

CABINET

On 18 September 2007

Report Title: Adult, Culture and Community Services Annual Complaints Report
2006/2007

Report of: **Director of Adult, Culture and Community Services**

Wards(s) affected: All

Report for: Non Key

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To report on the statutory complaints procedure for Adult Social Care for the year 2006/07 and make appropriate recommendations to improve performance.
- 1.2 To seek member approval for the Adult Social Care Annual Complaints Report for 2006/07.

2. Introduction by Cabinet Member

2.1 We recognise that there has been improvement in some areas and we are taking measures to ensure that improvement is consistent across all areas. Figures for the current year to date are encouraging.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That the Adult Social Care Annual Complaints Report be received.
- 3.2 That the performance for 2006/07 be noted.
- 3.3 That proposed initiatives for performance improvements are noted.

Report Authorised by:

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4. Executive Summary

- 4.1 The enclosed report outlines the performance of the Adult Social Care complaints handling procedures and practices for the period 2006/07. The regulations require that for monitoring purposes the Local Authority must produce annual reports on the operation of their complaint procedures
- 4.2 The report provides recommendations for improving complaint handling and ensuring early resolution

5. Reasons for any change in policy or for new policy development (if applicable)

- 5.1 Non applicable

6. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

6.1 The following background papers were referred to in the preparation of this report:

- Annual Report on the Council's complaints procedure for the years 2003/04 and 2004/05.

Department of Health statutory guidelines. To access these guidelines please go to <http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/OrganisationPolicy/ComplaintsPolicy/SocialServicesComplaintsProcedure/fs/en>

- Letter from the Meredith Vivian OBE, Head of Responsiveness and Accountability – Department of Health
- Local Government Ombudsman Annual Letter

7. Background

7.1 In line with the Local Authority Social Services Complaints (England) Regulation, 2006, the local authority is legally obliged to produce an annual report reviewing the complaints handling performance.

8. Description

8.1 The attached report will discuss the handling of Adult Social Care, Local Government Ombudsman, and the handling of the corporate complaint procedure within Social Care.

8.2 The report will also make reference to the demographic information and to compliments and suggestions made to the Social Care.

9. Consultation

9.1 No consultation was required in drafting this report.

10. Summary and Conclusions

- 10.1 This is the second edition of the Adult Social Care Service Improvement Report/Complaints Annual Report.
- 10.2 In order to ensure that we are responding to enquiries within timescale, weekly complaints meetings are conducted with Service leads, enabling complaints to be reviewed and monitored to ensure effective closure of cases at early resolution stage.
- 10.3 Weekly reports on overdue complaints are submitted to the Service Leads and Service Managers.
- 10.4 Monthly performance reports are submitted to the Directorate Management Team (DMT) and cascaded down to management meetings.
- 10.5 We continue to raise awareness of the Council's Feedback Scheme through publicity information. New procedures will be written and distributed to all staff along with specific Social Care Complaints Procedure training for staff.

11. Recommendations

- 11.1 For the annual report to be received and noted

12. Comments of the Director of Finance

- 12.1 The Director of Finance has been consulted and there are no financial comments to make on this report.

13. Comments of the Acting Head of Legal Services

- 13.1 All local authorities are legally required to have a social care complaints procedure as ordered by the Secretary of State under section 7B of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 (LASSA). Until 1st September 2006 the Complaints Procedure Directions 1990 laid down the procedures which the local authority should follow and in particular that a record must be kept of all representations made, the outcome and compliance with statutory time limits:
- Stage 1 - Informal or problem solving – no statutory time limits.
 - Stage 2 formal – complete within 28 days if possible and in any case, within 3 months
 - Stage 3 – complainant had 28 days within which to request review - panel consideration within 28 days of the complainants' request for review and record recommendations within 24 hours of panel meeting.
- 13.2 From 1st September 2006 the Local Authority Social Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2006 (and new statutory guidance) superseded those Directions. The most significant changes are:
- The introduction of a requirement that a complaint must be made within one year of the event complained about, unless it would be unreasonable to expect the complaint to have been made earlier than it was and provided it is still possible to consider it effectively and fairly.

