B in writing that he will not have to repay any arrears/overpayment amassed relating to the extra 8 hours that were put into place during his complaint. (Mr B will be expected to contribute financially</p>

			towards the four hours/five and a quarter hours direct payments he was assessed as needing.)
Midland Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	Ms X complains that the Council failed to support her as a carer since she moved home in 2018, including failing to provide respite care. She also complains there was no response to her formal complaint about this and about poor communication by social care staff.	Upheld – Maladministration and injustice	Apologise and pay Mrs X £150 for the delay in responding to her complaint for the poor quality carers' assessment by the carers' hub and for and poor communication by staff. Review the Trust's complaint handling processes (including those services delivered by PALS) to ensure all those who complain about social care services receive a prompt response to their complaints. Ensure all carers with eligible needs receive a carers support plan. •Start doing carers' assessments itself (The Council has decided to stop using the carers hub to do assessments from 6 April). There is already a system in place to check all assessments
Midland Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	Complaint is against NHS Midlands Partnership and their failure to adhere to the statutory guidance of the Care Act 2014 and the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Namely: a) NHS Midlands Partnership failed to correctly assess my mother's dementia needs. These risks include the prevention of falls, viral infection from visitors, but also the potential risk of abuse from family members. b) NHS Midlands Partnership failed to take into account my mother's life-long wishes of remaining in her own home with as little intrusion as possible. c) NHS Midlands Partnership ignored my request for a second assessment taking into account my mother's condition d) NHS Midlands Partnership did not refer my mother's case to a multi-agency safeguarding hub.	Awaiting Allocation to an investigating officer	Awaiting allocation to an investigating officer.

Mental Health team (North)	Miss X complains that the Council discharged her without notifying her and without an appropriate assessment. She says as a result she lost the opportunity to be considered for supported housing.	Under investigation	Under Investigation
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Other Activity

In addition to the recording and administering of Statutory Complaints, the Customer Feedback and Complaint Service have formally acknowledged and monitored an additional **233** enquiries each requiring redirection to other organisations/authorities or action into other procedures.

Dealt with by Complaints Team*	102
Referred to Adult Social Care (MPFT)**	44
Joint Statutory Stage 1 response with other organisation / NHS	5
Referral to another Organisation for action / investigation	6
MP Enquiry (Adult Social Care)	71
Public Enquiry	2
Safeguarding referral initiated	1
Corporate Complaints Procedure	2
Total	233

*Complaints / enquiries which are handled by the Complaints Team consist of liaising with the service team in order to resolve the complainants concerns or the Complaints Team solely investigating the complaint and providing a response to the complainant. Depending on the nature and complexity of the concern raised this can take 24 hours to complete or several weeks of investigative work in order to fully conclude.

19% of complaints received were referred to **Adult Social Care (MPFT)**. Generally, concerns were regarding the information provided by a social worker in respect of charges for services when a care is arranged.

34% of duty matters were resolved with the **Financial Services**. This often included a telephone call to the complainant to explain an invoices / charges. This also includes the concerns raised regarding the £400 Arrangement Fee for self-funders and the request for this to be written off.

** The Council's Complaints Team refer a complaint to MPFT when the complaint solely concerns the actions of a social worker or social care assessment (Adult Social Care Team's managed by MPFT).

Compliments

During 2020/21 a total of **20** compliments were recorded with the Customer Feedback and Complaints Team which related to Adults Social Care. This figure may not represent all the compliments received as some staff members may have received a compliment directly.

Services provided by Staffordshire County Council	No. Rec'd
Adult Learning Disability Team	8
Brokerage Service	5
Commissioning (PPE supplies)	1
Contact Centre	2
Home Care Agency	1
Debt Recovery Team	3
TOTAL	20

Adult Learning Disability Team
 "Steve, we read the report again. You have captured everything perfectly and your report writing is with huge compassion and respect. I can tell that you have through everything and it is a difficult situation to describe. We just wanted you to know. Please pass on to your manager and let her know how appreciative we are to you and your compassion"

"I would like to place on record my sincere thanks for the recent review that Caroline completed.

As a family Covid 19 has impacted immensely and a review was therefore bought forward. Caroline identified areas of need and concerns and was through in completing the paperwork.

She was always professional and responded quickly to my emails."

Brokerage Team
 "My brother and I dealt with Kate in November 2020 whilst we were trying to find a care home for our dad, David We wanted to put on record our thanks to Kate because she was so very helpful and kind during what was a difficult experience for us.

I contacted her a lot during the process and always found her to be very pleasant and cheerful even though I must have been driving her mad with my questions!! Kate is a credit to your team and you are lucky to have her.

"To whom it may concern: Too often people feel the need to criticise the council, yet when excellent service is delivered remain silent. I prefer to applaud when someone helps and 'goes the extra mile'. So I thank Amreen who helped me this afternoon on the telephone to secure my mother's badge renewal. I was able to explain the situation, was not rushed and was guided to give the relevant information. Please convey, officially, my grateful thanks to her. When I said I would be writing to the council she said I had, 'made her

Service Approach for 2020/2021

- Continue greater emphasis on quality of Stage 1 responses to complainants and the importance of discussing the complaint details with the complainant during each investigation.
- To develop processes within the Complaints Team and service areas to ensure complaints are responded to within the agreed timescale.
- To develop processes with the Complaints Team and services areas to ensure recommendations made by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman are completed with the agreed timescale.
- To continue to work with Midlands Partnership Foundation NHS Trust in order to administer complaints for adult social care in line with the Section 75 agreement and to ensure lessons are shared and learnt following the outcome of a complaint.
- To continue to develop and enhance reporting processes and requirements with colleagues within Staffordshire County Council in order to provide complaint data regularly to senior management.

Author; **Natalie Smith**
 Complaints Officer
 Customer Feedback and Complaints Team
 Staffordshire County Council

Local Members Interest
N/A

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday 03 August 2021

Customer Feedback and Complaints Service, Children's Social Services Annual Report 2020/21

Recommendation

I recommend that the Committee:

- a. Considers the Annual Report of the Customer Feedback and Complaints Service, Children's Social Services 2020/21, taking the opportunity for any comments on the content of the report.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Summary

What is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being asked to do and why?

1. The Committee is being asked to consider the Annual Report of the Customer Feedback and Complaints Service, Children's Social Services 2020/21, taking the opportunity for any comments on the content of the report.

Report

Background

2. In line with The Children Act 1989 Representation Procedure (England) Regulations 2006, the Local Authority is required to produce an Annual Report. This report must include the number of complaints recorded under the Representation Procedure together with information on the outcome of each representation and whether statutory timescales were adhered to.
3. The Annual Report, Customer Feedback and Complaints Service, Children's Social Services 2020/21 is being submitted for scrutiny and endorsement.
4. The report contains information about the nature of complaints received, together with responses provided and their handling by the Council.
5. It is important that the Local Authority uses the evidence available from Complaints and Representations to inform service improvements. The report provides information about how complaints investigations are used to identify specific themes, where service improvement can be addressed and highlights where the County Council is providing quality services to customers which may be identified

from compliments received. This is in line with the Council's Strategic Plan, to use Customer Insight to develop high quality services which meet customer needs.

