

# Central Bedfordshire Council

**Social Care Health & Housing Overview &  
Scrutiny Committee**

**26<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

**Adult Social Care & Public Health Services: Customer Feedback –  
Complaints, Compliments Annual Report 2017/18**

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**Report of:** Cllr Carole Hegley,  
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**Responsible Director(s):** Julie Ogley, ([Julie.Ogley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Julie.Ogley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

**This report is for information**

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## **Purpose of this report**

This report fulfills the council's statutory duty to monitor the effectiveness of the complaints procedure and provides an annual report for Adult Social Care and Public Health. The report provides statistics on the number of compliments and complaints received; complaint causes; complaint outcomes (upheld/not upheld); performance; and learning/improvements resulting from complaints for 2017/18.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee is asked to:

- 1. To consider and comment on the content of the report at Appendix A**

## **Issues**

1. The Customer Relations Team manages the council's customer feedback procedures. These procedures detail how customer compliments, comments and complaints are handled. There are three procedures. Two of the procedures are statutory and are governed by regulations relating to adult social care services and children's social care services. The third procedure covers all other council services. If customers remain dissatisfied with the council's handling of the complaint they can refer to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSO). The LGSO is an independent body that can consider complaints about the council

2. The councils Public Health Service delivers most of its services by commissioning from external providers, who manage their own complaints. There were 14 compliments registered for the Stop Smoking Service in 2017/18. No complaints were registered.
3. In 2017/18 there were 3787 records of adults receiving support from social care services. There were 58 compliments and 45 complaints received in the period. This represented a decrease in the number of compliments and complaints recorded in 2017/18 compared to the previous year, which captured 70 compliments and 53 complaints.
4. Complaints were important customer feedback and a means of identifying how practices may be changed for the better. Services were receptive to customer's views and complaints with 74% of complaints either upheld fully or in part.
5. The top reason for complaints across Adult Social Care in 2017/18 related to incorrect action being taken (i.e. procedure not being followed) and staff conduct/attitude.
6. There may be occasions where financial redress is offered through the complaints procedure. Financial remedies can be provided to acknowledge avoidable distress; harm; risk; or other unfair impact. As injustice of this nature cannot generally be remedied by a payment, the amount is usually symbolic to acknowledge the impact of fault on the complainant. Financial remedies can be recommended during the council's procedure and following investigation by the LGSO.
7. There were no financial remedies paid in relation to complaints during 2017/18. Whilst benchmarking data is not available for all similar sized authorities the decision notices available on the LGSO website indicate that in the same period financial remedies for other councils ranged up to £110,650.87.

## **Council Priorities**

8. The report supports Central Bedfordshire's Five-Year Plan 2015/2020 and the specific priorities of great resident services; protecting the vulnerable and improving wellbeing; and a more efficient and responsible council.

## **Legal Implications**

9. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

## **Financial and Risk Implications**

10. Complaints are assessed at the point of receipt to ensure risks are managed e.g. safeguarding issues; risk to reputation; exclusions.
11. Effective management of complaint issues focuses resource on resolution and reduces the risks of financial remedies being paid.
12. Effective complaints management ensures service failings are identified and remedied, thereby reducing the risk of public report from the Local Government and

Social Care Ombudsman (LGSO). There were no public reports about Adult Social Care or Public Health complaints in 2017/18.

## **Equalities Implications**

13. The report contains statistical analysis of monitoring information where it has been recorded.

## **Conclusion and next Steps**

14. The production of an annual report is a statutory requirement and should be made available to anyone on request. The report will be posted on the council's website.
15. Members are asked to note the content of the report at Appendix A

## **Appendices**

Appendix A: Adult Social Care & Public Health Services:  
Customer Feedback – Complaints, Compliments Annual Report  
2017/18

## **Background Papers**

None

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