- Various changes to the old time-limits, including a time limit for responding at informal Stage 1 (10 working days which can be extended to 20 days if necessary), in default of which a request for a stage 2 investigation can be made.
- The Stage 3 review panel must now have at least two independent members. Officers of the Council (or their spouse/civil partner) can no longer be part of the panel; one council member can be on the panel, but not as the chairperson.
- A complaints manager must be appointed and, at the investigation stage, should ensure the appointment of an investigating officer to report in writing for adjudication by a senior manager.
- Requirements for liaison and co-operation between local authority and NHS bodies if a complaint includes elements that relate to part of the NHS, and time limits.

13.3 Provided the investigation is being conducted diligently, the authority is unlikely to be criticised either by the courts or the ombudsman if the time limits are not complied with.

13.4 The Local Government Ombudsman is empowered to investigate written complaints made by members of the public who claim they have suffered injustice as a result of mal-administration by or on behalf of the local authority but is reluctant to become involved unless other avenues of investigation have been exhausted.

14. Equalities Implications

14.1 Please note the detailed equalities analysis of complaint in section 9 of the main report which shows here were no obvious trends to suggest that any ethnic group were making complaints about specific services. In relation to age, the largest group registering a complaint is in the 60+ group and more females have complained than men.

15. Use of Appendices / Tables / Photographs

15.1 Four images were used in this report, two images, one of man in the gym and lady in wheelchair were supplied by Third Avenue, the other two were supplied by Slater King

15.2 Adult Social Care Complaints Annual Report

15.3 Statistical data from the Local Government Ombudsman.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Complaints Annual Report

2006-2007



Adult Social Care

1. Background to Complaints Procedure

Haringey Adult Social Care aims to provide services of the highest standard. In order to achieve this we need to involve service users and listen to their views.

Adult, Culture & Community Services is a large department providing a wide range of services. We accept that things can go wrong and if anyone feels unhappy about the way they have been treated then they have a right to complain.

The Social Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2006, state that as a working guide, a complaint may be generally defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet about the actions, decisions or apparent failings of a local authority’s adult’s social care provision which requires a response”.

A person is eligible to make a complaint where the local authority has a power or a duty to provide, or to secure the provision of, a service for him/her, and his/her need or possible need for such a service has (by whatever means) come to the attention of the local authority. This also applies to a person acting on behalf of someone else.

The complaints' procedure consists of a three-step process. The first step is local resolution. Whenever possible, managers will try to resolve your complaint speedily and informally. If we are not able to resolve your complaint locally, you may then ask for a formal complaint. If you are still not satisfied with the outcome you can then request a review panel.

Not only does Adult Social Care handle complaints under the Social Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2006, they also handle complaints under the corporate complaints procedure.

We welcome compliments and suggestions so that we can learn from these and improve our services.

2. Reporting Mechanisms

The Directorate’s Designated Complaints Officer (DCO) now reports to the Head of Business Management under the Strategic Services Division, who in turn reports to the Assistant Director of Strategic Services.

The DCO is a fourth tier manager and has worked up very good working relationships with all senior managers.

Below is a brief outline of the complaints process within the Council:

- The DCO manages the complaints process.
- The Council has a central database for logging all complaints.
- Complaints are taken in any format such as: written, oral or electronic.
- An acknowledgement letter will be sent within 2 working days of receiving the complaint. This letter will provide the complainant with the contact details of the person investigating their complaint and when the response is due.
- All complaints are sent via email to the service manager of the team directly responsible.
- Response letters at all stages carry an escalation paragraph, explaining how the complainant may take their complaint to the next stage of the complaint procedure.
- If there are any recommendations after any stages of the complaints procedure, the DCO will monitor that these have been implemented.
- The Complaints Team will generate weekly reports that are sent to all service heads; this shows how many complaints they have and the due date.
- The Complaints Team will chase up the service heads daily for complaints that are due imminently.
- The DCO produces monthly performance reports for DMT, which are cascaded to all service heads.
- The DCO produces a quarterly report and emphasis is made on learning from complaints and how we have improved our services from these complaints.
- We are always looking for ways to improve our services and feel that there are many benefits to a good complaints procedure.

3. Advocacy Services

The Council will support anybody in their request to use an advocate in helping with their complaint through the complaint process, as the Council appreciates that people can often become confused by the complaints process.

The Council uses independent advocacy services through a number of community based organisations.

The DCO is aware of the providers of the advocacy services and would know how a service user may make contact with these organisations.