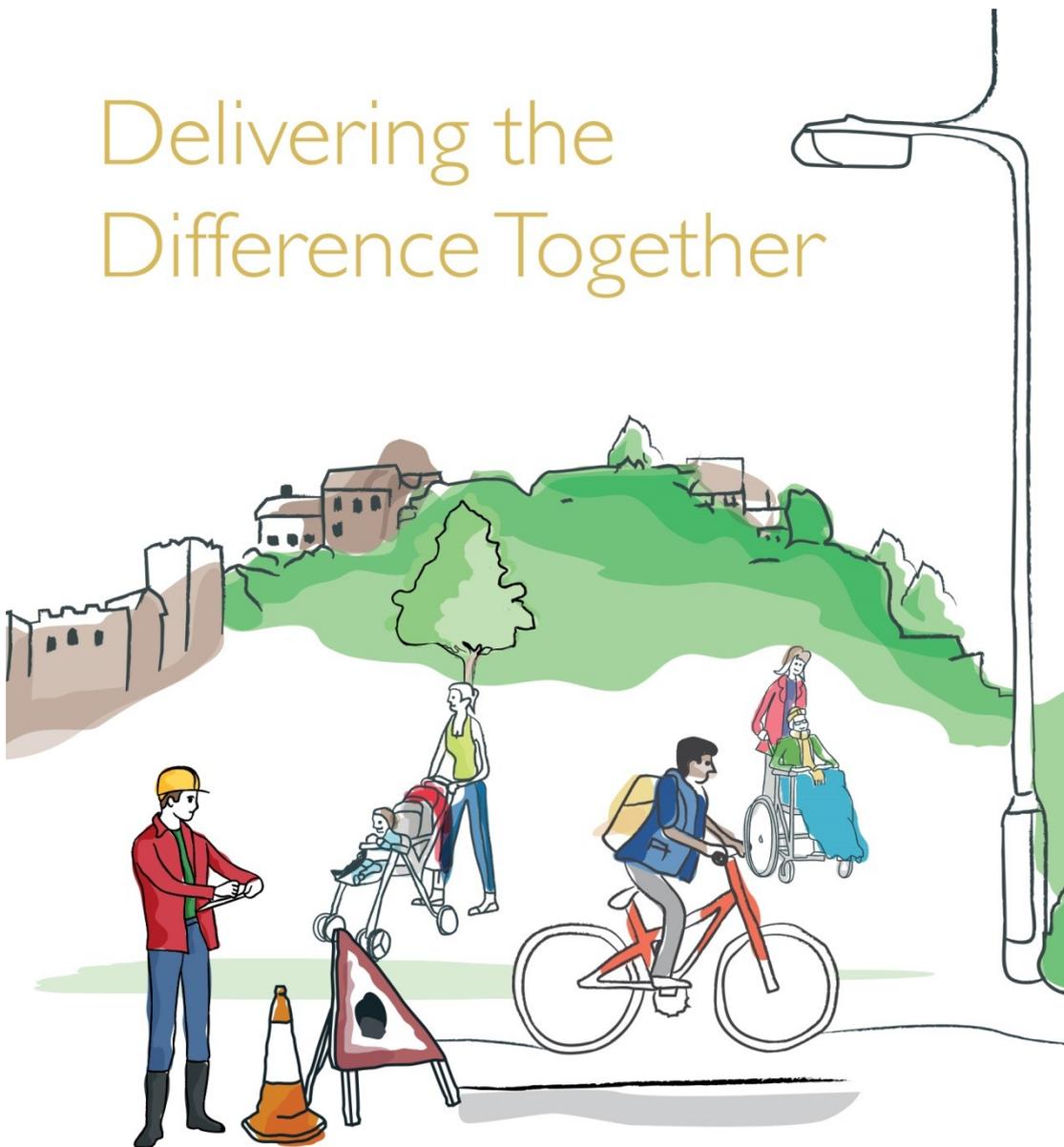
List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Customer Feedback and Complaints Service, Children's Social Services Annual Report 2020/21

Contact Details

Assistant Director:	Tracy Thorley, Assistant Director for Corporate Operations
Report Author:	Kate Bullivant
Job Title:	Complaints, Access to Information and School Appeals Manager
Telephone No.:	01785 277407
E-Mail Address:	kate.bullivant@staffordshire.gov.uk

Delivering the Difference Together



Putting the people of Staffordshire first



COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK
STATUTORY ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES

Introduction

This report provides information for the Statutory Children's Complaints and Representations Service and the Corporate Feedback Procedure for Children and Families services, for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. The report and service is provided in accordance with the Complaints and Representations Procedures established under the Children Act 1989 and the Local Authority Act 1970.

The Procedures were amended from 1 September 2006 by The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006, and 'Getting the Best from Complaints', the accompanying guidance.

The Statutory Complaints Procedure

The Statutory Procedure provides a Procedure for making representations about the discharge by a Local Authority of its functions under Part 3 and specified functions under Parts 4 and 5 of The Children Act 1989, certain functions under 2002 Act and functions regarding Special Guardianship support services.

There are three stages to the Statutory Complaints Procedure:

Stage 1 – Local Resolution

This stage is usually carried out by a Team Manager, who is required to carry out an investigation by discussing the complaint with the relevant practitioners and the complainant and taking into account any evidence which is held by the Local Authority, before making an informed finding on each specific complaint. There is a timescale of 20 working days to complete this stage.

Stage 2 – Independent Investigation

This stage involves the commissioning of an Independent Investigating Officer (IIO) and an Independent Person (IP) who will carry out an evidence-based investigation by meeting with various practitioners concerned and viewing evidence held on the Local Authority files. The IIO and IP will each prepare a report, including recommendations for the service to consider. The responsible Assistant Director will then consider the reports and recommendations and prepare a response to the complainant detailing whether they accept the findings and recommendations, before all reports and responses are sent to the complainant. There is a timescale of 65 working days to complete this stage.

The Complaints Team are required to accept all requests for a Stage 2 Investigation, however attempts are always made to try and resolve the issues locally, by the Complaints Team offering to meet the complainant along with the relevant Head of Service.

Stage 3 – Complaint Review Panel

This stage involves the commissioning of three independent Panel members, who will attend a Panel meeting alongside the IIO and IP, the complainant, a representative from the service, the Complaints Manager, a Clerk to the Panel and anyone else who is considered to be required. The Panel will consider the adequacy of the Stage 2 Investigation in light of any additional information provided by the complainant. Panel will reach a view as to whether any findings need to be overturned and whether any additional recommendations need to be implemented. The report provided by Panel will be shared with the Local Authority and the Director for Children's Services (DCS) will prepare a response to the complainant which will detail whether the recommendations are accepted. The Panel report and response from the DCS is then shared with the complainant.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

In the event that a complainant remains dissatisfied following exhaustion of all three stages of the complaints procedure they can take their complaint to the LGO. A complainant can access the LGSCO at any point but the LGSCO normally provides the Local Authority with the opportunity to process through all stages of the complaints procedure unless they decide otherwise. Complaints referred back to the Local Authority to process are classed as 'premature referral' complaints. If the Local Authority take the

decision to refuse to investigate a complaint or refuse to escalate the complaints to the next stage of the procedure, a complainant may then also approach the LGSCO.

The Corporate Complaints Procedure

The Corporate Complaints Procedure can be utilised when the representation does not fit the criteria to be investigated via the Statutory Complaints Procedure and is regarding a non-statutory service or if the representation is being made in the complainants own right about a service which they have personally received, subject to the specific detail of the complaint.

There are two stages to the Corporate Complaints Procedure:

Stage 1: Local Resolution

This stage usually involves a Team Manager investigating the complaint by conducting discussions with staff members and liaising with the complainant. The Team Manager will then reach a conclusion in terms of the findings of the complaint. The timescale of this stage is 20 working days.

Stage 2: Internal Review

A complainant can submit a request for a Stage 2 Review; however, the Complaints Team have discretion in whether this is accepted. The complainant must provide sufficient evidence to warrant this. If accepted, a senior manager will review the stage 1 response alongside the evidence supplied by the complainant and will reach a finding on each aspect of the complaint. The timescale for completing this stage is 25 working days.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

The option to approach the LGSCO is available to the complainant for the Corporate Feedback Procedure, as it would be for the Statutory Procedure.

Key Numbers and Initial Overview 2020/21



A total of **230** complaints investigated through the different stages of the Statutory and Corporate Complaints Procedures.



264 compliments received for the whole service.



65% of completed complaints responded to within prescribed timescales.



12% of completed stage 1 complaints found upheld, **39%** found not upheld, **44%** found partially upheld.



197 matters recorded under the Duty category.



41 matters considered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

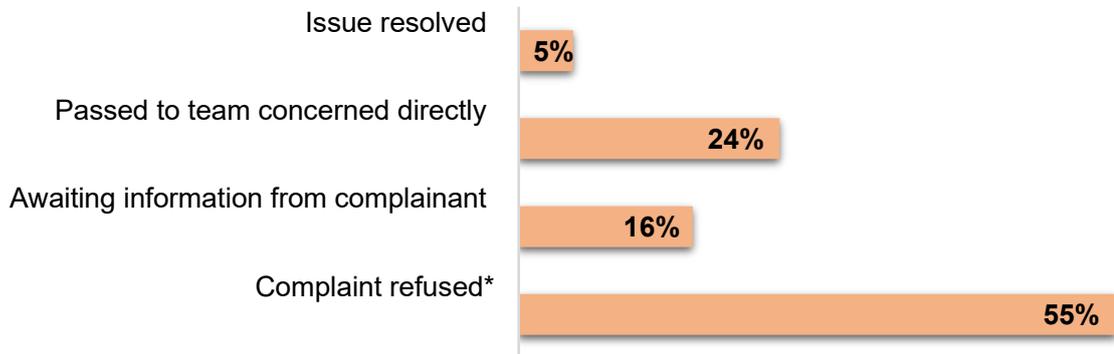
Composition of Total Feedback Received

The chart below provides a general overview of the total amount of feedback which has been recorded by the Complaints Team. For the purpose of the below chart some feedback has been categorised together, such as duty and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) matters, these shall be further broken down as the report progresses.

