

	Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee 15 November 2017
Title	Family Services Complaints, Compliments and Comments Annual Report 2016 - 17
Report of	Strategic Director of Children and Young People
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	Appendix A: Family Services Complaints, Compliments and Comments Annual Report 2016-17 Appendix B: Statistics
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Summary

This report provides an overview of the complaints and compliments received in Family Services in the period 1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017.

It reflects the progress that the service has made in how complaints can be used to learn and improve service delivery.

The appendix includes statistical data, commentary about the types of complaints and any trends, progress made since the last report and areas for further development.

Recommendations

That the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee note the report and appendix.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 This report is needed to report on complaints made about Family Services and its response. This report also gives Committee members an update on

improvements made during 2016/17 and the next steps proposed during 2017/18 to enable the continual improvement of services in line with customer feedback and to reduce the likelihood of complaints arising.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the contents of the reports be noted, especially in terms of complaints from children and young people and complaints processed under The Children Act 1989. This is to ensure that there is sufficient senior oversight and scrutiny of the way complaints are managed and learnt from

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 N/A

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Following the decision, the service will continue to use complaints to inform service improvement and further engage with young people to ensure they have access to the complaints process.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

Responding appropriately to and learning from complaints made in relation to children's services contributes to the Corporate Plan priority 'To create better life chances for children and young people across the borough' as well as our commitment to excellent Customer Care by listening to, and learning from feedback we can improve the service that we deliver to our residents.

The Council's Corporate Plan 2015-20 states that the council, working with local, regional and national partners, will strive to ensure that Barnet is a place:

- of opportunity, where people can further their quality of life
- where people are helped to help themselves, recognising that prevention is better than cure
- where responsibility is shared, fairly
- where services are delivered efficiently to get value for money for the taxpayer

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Complaints and compliments play a key part in driving service improvement and contribute to delivering services effectively to get value for money for residents

5.3 Social Value

Insight and information gained through complaints will contribute to the

development of Family Services and the journey of service improvement. This will provide social value to the families that we support.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

5.4.1 The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006. This lays out a clear legal process for complaints made in relation to any decision made under the Children Act i.e. any child or family receiving social care, and referred to as 'Statutory Complaints' in the attached appendices.

5.4.2 All other complaints are dealt with in accordance with Barnet's Corporate Complaints procedure – referred to as 'Service Complaints' in the attached appendices

5.4.3 As outlined in Article 7 of the Council's Constitution's Committees, Forums, Working Groups and Partnerships, the Committee's responsibilities includes:

- all matters relating to children, schools, education and libraries.
- to receive reports on relevant performance information on Delivery Units providing services under the remit of the Committee

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 Failure to investigate and deal with our residents' complaints in a transparent and timely manner risks legal challenge and loss of confidence by our residents. It also reduces opportunities to learn from complaints to improve services and to put plans in place to pro-actively reduce the likelihood of future complaints.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- foster good relations between people from different groups

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services

Our procedures ensure compliance with the council's equality policies and Strategic Equalities Objective

The main objectives of the complaints procedure are to:

- recognise the rights of all service users to make complaints and representations and to have their views considered within a clear procedure as defined by law;
- ensure that council staff and all partner organisations work together so that every child or family facing problems and challenges, who wishes to

make a complaint or representation, is well supported in reaching a satisfactory resolution

- make the complaints process more accessible to people who may not have easy access to information online. A new leaflet has been developed to support this.

5.7 **Consultation and Engagement**

The Complaints Officer consulted with representatives from teams across Family Services through the Closing the Loop group.

5.8 **Insight**

5.8.1 Closing the Loop Group' comprises representatives from across the services who meet regularly to share good practice and learn from our complaints. The group looks at data and trends to improve outcomes and stop complaints escalating.

5.8.2 The Complaints Team analyse data on a quarterly basis and produce a report which is distributed to senior managers across Family Services.

6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Family Services Complaints, Compliments and Comments Annual Report 2015-16

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=697&MId=8686&Ver=4>