In some cases the organisations provide advocacy to specific vulnerable groups within the community:

- MIND in Haringey offer advocacy for Mental Health service users;

- HAIL (Haringey Association for Independent Living) is for service users with Learning Disabilities;
- Age Concern can be used for our Older People service users.

Part of the role of Supported Housing Scheme Manager is to advocate on behalf of a tenant if they are unable to complain for themselves. The day Centres Managers in Older People Service also act as advocates to assist users in complaining.

Haringey Carers receive further support from a different group of community based organisations:

- Learning Disabilities advocacy project Mencap;
- The Haringey Carers Centre provides advocacy: info@haringeycarers.org tel. 020 8888 0831;
- Mental Health Carers Support Association has an advocacy project for mental health carers;
- Asian Carers Support Group;
- Black and Minority Ethnic Carers Support Service, do offer advocacy services but this is not something that they are contracted to do.

Discussions and meetings have taken place with some of the organisations offering advocacy services. The purpose of these meetings has been to review the services in detail and highlight issues and agree a way forward. These have focussed on the monitoring of advocacy provision, quality standards and benchmarks, providers to work in partnership to reduce duplication, and an expectation that training of volunteer advocates will take place.

The Complaints Team are aware that complainant's advocates can also be a friend or family member.

Wherever the Complaints Team receive a complaint from a Third Party, they will send a client consent form to the complainant to get confirmation that somebody other than themselves would be handling the complaint on their behalf. This form would give the details of the advocate.

The Complaints Team will provide assistance to service users who do not speak English as a first language. The Council has its own translation unit and has staff throughout the Council who will offer to interpret on an ad hoc basis.

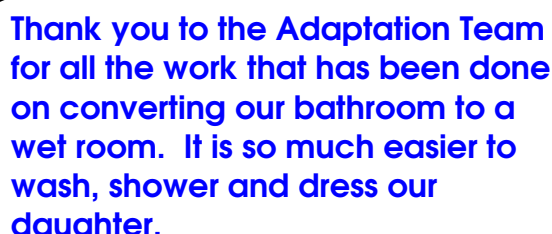
The Complaints Team will always ask if there is any way we can offer any help or support for e.g. Translation, Braille or large print copies of correspondence.

4. Performance 2006/07


4.1 Compliments

During the past year, we received 30 compliments with regards to the Adult, Culture & Community Services Directorate. This is an increase on the previous year where we received 13. We encourage people to write to the Complaints Team to tell us what and with whom they are happy with. We do ensure that the person or teams that are complimented are formally acknowledged.

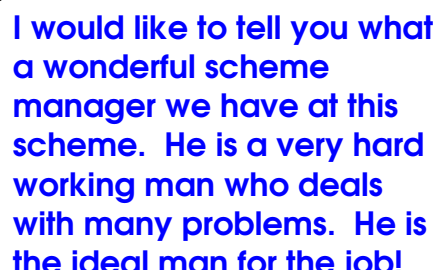
Some of the compliments we received were



Thank you to the Adaptation Team for all the work that has been done on converting our bathroom to a wet room. It is so much easier to wash, shower and dress our daughter.



Thanks for the compassion and understanding that was shown whilst handling my mother's first respite care.



I would like to tell you what a wonderful scheme manager we have at this scheme. He is a very hard working man who deals with many problems. He is the ideal man for the job!

4.2 Suggestions

Adult Social Care received one suggestion during this period. Suggestion forms are available in all reception areas and suggestions can be made via the web, telephone or on our complaint form.

4.3 Whistle-blowing

Whistle-blowing is when either a member of staff or member of the public has serious concerns that something is seriously wrong with the Council. The following are a few examples of areas raised through whistle-blowing: fraud, corruption, concerns over people in our care. The Council deals with these concerns anonymously when an individual does not wish to give their details.

All allegations are investigated by a senior member of staff.
For the reporting period there were a total of 2 whistle-blowing incidents reported to us.

4.4 Complaints

Performance on complaints handling is determined by whether or not responses have been sent to the complainant within the set timescale.

Stage 1 – Local Resolution

This is the most important stage of the complaints procedure. The Department's teams are expected to resolve as many complaints as possible at this initial point.

The performance target set for the period 31 March 2006 – 31 August 2006 was 80%. This target was set locally as opposed to a statutory target or timescale. As the new procedures were introduced in September we will report on 2 sets of figures.