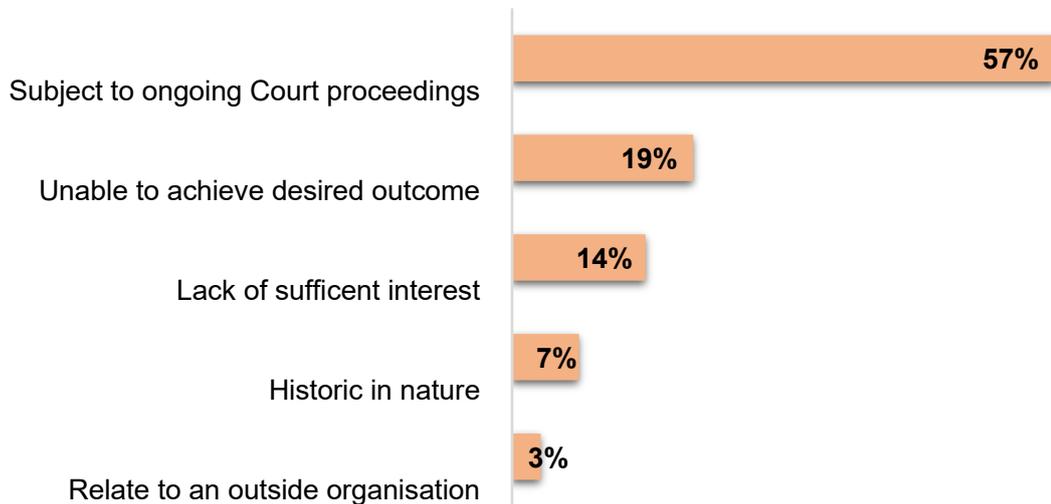
Category	2019/20	2020/21	Change
Duty	212	197	7% ↓
Statutory Stage 1 Complaints	124	107	14% ↓
Statutory Stage 2 Independent Investigations	12	10	17% ↓
Statutory Stage 3 Panels	1	3	200% ↑
Corporate Stage 1 Complaints	169	100	41% ↓
Corporate Stage 2 Reviews	18	10	44% ↓
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)	47	41	13% ↓
Compliments	225	264	17% ↑
MP Enquiries	69	77	11% ↑

Duty Matters

A total of 197 matters have been recorded under the duty category. The following chart provides a breakdown of how these have been categorised.



*In respect of the complaints which have been refused further investigation, the chart below provides further detail on the reasons for refusal:



Duty Matters by Operational Leadership*

LAC and Disability Services: 30%

Partnership and Development: <1%

Education and Skills: 15%

Specialist Safeguarding, Targeted Services and Youth Offending Services: 54%

*matters categorised as 'pending further information' are not contained in these figures.

Feedback categorised under the duty umbrella, remains a high figure and apportioned a large amount of the Complaints Teams work. All feedback which is received relating to Children and Families Services requires assessing, to determine if it is eligible for further investigation. The 197 matters referred to above, have therefore been through a detailed screening assessment to determine the correct avenue for the feedback to follow. Of particular note is the 55% of complaints which have been refused; compared to 35% in the preceding year. Complaints which are refused further investigation can be subject to scrutiny by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and it is therefore imperative that the decision reached is evidence based and is in line with the legislation which the Complaints Team are duty bound to follow.

Statutory Stage 1 Complaints: Key Themes

Numbers

An overall 14% decrease is reported for Stage 1 Statutory Complaints across the services. Upon comparison to 2019/20 this equates to a 28% decrease for Specialist Safeguarding and a 6% decrease for LAC and Disability.

Nature of Complaint

Case management remains the consistent theme for nature of complaints, allowing for 81% of Statutory Stage 1 Complaints.

Timescales

The services adherence to the timescales when responding to Statutory Stage 1 Complaints has increased 20% compared to the previous year, with 65% being responded to within published timescales.

Resolved

Various complaints have been resolved to complainant's satisfaction via meetings facilitated with the Complaints Team and Heads of Service. This has been following a request for a Stage 2 Independent Investigation and has therefore reduced the cost to the public purse.

Findings

Only 4% of Stage 1 Statutory Complaints have been found to be wholly upheld.

Relationship

58% of Statutory Stage 1 Complaints were received from parents of service users. Only 13% were received from a young person directly or an Advocate on behalf of a young person. The remainder were from relatives, Foster Carers and Solicitors.

The Complaints Team processed a total of 107 complaints through the Statutory Complaints Procedure at Stage 1. The chart below provides a breakdown with a comparison for the previous reporting years:

Reporting Period	TOTAL
2018/19	103
2019/20	118
2020/21	107

The data above reports a 14% decrease in Statutory Stage 1 Complaints. Whilst a decrease in complaints received is always welcome, it is not possible to forecast future complaint figures and any key themes can be better identified by considering the findings of these complaints.

Breakdown

The following tables provide a further breakdown into operational leadership and individual teams, of the 107 complaints investigated at Stage 1 of the Statutory Complaints Procedure, with a comparison of the preceding year.

Specialist Safeguarding, Early Help and Youth Offending Service	TOTAL 2019/20	TOTAL 2020/21
Specialist Safeguarding Units	73	51
First Response Team	3	1
Emergency Duty Team	-	1
LADO Service	1	-
TOTAL	77	53
Looked after Children and Disability Services	TOTAL 2019/20	
Care Planning/Court Teams	12	22
Care Proceedings Teams	-	2
Disability Services	10	8
Throughcare Teams	16	11
Adoption Service	3	1
Fostering Service	6	5
Residential Units	-	1
TOTAL	47	50
Partnership and Development	TOTAL 2019/20	TOTAL 2020/21
Independent Review Officers (IRO)	-	4
TOTAL	0	4

Outcomes of Stage 1 Statutory Complaints*

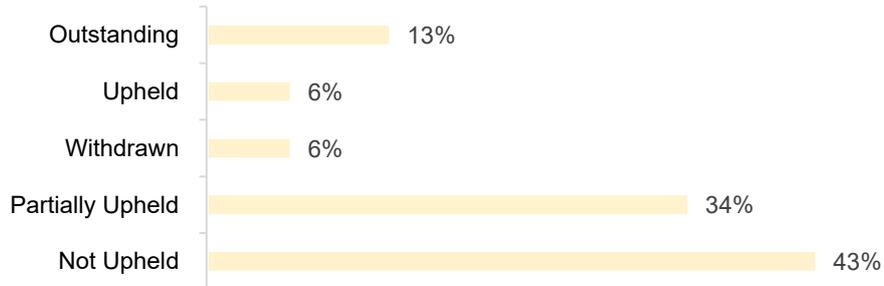
Reporting Period	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Complaint withdrawn
2018/19	6%	56%	34%	5%
2019/20	2%	39%	39%	7%
2020/21	4%	28%	46%	7%

*at the time of reporting 15% of complaints remained open/outstanding.

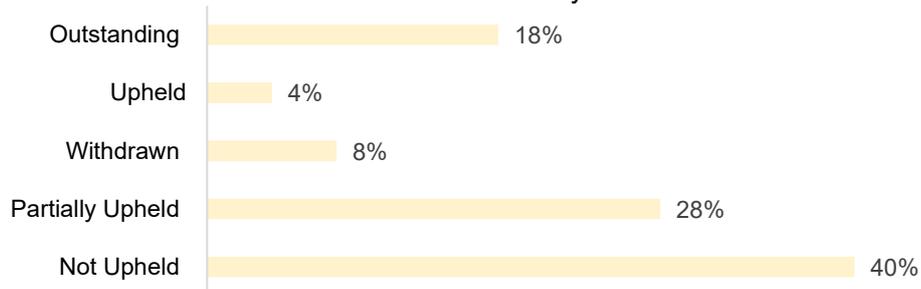
The figures above evidence a slight increase in complaints found to be upheld, however there is a decrease in those found to be partially upheld with an increase in complaints found to be not upheld.

Outcomes by Operational Leadership

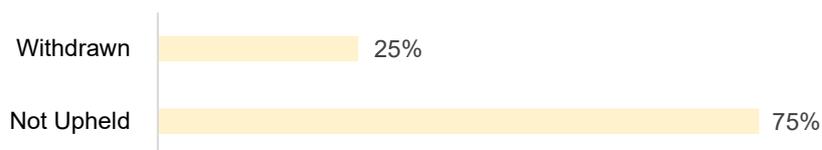
Specialist Safeguarding, Early Help and Youth Offending Service



LAC and Disability Service



Partnership & Development



Timescales for Responding to Stage 1 Statutory Complaints

The following chart shows a comparison of the response timescales for Stage 1 Statutory Complaints for 2020/21 against previous reporting years.

Reporting Period	Within timescale	Over timescale	Complaint withdrawn
2018/19	53%	42%	5%
2019/20	54%	40%	6%
2020/21	65%	26%	9%

The above figures report a significant decrease in complaints being responded to outside of published timescales and an increase in those responded to within timescale. When comparing this data to the preceding years, it is clear that the individual teams have exceeded themselves in terms of meeting these targets. It cannot be forgotten the immense pressure which all services were under during 2020/21 and the fact that these frontline services have managed to narrow the gap in respect of these figures should be commended.

Stage 2 Statutory Independent Investigations

The below table shows the number of Stage 2 Investigations commissioned this reporting year whilst also some comparative data of the preceding year with the percentage of stage 1 complaints progressing to the next stage.

