

NAME OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Services Scrutiny Committee
DATE OF MEETING	22 September 2015
TITLE OF ITEM	Social Services Annual Complaints Report 2014-15
CABINET MEMBER	Cllr Gareth Roberts

1. Introduction

At an informal meeting on 18 July 2015, members of the Services Scrutiny Committee considered the Social Services Department's Annual Complaints Report 2014-15.

Following the meeting, the Director of Social Services, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Cabinet Member for Adults and Health and the Complaints Officer were asked to prepare a report in response to the points for the Services Scrutiny Committee on 22 September 2015.

2. Responding to the issues:

Specific answers to the following questions were requested:

2.1 More details about the complaints, enquiries and observations received and resolved.

See APPENDIX 2 for more detailed examples

2.2 Point 2.1 notes that 30 complaints were late receiving a response. Is this the total number of late complaints, enquiries and observations?

A total of 30 Stage 1 complaints (Children and Adults) were late receiving a response. This figure does not include enquiries and observations.

2.3 Of the complaints which did not receive a timely response, how long did it take to respond?

The target for a written response is five working days. If we anticipate that it will not be possible to meet the target, we obtain the complainant's agreement to extend the timescale. Generally, the complainants are very willing to wait for a response and understand that it will not always be possible to respond within five days. Of those complaints which were late, the majority had received a response within 10 days.

2.4 Note how you have considered dealing with the pressures in relation to workload.

The Department remains in a period of restructuring and has lost one Manager post; nevertheless, every effort is made to respond to the complaints within the timescale.

Recently, two new Senior Managers have been appointed and they will start in their posts shortly.

2.5 Lessons learned – Note a summary of the lessons learned and the action taken.

The trends and lessons learned have been noted in Section 2.8 and 2.9 of the report.

2.6 Categorisation – Is there a more detailed analysis available of the trends in 2.8 and 2.9?

See APPENDIX 2 for more detailed examples; also see Section 2.8 and 2.9 of the report for a summary of the trends over the course of a year.

2.7 External Providers – Is the same procedure followed for external providers?

Every provider is expected to have a complaints policy and to follow the statutory procedure. Complaints about providers made directly to the Council are recorded by the Department and we co-ordinate the response to the complaint. Users can also complain directly to the Provider. In these circumstances, the Provider is expected to investigate and respond in accordance with the statutory procedure. The Provider is expected to report to the Commissioning and Contracts Unit on the number of complaints they have received; this is a condition in their contract and is monitored.

2.8 South Meirionnydd (2.5) – In terms of the shortage of support workers in South Meirionnydd, have you considered alternative arrangements to respond to the problem?

There are historical problems with recruitment in South Gwynedd, particularly recruiting sufficient Welsh-speakers. This is true across the field of adults and children. Every effort is made to respond to these problems, including recruitment drives, collaborating with education providers etc.

2.9 Vacant Post – Require more information on comment 4 (c) of the report, namely the vacant post following a secondment to another post and require information about the arrangement for the current situation.

The vacant post was filled in June 2015.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Members are requested to accept the report.