For the period 31 March 2006 – 31 August 2006 Adult Social Care achieved 76%. The outturn figure was 21 complaints received and 16 completed within timescale.

For the period 01 September 2006 – 31 March 2007 Adult Social Care achieved 60%. The outturn figure was 55 complaints received and 33 complaints completed within timescale.

Overall for 2006/07 Adult Social Care achieved 64%. The outturn figure was 76 complaints received and 49 were completed within timescale.

Complaint handling has been monitored very closely since April 2007 and figures since 01 April 2007 – 31 July 2007 have indicated a significant improvement in performance.

Stage 2 – Formal Investigation

This stage is implemented where the complainant is dissatisfied with the findings of Stage 1. Stage 2 is an investigation conducted by either an internal manager or an external investigating officer. In most cases, Haringey appoint investigating officers from a pool of external investigating officers. The role of the investigating officer involves interviewing staff and file reviews, reviewing policies and procedures, and producing a comprehensive report. Once the investigating officer has completed their report an Assistant Director is appointed to consider the findings and respond to the complainant accordingly.

The new procedures now make it clear when a Stage 2 investigation's timescale commences. This should be when the complaints manager has received the written record of the complaint. Previous to this the council commenced a complaint as soon as the complainant advised they wished to go to Stage 2.

The procedure from 01 April 2006 – 31 August 2006 stated that these investigations were to be completed within 28 days and with agreement an extension to 90 days.

Adult Social Care had four Stage 2 investigations during this period; none were completed within 28 days. Two were completed within 90 days and two were over 90 days.

For the period 01 September 2006 – 31 March 2007, there were two Stage 2 investigations. These Stage 2 investigations should be dealt with in 25 days although, in certain cases can be extended to 65 days; none were completed within 25 days. One was completed within the 65 day timescale and one outside of this timescale.

Some of the reasons for the delays in responding within timescale are down to the complainant not being available to meet the investigating officer or key staff being unavailable and the complexity and nature of Social Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2006.

During the coming year we will be actively recruiting to increase our independent investigating officers pool. There will also be further training for the investigating officers and a greater emphasis on meeting the timescales. We will devise a way of ensuring that timescales are met for example an action plan to be completed by the investigating officer before they start the investigation. We will be meeting with the Investigating Officers on a yearly basis which will also incorporate a monitoring session.

Stage 3 – Review Panel

Where complainants are dissatisfied with the finding of the Stage 2 investigation, the Council is required to establish a Complaints Review Panel. The panel makes recommendations to the Director who then makes a decision on the complaint and any action to be taken. Review Panels are made up of two independent panellists and one Councillor. The timescales for Review Panels are as follows:

- Within 30 days set up the Panel
- Producing the Panel's findings within 5 days
- Produce the Councils response within 15 days.

Adult Social Care had 1 complaint that went to Review Panel. This could indicate that complainants were generally satisfied with the responses to their complaints.

Corporate Complaints Procedure

The outturn figure for Adult Social Care for the period 2006/07 were 34 complaints received under the corporate complaints procedure, of which 23 were completed within timescale. This shows 68% were dealt within timescale.

During the period July 2006 – March 2007, the Complaints team were also responsible for handling the complaints relating to Housing. There were a total of 197 complaints of which 124 were completed within timescale.

5. Local Government Ombudsman

The Commissioners for Local Administration (generally known as the Local Government Ombudsmen) were established by the Local Government Act 1974, Part III. They are empowered to investigate (among other things) any Local Authority. All complaints must be in writing and made by members of the public who claim to have sustained injustice in consequence of mal-administration in connection with action taken by or on behalf of an Authority.

LGO decisions 2006/2007

	Local Settlement	No Evidence of Maladministration	Ombudsman's Discretion	Outside Jurisdiction	Premature Complaint	Total
Social Care	5	8	6		11	30

6. How did we handle your complaints

Adult Social Care received 112 complaints last year including the corporate complaints that did not fall under the Directions/Regulations but were none the less dealt with by Social Care.

The following table shows examples of complaints that were received during this reporting period and what we did in response to those complaints.