Reporting Period	Number of Stage 1 Statutory Complaints	Number of Stage 2 Independent Investigations	Percentage of Stage 1 Complaints progressing to Stage 2 Investigation
2018/19	103	8	8%
2019/20	124	12	10%
2020/21	107	10	9%

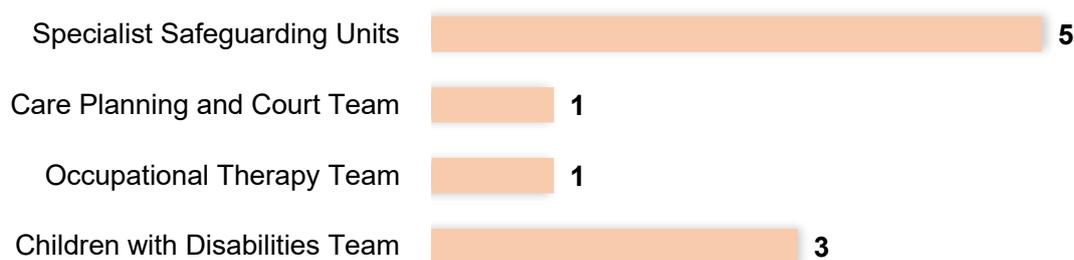
This data shows that despite a decrease in complaints being investigated at Stage 1, there is little difference in the percentage of those complainants who progress to a Stage 2 Independent Investigation. The Complaints Team wish to note that escalation to Stage 2 of the Statutory Complaints Procedure is the complainants right and should they wish to take this avenue, we are duty bound to commission an investigation. The Complaints Team work closely with Senior Managers within the services and make every effort to try and resolve complaints where further escalation is requested. This attempt at resolution is usually through a meeting between a Senior Manager, the complainant, and the Complaints Officer, where the complainant's views are listened to and dialogue takes place to try and reach an acceptable outcome. This reporting year several meetings have taken place where the complainant initially wished to escalate their complaints however their view has changed following a meeting.

It should not be assumed that a request to escalate to Stage 2 of the Statutory Complaints Procedure is as a result of a poor response from Stage 1. A complainant may disagree with a Stage 1 response for a variety of reasons and ultimately their view on matters may differ from that of the Local Authority. The Complaints Team work alongside the service areas to ensure a thorough a robust response is provided at Stage 1, which is evidence based and can be used to support the stance of the service should the complaint escalate to a Stage 2.

Service	Number of Stage 2 Independent Investigations
Looked after Children and Disability Services*	5
Specialist Safeguarding, Early Help and Youth Offending Services*	5

*a total of 4 Stage 2 Investigations remain in the process of being investigated.

The chart below provides a further breakdown into individual teams:



Recommendations from Stage 2 Statutory Investigations

The following table provides a small selection of some of the recommendations which have been implemented as a result of Stage 2 Statutory Investigations. These recommendations are disseminated to practitioners through a variety of methods and the development of this specifically will be discussed towards the end of this report.

Service: Looked after Children and Disability Services
A selection of recommendations accepted by the service:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's Services should acknowledge and reassure <i>young person</i> that it remained mindful of her mental and emotional well-being throughout and that her wishes and feelings remained a priority in any decision making. <p>A full and unreserved apology was provided from the Assistant Director, in respect of how this young person felt. Reassurance was given that the Children in Care Council and Corporate Parenting Panel are doing a huge amount of work with children and staff to ensure that we continually improve our services in line with the voices of children in our care.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That an earlier referral to the Assistant Director should be made when responses to complaints at Stage 1 are not forthcoming within an appropriate timescale. <p>Should a Head of Service be allocated a complaint which runs over timescale, the Complaints Team will endeavour to inform the appropriate Assistant Director at the point in which the timescale elapses. The Complaints Team will maintain communication with the Assistant Director to ensure the complainant can be updated.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Children with Disabilities Service reviews the value of including a space in the Property Assessment Reports for the Parents/Carers signature, and if it is

decided to continue with these, to introduce measures to ensure that the date these are sent out for signature is recorded.

It was agreed that this should be explored, and if this requires changes to our IT systems then other means of capturing the information should be explored.

Service: Specialist Safeguarding, Early Help and Youth Offending Services

A selection of recommendations accepted by the service:

- That whenever possible, in order to avoid any potential conflict of interest, S47 investigations involving social workers, should be undertaken by social work staff not known to the subject of the investigation.

A memo was sent to all practitioners “I would like to highlight this to all Team Managers, to consider any potential conflict of interest when allocating to practitioners, bearing in mind that smart working can mean staff from different teams being present in other offices. Whilst there may be no conflict of interest, I would ask that you be mindful of allocation and consider how the parent may feel in this situation and whether further discussions should take place with your Head of Service to consider allocating outside of your team”

- That SS considers financial compensation in terms of the financial implications outlined in 4) of the complainant’s Desired Outcomes. This should be considered in line with the LGSCO guidelines.

A monetary offer was made however the complainants declined this.

- That in line with *the complainants*, second, fifth, ninth and tenth desired outcomes, that they are given the opportunity to have their version of the events placed alongside the CSWA on the file record.

The complainants were invited to submit their views in writing and were assured these would be placed on the file record to represent their views.

Stage 3 Complaints Review Panels

The below table provides an overview of any Stage 3 Complaints Review Panels which were held in 2020/21 and the respective services involved:

Service	Number of Stage 3 Complaints Review Panels
Specialist Safeguarding, Early Help and Youth Offending Services	1
Looked after Children and Disability Services	2

Through the Stage 3 Complaints Review Panel process, the Panel will consider information presented by the complainant before inviting officers in attendance to make comment on these. They will then deliberate before submitting a report including recommendations to the Local Authority and the complainant. The Local Authority will then provide a response to those recommendations and inform the complainant of how these shall be implemented.

The below table provides an example of some recommendations implemented following the Stage 3 Complaints Review Panel.

Service: Specialist Safeguarding, Early Help and Youth Offending Services
A selection of recommendations accepted by the service:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel recommends that thought be given to additional training of workers in the Child Protection arena of the sensitivity and importance of initial visits in establishing a cooperative relationship with parents for the benefit of the children concerned and the family as a whole. <p>This is now implemented into training for newly qualified social workers as part of the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE).</p>
Service: Looked after Children and Disability Services
A selection of recommendations accepted by the service:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of ongoing anti-discrimination training offered to include Unconscious Bias training if not already part of what is offered. <p>The Local Authority confirmed that this training is already taking place and includes Unconscious Bias training, which has recently been circulated to all practitioners again as a refresher session.</p>

Corporate Stage 1 Complaints Key Themes:

Numbers

There has been a significant decrease in Stage 1 Corporate Complaints of 41% in comparison to the previous reporting year. This equates to a 50% decrease for Education, Strategy and Skills and a 37% decrease for Safeguarding, Early Help and YOS.

Nature

Following the trend for Statutory Complaints, case management is the main theme of Corporate Stage 1 Complaints, accounting for 82%.

Timescales

The services have improved their adherence to meeting prescribed timescales for responding to Corporate Complaints by 19%.

Remedies

An explanation and an apology accounts for 76% of remedies for Stage 1 Corporate Complaints.

Trends

The decrease in Stage 1 Corporate Complaints is notably attributable to the SEND Service. Complaints relating to this service have decreased by 50% compared to the previous reporting year.

Relationships

The majority of feedback within the Corporate Complaints Procedure is from parents of young people. Very minimal contact is received from young people themselves.

The Complaints Team processed a total of 100 complaints through the Corporate Complaints Procedure at Stage 1. The chart below provides a breakdown with a comparison for the previous reporting year.

Reporting Period	TOTAL
2018/19	113
2019/20	169
2021/21	100

The above data represents a 41% decrease in complaints investigated through Stage 1 of the Corporate Complaints Procedure. This decrease is welcomed, especially given that in 2019/20 there was a 49% increase in complaints investigated at this stage. As with the data for Statutory Complaints, it is not possible to forecast figures for complaints as it is not predictable to know what may constitute a complaint to someone.

Breakdown

The following tables provide a further breakdown of the 100 complaints investigated at Stage 1 of the Corporate Complaints Procedure:

Education, Strategy and Improvement	TOTAL 2019/20	TOTAL 2020/21
SEND Teams	105	58
School Admission and Transport	1	-
Home Education Team	2	-
Education Psychology	3	-
Education Welfare	1	-
Performance Licence Team	-	-
School Penalty Charge Notices	5	-
TOTAL	117	58
Looked after Children and Disability Services	TOTAL 2019/20	TOTAL 2020/21
Care Planning and Court Team	11	8
Fostering Teams	4	4
Occupational Therapy Team	-	3
Disability Team	-	5
Throughcare Team	3	1
Adoption Team	1	-
Intensive Prevention Service	1	1
TOTAL	20	22
Specialist Safeguarding, Early Help and Youth Offending Services	TOTAL 2019/20	TOTAL 2020/21
Youth Offending Team	1	-
Specialist Safeguarding Units	18	13
First Response Team	3	1
Early Help Teams	10	5
Emergency Duty Service	-	1
TOTAL	32	20

When looking at the above data, there is a significant 50% decrease in complaints allocated to the SEND Service. The preceding year saw a 114% increase in complaints for this service which related to the adherence to prescribed timescales and delay in securing the services of Educational Psychologist. The fact that there has been 50% less complaints this reporting year, suggests that the work which this service have done in the previous year, has had a positive effect on reducing the number of complaints being made moving forwards.

Outcomes of Stage 1 Corporate Complaints*

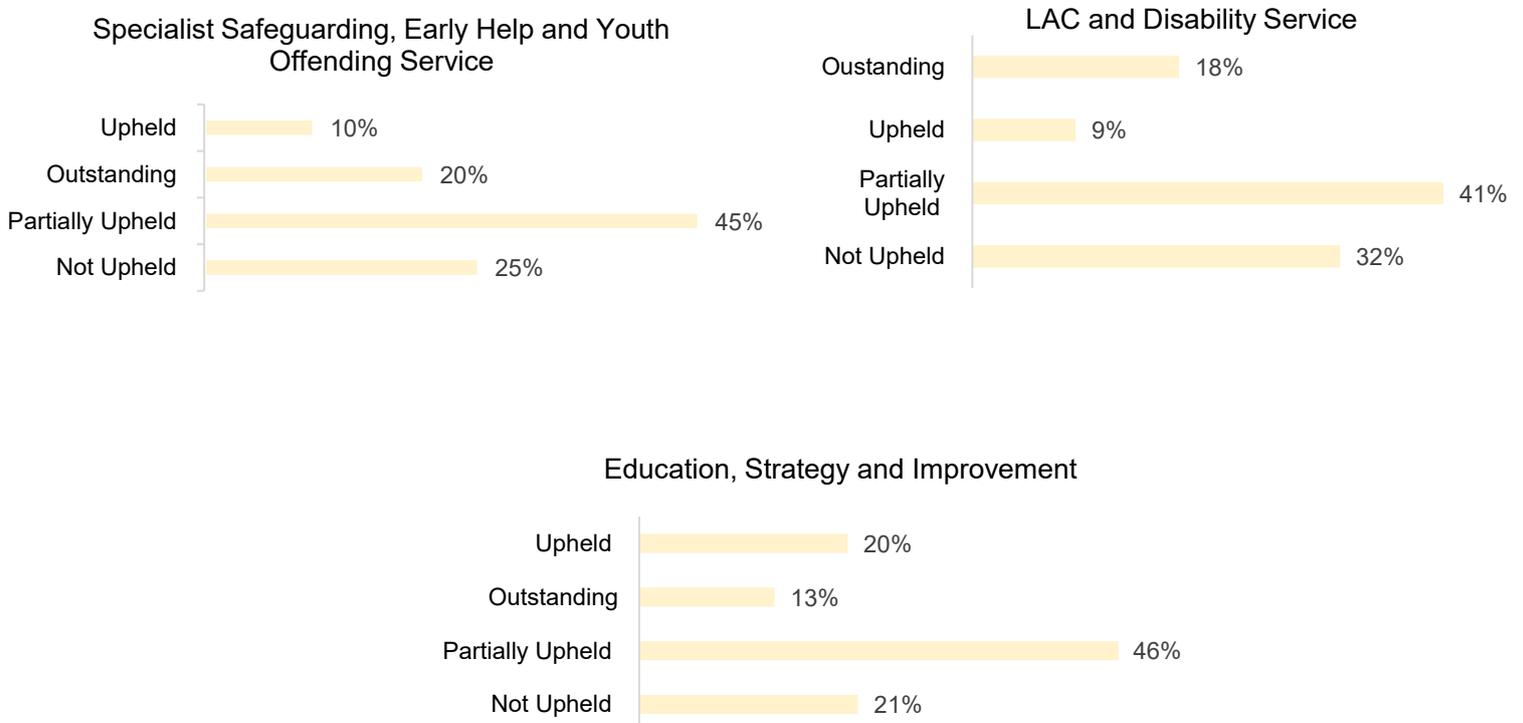
The table below illustrates the outcome of complaints dealt with under Stage 1 of the Corporate Feedback Procedure during this reporting year with a comparison for the preceding year:

Reporting Period	Upheld	Partially upheld	Not upheld	Complaint withdrawn
2018/19	19%	44%	35%	1%
2019/20	22%	30%	24%	-
2020/21	17%	42%	20%	2%

The data above shows a decrease in the complaints which are found to be upheld, with an increase for those found to be partially upheld.

*at the time of producing this report, 9% of complaints remained outstanding and as such the data above may alter in the future.

Outcomes by Operational Leadership:



Timescales for Responding to Stage 1 Corporate Complaints

The table below illustrates the timescales for responding to Stage 1 Complaints via the Corporate Complaints Procedure, with comparative data for the preceding year:

Reporting Period	Within timescale	Over timescale	Complaint withdrawn
2018/19	66%	34%	-
2019/20	58%	42%	-
2020/21	61%	34%	5%

These figures show that 61% of the completed complaints have been responded to within the prescribed timescale set out within the Corporate Feedback Procedure. This is a slight increase upon the previous reporting year. There has also been a decrease in the percentage of complaints which are responded to outside of the prescribed timescales.

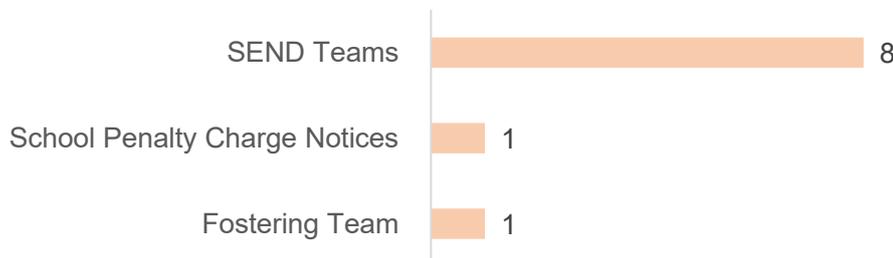
Stage 2 Corporate Complaints – Internal Review

During this reporting year, there were 26 requests for escalation to Stage 2 of the Corporate Complaints Procedure. The Complaints Team has discretion with requests of this nature and each request is assessed on its own merit. If it is felt that there would be no benefit to the complaint progressing to a Stage 2 Review, then the request is refused, and the complaint directed to the LGSCO. 10 requests were accepted for an internal review at Stage 2 of the Corporate Complaints Procedure.

The table below shows the Stage 2 Reviews that have taken place in respect of the services:

Service	Number of Stage 2 Reviews
Education, Strategy and Improvement	9
Looked after Children and Disability Services	1

The chart below provides a further breakdown into teams:



Recommendations and Learning from Corporate Stage 2 Reviews

The below table provides a small selection of recommendations and learning which has been identified from Stage 2 of the Corporate Complaints Procedure.

Service: Looked after Children and Disability Services
Action taken by the service following recommendations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the findings of this complaint with the Fostering Service and also discuss the DBS process and notifications around withdrawals with HR colleagues.

Service: Education, Strategy and Improvement
Action taken by the service following recommendations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to reassure you that we remain committed to supporting your education in keeping with your wishes and aspirations, I agreed that we would provide further support to you via an independent advocate and I have ensured that you are provided with a dedicated SEND key worker. I understand that you have been working well together and a likely placement has been identified that will allow you to study your chosen courses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are continually reminded as part of their personal development to be vigilant in checking documentation to ensure that all areas which are required have been fully completed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff will be informed that wherever possible, families need to be made aware of the steps which the SEND Service are taking regarding consulting with settings and considering parental preferences. Open communication is vital within the Service and may alleviate any future complaints of this nature.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

The LGSCO has processed 41 individual matters for the services during this reporting period. The LGSCO will make a judgement on whether they chose to investigate the complaint themselves or make enquiries with the Local Authority before making a decision.

The below table provides further detail; the LGSCO finding reported below how it is stated from the LGSCO:

Service	Status	Findings	Recommendations / Summary
Care Planning & Court Team	Refusal to Investigate	NA	The Ombudsman cannot investigate this complaint about the involvement of the Council's children's services with the complainant's family. This is because the complaints are out of his jurisdiction. Most of the matters raised have formed part of court proceedings. Other complaints date from more than 12 months ago and are made late.
Care Planning & Court Team	Refusal to Investigate	NA	Mrs X complained the Council did not include the paternal extended family in decisions about contact with her brother's children. We cannot investigate this complaint, because the law prevents us from considering issues that are being considered in court.
Care Planning & Court Team	Refusal to Investigate	NA	The Ombudsman will not investigate Mrs X's complaint about the Council's decision not to consider her complaint about its child protection involvement with her niece and her children. This is because there is no sign of fault in the Council's response to her complaint. We will not investigate this complaint. This is because there is no sign of fault by the Council. It has explained that it needs consent from the children's mother and grandmother to be able to consider this complaint from Mrs X. The Ombudsman would also seek such consent. If Mrs X wishes to pursue this complaint, she should first provide the necessary consent to the Council so it can consider it. We cannot consider the substantive complaint until the Council has had the opportunity to do so.
Education Advice Safeguarding Service	Refusal to Investigate	NA	We will not investigate Mr X's complaint about the advice provided by the Council to his daughter's school, which he says led to him being unable to see his daughter for 10 months. This matter is not separable from the contact arrangements for his daughter, about which he had a right to go to court it was reasonable to use.
Fostering Team	Refusal to Investigate	NA	We will not investigate Ms B's complaint that the Council is at fault in failing to take action in response to her complaint about a foster carer. This is because it is unlikely we could add to the investigation the Council has carried out.
Family & Friends Fostering Team	Refusal to Investigate	NA	We will not investigate Miss X's complaint about matters during a court case in 2013 and the actions of her son's special guardians at contact sessions. We cannot investigate matters that happened during court proceedings, and it would be reasonable for Miss X to return to court if she is dissatisfied with contact arrangements.
Home Education Team	Investigation	Maladministration and Injustice	For the four months of education K missed, the Council should make a payment to him of £800 for educational purposes within three months of the date of my decision. This reflects the fact that provision is still part time. His tutor should be consulted by the Council to decide how this might best be spent. For the significant time and trouble caused to Ms J through the Council's delays in complaints handling, the Council should make a payment of £400.
Early Help Team	Enquiry	Remains ongoing	NA

Occupational Therapy Team	Investigation	Maladministration and Injustice	For the Council to apologise to Miss W for the fault identified in this statement. It should also make a payment of £400 to acknowledge her time, trouble, and distress, in obtaining responses from the Council to try to understand its position in not arranging an OT assessment for a DFG for V.
Occupational Therapy Team	Premature Referral	NA – Escalated via the Complaints Procedure	NA
Occupational Therapy Team	Premature Referral	NA – Escalated via the Complaints Procedure	NA
SEND Team	Investigation	Maladministration and Injustice	For the Council to make a payment for time and trouble for Mrs B of £200, which reflects the considerable amount of effort Mrs B had to go to through the process of obtaining an EHCP for C. It should make this payment within two months. For the Council to tell me how it will ensure educational psychology can properly respond to EHCP assessment requests within statutory timescales going forward within three months. For the Council to tell me how it will ensure delays are minimised in the complaints process going forward within three months. For the Council to tell me how it might better keep parents informed through the process of achieving an EHCP within three months.
SEND Team	Investigation	Maladministration and Injustice	For the Council to apologise for the fault identified in this draft decision within a month of the date of my decision. The actions of the Council caused Mrs M time and trouble chasing it for the EP report and for the EHCP. The Council should make a payment to her of £200 as an appropriate remedy in line with our guidance within three months of the date of my decision. For the distress and anxiety caused to the family by the Council's failure to consider whether more education should be provided to N when she was out of school (or whether she needed support to access the education she was provided with) the Council should make a payment of £300 to Mrs M within three months of the date of my decision. For N's lost opportunity to potentially start full-time at the school a term earlier, the Council should make a payment of £1,200 (£300 for each of four months) for educational purposes. The Council should ask the school, within a month of the date of my decision, to identify how this might be spent to best benefit N with the aim of making the payment within three months
SEND Team	Investigation	Maladministration and Injustice	The Council will apologise to Mr and Mrs Q for the fault identified in this Statement within a month of the date of my decision. The Council will make a payment of £200 to acknowledge their time and trouble within three months of the date of my decision. The Council will make a payment of £351, based on its usual mileage rate, to reimburse Mr and Mrs Q for the transport provided to P within three months of the date of my decision. The Council will make a payment of £500 for the missed provision, £800 for the

			lack of 1:1 support at school and £115 for missed swimming lessons. These payments will be made to Mr and Mrs Q, on P's behalf, for her educational benefit within three months of the date of my decision. The Council has told me it informs schools they should return annual review documentation to the Council within two weeks of the meeting. The Council should consider whether it needs to generate reminders to schools where it has not received annual review documentation within that time. It should tell me what action it will take within four months of the date of my decision. The Council should consider amending its guidance to officers so they check annual review documentation to ensure it is complete when received. It should tell me what action it will take within four months of the date of my decision. For the Council to tell me what changes it will make to ensure it issues EHCPs within statutory timescales within four months of the date of my decision
SEND Team	Investigation	Maladministration and Injustice	For the Council to apologise for the fault identified in this statement within one month of the date of my decision. For the Council to make a payment of £1,000 to Mr D for the special needs provision he missed within three months. For the Council to make a payment of £300 for the substantial time and trouble experienced by Mrs C, over the duration of the matters complained of within three months. For the Council to consider how to keep parents and guardians informed of the progress of EHCPs within three months. For the Council to consider how it might put details of Stage Two complaints on its website within three months.
SEND Team	Refusal to Investigate	NA	The Ombudsman will not investigate Mrs Q's complaint about the Council's handling of an Education, Health and Care Plan assessment. This is because part of the complaint is late and, in addition, Mrs Q has appealed to a tribunal.
SEND Team	Enquiry	Remains ongoing	NA
SEND Team	Enquiry	LGSCO investigation commenced	NA
SEND Team	Enquiry	LGSCO investigation commenced	NA
SEND Team	Investigation	Remains ongoing	NA
SEND Team	Premature Referral	NA – Escalated via the Complaints Procedure	NA

SEND Team	Investigation	Maladministration and Injustice	The Council has agreed that within one month of the date of my final decision, it will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer to make a payment of £1200 to Mr & Mrs C to acknowledge the loss of provision during the six months where no specialist tuition was in place. This should be used for the benefit of D's education. • Offer to make a payment of £500 to Mr & Mrs C to acknowledge the further five-month period where it arranged a personal budget which did not meet the full number of hours needed to meet D's tuition provision. This should also be used for the benefit of D's education. • Offer to pay Mr & Mrs C an additional £150 to recognise the distress the Council's fault had on them, in the form of inconvenience and frustration.
SEND Team	Investigation	Remains ongoing	NA
SEND Team	Enquiry	Remains ongoing	NA
SEND Team	Enquiry	Remains ongoing	NA
SEND Team	Investigation	Remains ongoing	NA
SEND Team	Investigation	Remains ongoing	NA
School Transport Policy Team	Investigation	Maladministration and Injustice	Mrs X complains of fault in the way the Council decided not to offer free home-to-school transport for her son, Z, causing him to miss out on this. There was fault by the Council because an officer who assessed the route's safety sat on the panel hearing Mrs X's appeal. She has avoidable uncertainty whether a panel acting without fault would have upheld her appeal. The Council will arrange a fresh appeal heard by a panel with no previous involvement in assessing the route or deciding her application or appeal. To remedy injustice caused by fault, the Council will arrange a fresh hearing of Mrs X's appeal by a new panel whose members have had no previous role in deciding the matter or assessing the availability of the route. It will arrange this appeal to take place within one month of the date of the final decision
Specialist Safeguarding Unit	Enquiry	Remains ongoing	NA
Specialist Safeguarding Unit	Investigation	Maladministration and Injustice	Within one month of my final decision the Council agrees to: Pay Mr B £100 for his time and trouble pursuing his complaint. Appoint an Investigating Officer and Independent Person to investigate Mr B's complaint at stage two of the statutory complaint procedure. Within two months of my decision the Council agrees to remind staff dealing with statutory complaints of: the process of escalating a complaint through the statutory procedure, and the limited circumstances in which the Council is not required to investigate a complaint, or can refer a complaint early to the Ombudsman
Specialist Safeguarding Unit	Investigation	Remains ongoing	NA

Specialist Safeguarding Unit	Refusal to Investigate	NA	We will not investigate this complaint about the Council's safeguarding investigations. This is because it involves matters already considered by a court and Mr Y is not the appropriate person to represent two children who are extended family members.
Specialist Safeguarding Unit	Investigation	Remains ongoing	NA
Specialist Safeguarding Unit	Refusal to Investigate	NA	We will not investigate this complaint about evidence that may be used by the Council in court proceedings, as it is reasonable for Mrs J to raise this matter in court. It is unlikely we would find fault on the Council's part in refusing to accept Mrs J's complaint.
Specialist Safeguarding Unit	Premature Referral	NA – Escalated via the Complaints Procedure	NA
Specialist Safeguarding Unit	Refusal to Investigate	NA	We will not investigate Mr X's complaint about the actions of a social worker in writing a court report. These matters are not separable from those that have been heard in court, or in respect of which Mr X has a right to go to court it would be reasonable to use.
Specialist Safeguarding Unit	Refusal to Investigate	NA	We should not investigate Mr X's complaint about the actions of social workers towards him before, during and after a court case concerning his children. These matters are not separable from those which have either been heard in court or where Mr X has a right to return to court it would be reasonable to use.
Specialist Safeguarding Unit	Enquiry	Remains ongoing	NA
Specialist Safeguarding Unit	Refusal to Investigate	NA	We will not investigate this complaint about evidence that may be used by the Council in court proceedings, as it is reasonable for Mrs J to raise this matter in court. It is unlikely we would find fault on the Council's part in refusing to accept Mrs J's complaint.
Throughcare Team	Enquiry	Remains ongoing	NA
Outside Agency – Care Provider	Investigation	Remains ongoing	NA
TOTAL			41

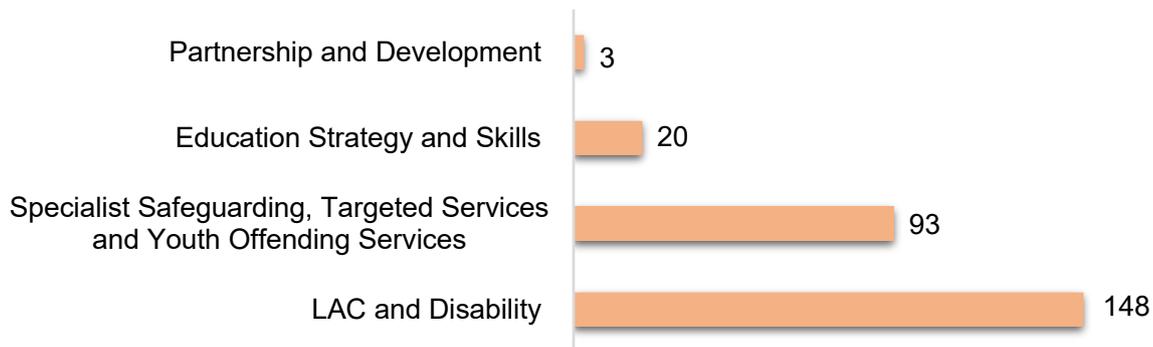
From the 47 complaints which the LGSCO have considered, 22% have reached a finding of fault. It should be noted that 13 matters remain pending further detail and as such the above figure is subject to change. The complaints which have identified fault, shape learning for the Local Authority in the same way that learning identified from all complaints is taken forward. The LGSCO will monitor any

recommendations and their case shall remain open until they are satisfied that a proposed remedy has been implemented.

Compliments

A total of 264 compliments have been recorded for this reporting period, a 17% increase from the previous year. During a year when services have been strained and working under entirely different and difficult circumstances, the fact that positive feedback has increased should be duly noted.

The below chart provides a breakdown of these compliments between the services:



Examples of Compliments

Specialist Safeguarding, Targeted Services and Youth Offending Services

- I just wanted to highlight that she was extremely professional but also with a very warm nature. There was a lot of information to pass on and she was very reassuring and clear with her questioning.
- I wanted to thank you for the support that you have offered our children and their families and for your passion and hard work. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with you and wish you all the very best.
- She has always returned my calls and kept me in the loop of any incidents or issues raised. The communication has been amazing even though I know she has been busy. During Covid-19 she has always explored my thoughts and feelings, and as professionals in a situation of uncertainty she always managed to bring the spirit up and remain positive. I have learnt a lot from her, very structured and organised, confident and knowledgeable, this is something I will always be mindful of for my own development. I have really enjoyed working with her.
- She is thoroughly committed to working with the family and I recognise the important work she undertook pre proceedings. She has ensured that regular communication has been maintained with myself and this is extremely positive. This collaborative working, in my opinion, is extremely important in terms of reaching the best outcome for the children and as such I wanted to write to the team manager to commend her on her excellent management of this case so far.
- He answers questions, he is always available on the phone. Mum described Social Worker as patient when explaining things. Initially Mum thought social services take children away and it's not like that at all, after a few sessions she understood that it was to help her and her child; and they did. Mum said she had nothing bad to say, he has cared for me and my child. Mum said at first, she was terrified about social services, and it's not like that. Mum described Social Worker as having a peacefulness about him, it makes her calm, he helped them get back on track.

Looked after Children and Disability Services

- I wanted to pass on my appreciation of Social Workers depth of knowledge about the boy. She was working from home, against the odds due to COVID-19, and did not have a good indoor telephone signal. However, without reference to a computer, she was able to demonstrate her insight into his life. I understand she has only been his social worker since February 2020, but she clearly knew him well. She was able to give me a good picture of his needs, previous experience, important relationships and level of wellbeing.
- I would like to thank Social Worker on all her efforts on how amazing she has been in working with myself and my partner as we now have our baby son back home I feel this is a great achievement for ourselves and we are both continuing to engage with all the support and all the advice she has given us we can't thank her enough.
- We felt she's always had our child's interest at the heart of everything and considers his best interests when making decisions. She also makes us feel empowered as she actively seeks our opinion before making any decisions. We have always found her extremely supportive and approachable. I think it will be understatement that we will miss her.
- Take care and thank you for all the support and help you are and have given to us as a family, I can't begin to tell you how much you are appreciated by us all.
- I just wanted to compliment him on his excellent work ethic and fantastic relationship building with the foster carer, myself and the child. He is very efficient and very approachable. Nothing is ever too much, and he has gone above and beyond for the child we work with.
- Judge Bailey has specifically asked me to pass on her gratitude to you for completing the plan last night – she appreciates the pressures everyone is under but the fact that you had been able to complete that was extremely helpful especially given it has led to an agreement.
- We really do consider ourselves to be very lucky to have such an amazing and dedicated social worker/friend who has been with us every step of the way!!
- It felt like we had a supportive arm around our shoulders helping to take away concerns for the boys for that funeral.
- I have chaired the CPR for the children this morning and have received some lovely comments from the father as to the positive work and relationship that Social Worker and his predecessor have delivered. Father has felt these professionals to be balanced in their approach in working with him and without prejudice as a perpetrator of domestic abuse, which he has found enabling in supporting him in being motivated to engage with the appropriate services to reduce risk.
- She has a knack of helping when I am exasperated with services, she is a sensible sounding board for me. She allows me to offload and offers support and makes me feel listened to. Sarah was the first person at the last meeting to acknowledge that I am doing well, even though I feel isolated and she helps me understand my own emotions. It's really daunting for me to work with services, I'm not used to this, it's scary, but she is always there to reassure me.'

Education Strategy and Improvement

- I've said this a few times now, but I am immensely grateful for her support when working remotely, it's made a massive difference to my outlook and my prospects of finishing the year. She really is great to work with and ironically, we are working more productively than ever.

- I would like to compliment one of your case workers on the support she has given me over the last few weeks. I am a newish SENCo going through emergency review processes for the first time. On top of that the current situation has added extra uncertainty. She has been so patient and helpful with me. The same goes for the parents we support. She has answered what are probably the silliest little questions I've asked and sorted out a bug in the EHC hub for me in a matter of minutes.
- I just wanted to pass on my immense thanks. The plan is precise and highly accurate including much detail of the challenges that he faces. It's really refreshing to see such a well-written plan with specifics as sometimes they can be so vague. Therefore, please accept our thanks because moving forward this will be life-changing for him.
- Just a message to say a massive thank you. She absolutely cried her eyes out. And wanted to phone her big brother up, something completely new for her. Without you and your hard work do not know how we would have coped. We so very lucky that you were our key worker. Thanks, , for giving her a chance to be a child and be able to learn and be happier again. It truly means the world to me.

Partnership and Development

- I just wanted to thank you formally for the way you conducted the review. As you know, it was a very difficult meeting and you did a sterling job of ensuring it was conducted professionally and remained on topic dealing whilst dealing swiftly and appropriately with conflict and hostility that arose. You ensured that all relevant questions in relation to the Care Plan were asked in order to reach a well-considered decision in terms of the move.

Annual Report Commentary from the Complaints Team

The data contained within this year's Annual Report overall shows a decrease in feedback received, aside from an increase in compliments which is welcomed. The most significant decrease is seen within the figures for the Corporate Complaints Procedure and more specifically within the SEND Service. Whilst we cannot be certain as to the reasons behind a decrease in the feedback being received, the Covid pandemic may account for this. The data shows that feedback was steady across each month of this reporting year, with no significant drop or spike. The decrease in complaints received for the SEND Service could also be accounted to the work which they implemented in the previous reporting year, which is now having a positive effect in reducing the numbers of incoming complaints.

Whilst there has been a decrease in complaints, the work which each complaint produces for the responding team should be noted. The Complaints Team are grateful for the services continuing to aim to produce robust responses at Stage 1 of each Complaints Procedure and accept that these investigations are time intensive. During the Covid pandemic, the services are applauded for improving the timescales in which they respond to complaints across all services. On a similar vein to this, the fact that complaints numbers have decreased would not equate to the workload of the Complaints being decreased; it should be noted that the different Complaints Procedures are long processes which require ongoing work between the Complaints Team and the individual services. It is difficult for the figures to accurately represent the length of time which each complaint involves.

The Complaints Team have begun looking at how learning from complaints is shared this year. It is noted that we should be sharing this information as widely as possible and that this should not just be limited to learning from complaints, it is equally important to share the positive feedback which is received in order to help to shape future practice. The Complaints Officer has attended practitioner briefings and manager forums this year to understand the views of these professionals and it has transpired that practitioners are keen to understand further detail surrounding complaints and whilst they appreciate the learning from these being shared, they might find it useful to understand more about what caused the individual to submit a complaint and what those individual complaints were. The Complaints Team have

been considering how we can share such detail, in what format and how regularly. Complaints investigations can produce a high amount of data and we are currently looking at how to strike the correct balance of providing enough information to be informative without overwhelming the reader. This piece of work will remain ongoing into the next reporting year and a proposed template for sharing this detail has been shared with Senior Managers and is awaiting feedback.

There remains a minimal amount of complaints which have been found to be wholly upheld and a portion of complaints found to be partially upheld. It is these complaints which can provide the valuable learning to the services and the fact that these can be identified at Stage 1 through local resolution, shows the services willingness to identify fault and operate in a transparent manner.

It can be seen from this Annual Report that the LGSCO have made several recommendations in respect of the services. The Complaints Team are thankful to the services for working with us and providing the vast amounts of information which is requested by the LGSCO in the short timescales which we are given. The Complaints Team will continue to develop their relationship with the LGSCO and challenge decisions where we feel necessary.

The Complaints Team wish to acknowledge the hard work of the services this year and are appreciative of the strong working relationship which we maintain with each service.

Report Author:

Elaine Hemming - Customer Feedback and Complaints Officer Children's Services

elaine.hemming@staffordshire.gov.uk

DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME

Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2021/22

This document sets out the work programme for the Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee for 2021/22.

The Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising: children and adults' safeguarding; community safety and Localism. The Council has three priority outcomes. This Committee is aligned to the outcome: The people of Staffordshire will feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community.

We review our work programme at every meeting. Sometimes we change it - if something comes up during the year that we think we should investigate as a priority. Our work results in recommendations for the County Council and other organisations about how what they do can be improved, for the benefit of the people and communities of Staffordshire.

Councillor Bob Spencer

Chairman of the Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Membership – County Councillors 2021-22

Bob Spencer (Chairman)
Gill Burnett (Vice Chairman - Overview)
Richard Ford (Vice Chairman – Scrutiny)
Janet Eagland
Peter Kruskonjic
Jason Jones
Gillian Pardesi
Kath Perry
Jill Waring
Mike Wilcox

Calendar of Committee Meetings - 2021-2022

17 June 2021 at 10.00 am
6 July 2021 at 10.00 am
3 August 2021 at 10.00 am
14 September 2021 at 10.00 am
4 November 2021 at 10.00 am
10 January 2022 at 10.00 am
28 February 2022 at 10.00 am
21 April 2022 at 10.00 am

Meetings usually take place in either the Council Chamber or the Oak Room in County Buildings.

Work Programme 2021-22

Date of meeting	Item	Details	Action/Outcome
17 June 2021 10.00 am	Community Support (including Domiciliary Care) and 1-1 intensive support for Children with Disabilities Cabinet Member: Lead Officer: Martyn Baggaley	Pre-decision scrutiny prior to its inclusion on the July Cabinet agenda	Members agreed the recommendations. They want to receive details in the future of how this has progressed, and will specifically want to see how any gaps in skills have been addressed for those adults providers that have moved to provision for children.
	Introduction to the remit of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Officers: Helen Riley & Ruth Martin	To consider the remit of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Detailed presentations and discussions will form the basis of work programme planning
	Work programme Planning Lead Officer: Helen Phillips	Within the remit of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, begin planning the work programme for 2021-22.	A long list of suggested scrutiny items has been drawn up from Members suggestions and from details shared in the presentations and discussions with Officers and the cabinet Member. These will be discussed by the Chairman and Vice Chairmen, along with the Scrutiny Officer and included on the draft work programme for Members consideration at the July meeting.
July 2021 10.00 am	Domestic Abuse Cabinet Member: Lead Officer: Trish Caldwell	A briefing note had been considered by the previous Safe & Strong Communities Select Committee during the Pandemic. A report was requested for post lockdown to outline the impact of the Pandemic on DA.	The Committee were very impressed with the mitigation actions put in place during the pandemic. They supported developments with the perpetrator and victim programmes. Further detail was requested in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysis results on rationale behind disparity in referral figures between SCC and Police; • learning from police led analysis on impact of targeted work with repeat offenders; • waiting times for perpetrator services; • DA Act requirements around access to services, particularly victim services.
	Family Hub Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Joseph Sullivan	Item for pre-decision scrutiny Also requested at 17 June for inclusion on work programme around support for new and young parents and the importance of early years parenting support	The Committee supported the development of the Family Hub model, recognising the proposed incremental development across Staffordshire of an integrated model of working. Further developments will be considered by the Committee following the public consultation process.
	Regional Permanency Partnership Cabinet Member: Mark	Following consideration of the arrangements at their 7 November Select Committee Members had requested an up-date on progress with the	The Committee welcomed the developments made since the introduction of the regional permanency partnership known as Together4Children. They intend to receive further detail as the

	Sutton Lead Officer: Deborah Ramsdale, Scott Crawford & Jo Sullivan	arrangements.	partnership progresses, including detail of the two pilot projects TESSA & Mockingbird.
3 August 2021 10.00am	Customer Feedback & Complaints Annual report – Adults Social Care Cabinet Member: Julia Jessel Lead Officer: Kate Bullivant	Report brought annually	
	Customer Feedback & Complaints Annual report – Children’s Social Care Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Kate Bullivant	Report brought annually	
4 Sept 2021 10.00am	Safeguarding Adults on the cusp of care Cabinet Member: Julia Jessel Lead Officer: Ruth Martin	At the 7 November Triangulation meeting it was proposed to look at any gaps in provision between what is happening in the community for adults on the cusp of care, the neighbourhood coaches/provisions and any safeguarding issues this may present.	
	Adult Safeguarding Transformation Project Cabinet Member: Julia Jessel Lead Officer: Ruth Martin	Suggested at 17 June meeting to look at the rise in service demand and whether changes to service delivery are needed to manage this increase.	
4 Nov 2021 10.00 am			
10 January 2022 10.00am			
28 Feb 2022 10.00 am	Community Support (including Domiciliary Care) and 1-1 intensive support for Children with Disabilities Cabinet Member:	This was requested at 17 June meeting – looking at progress made and particularly how well those adult carers who have moved to provide care for children have filled skill gaps and how successful this provision has been	

	Lead Officer: Martyn Baggaley		
21 April 2022 10.00 am			
tbc	Low Level Neglect Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Helen Riley	Suggested by the Cabinet Member at 17 June meeting to look at impact of long-term low-level neglect, the current changes to ways of working and challenges that remain.	
tbc	Early Intervention & prevention Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Helen Riley	Suggested by the Cabinet Member at 17 June meeting.	
tbc	Community safety & the Outcome of the Fishmonger Hall Investigation Cabinet Member: Victoria Wilson Lead Officer:	Findings from the Fishmonger Hall incident showed there had been inadequate management of Usman Khan. Suggested at 17 June meeting Members want to satisfy themselves that changes have been made to prevent further such incidents. This also impact on the Committee's role as the designated crime and disorder panel. A further proposal at 17 June meeting was concerns around adolescent anti-social behaviour, including cross boarder issues. This is a further community safety concern that could be raised as part of this scrutiny A discussion is proposed between the Chairman, Commissioner and PFCP Chairman to consider ways forward and avoid duplication	
tbc	Sexual Harassment in Schools Cabinet Members: Mark Sutton & Jonathan Price Lead Officer:	Suggested at 17 June meeting, considering the concerns recently in the media of sexual harassment and abuse in schools. A need to consider the issue within Staffordshire schools and how this is addressed.	
tbc	Young Carers Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Helen Riley	To consider how well young carers are supported within Staffordshire Suggested at 17 June meeting.	

tbc	SEND Review Cabinet Members: Mark Sutton & Jonathan Price Lead Officers: Tim Moss & Helen Riley	Suggested by the Cabinet Member at 17 June meeting. Responding to the Review and moving forward.	
tbc	Governance Model Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Helen Riley	Suggested by the Cabinet Member at 17 June meeting. Considering how to work better together. Trying to develop a better and more effective governance model.	

Standing Items 2021-22

Item	Details	Action/Outcome
Themes emerging from Serious Case Reviews Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer:	Where Serious Case Reviews have taken place the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will consider any learning that can be taken from the Review	Some areas picked up by the DHR review process

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Briefing Notes/Updates/Visits 2021-22

Date	Item	Details	Action/Outcome
	Sexual abuse investigations	Requested at 17 June meeting – details of the number of child sexual abuse investigations over the last 5 years, how many of these resulted in prosecution and if the investigation was proportionate and reasonable.	

Working Group and/or Inquiry Days 2021-22

Date	Item	Details	Action/Outcome

Children's Improvement Board – monitoring of the Children & Families Transformation System progress

Date	Who attended from the Select Committee	Items discussed	Information