WHAT YOU TOLD US	WHAT WE DID
"The manager of the carers never calls when the carer will be late or if indeed a different carer will be attending. When client has rung the manager she always says she will call back and never does."	We apologised and changed the care provider as it was felt that the relationship between care provider and the client had broken down.
"My benefits are never paid on time".	After investigation it was clear that payments had not been received regularly. We apologised and set up a reoccurring payment direct to their account.
"I have been discharged from the Clarendon Centre and I now feel very isolated."	<p>Changes have now been implemented for the eligibility access to the centre, which will allow attendance by members of the community who have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discharged from secondary care to GP. • Referred to secondary care but deemed not eligible and referred back to GP. • Discharged from hospital and awaiting an allocation of a care co-ordinator (as long as there is liaison person in hospital).

7. How did we respond to your complaints?

The Council takes complaints seriously. When you complain about our services, we find ways to improve the quality and delivery of services. Common themes for complaints have been long waiting times and issues with service delivery these issues are currently being addressed in the respective departments.

8. Who complained to us?

Equalities data is collected to assess how Adult Social Care can better address the needs of the community. However, only a small number of complainants supplied information. With your help in filling out feedback forms, we will be able to serve you better.

There were no obvious trends to suggest that any ethnic group were making complaints about specific services. In relation to age, the largest group that we have registering a complaint is in the 60+ group and more females have complained than men. The tables below illustrate the ethnicity and diversity of people who complain about the Council.

	No. of Records 2006/07
Black or Black British	2
Asian or Asian British	2
White British	16
White Other	3
Mixed	2
Other Ethnic Group	4
Unknown	47
Total	76

Age Group	No. of Records 2006/07
18-23	1
24-45	6
46-59	10
60+	22
Not known	37
Didn't want to give info	0
Not categorised	0
Total	76

How Received	No of Records 2006/07
Complaint form	6
Email	7
Fax	4
Feedback form	8
In person	4
Letter	29
Phone	12
Not Categorised	0
Web Form	6
Total	76

Gender	No. of Records 2006/07
Female	45
Male	20
Male & Female	10
Unknown	1
Total	76

Disability	No. of Records 2006/07
Yes	27
No	6
Unknown	42
Didn't want to give information	1
Total	76

The following tables outline how many complaints were received by the service areas.

Adult Services	No. of Records
Learning Disabilities	13
Physical Disabilities	23
Mental Health	7

Older People	No. of Records
Assessment & Care Management	9
Day Care/Supported Housing	10
Finance	3
Homecare	8
Other	3

8. Learning from Complaints and Improving Services (Outcomes)

Adult Services are committed to delivering quality services that meet the needs of users and carers, complaints and feedback are utilised as a mechanism for continuous service improvement.

The purpose of the complaint's procedure is to ensure that we learn from complaints and make improvements to service quality. Significant changes have been made to improve communication, increase efficiency in handling complaints, and deliver better services. The Central Feedback team produces regular reports for all directorates on 'learning points' for stage 3 investigations and Ombudsman cases. Work will continue in 2007/08 on embedding the learning process. Figures from the 2007/08 indicate that improvements are being made.

Below are a few examples as to how we have learned from complaints and what improvements we have made. These outcomes are not necessarily as a result of complaints through advocates.

With respect to the Community Meals Contract (Meals on Wheels, Drop-In Centres and Woodside Day Centre) the following improvements have been made in response to client's concerns:

- Bigger range of vegetables;
- Hot desserts for kosher meals anticipated June 2007.

Our Learning Disabilities (LD) team have made the following improvements:

- review of LD panel;
- improved needs analysis for people in transition;
- improved working arrangements adult placement/ family link;
- proposed transfer of SW from children to adults.

In Learning Disabilities, the parents of a young person in transition complained about the transition planning for that person. Following this complaint, the Learning Disabilities Partnership has made improvements to the care management process for young people in transition and to the working of the panel that agrees placements. New care management protocols have been agreed, to ensure the transition process is streamlined. Cases will be transferred to Adult Services at 16+ towards the end of 2007. The panel process has now been made more transparent. It has been agreed that the decision making process and panel decisions should be available to service users and carers as soon as possible, with details of who they can discuss the outcome with.

In Supported Housing a complaint about the use of a mobility scooter, led to guidance being issued to tenants with a scooter on their responsibilities under the Road Traffic Acts. A complaint about the “at risk” visits recording system used by the support service within Supported Housing, has led to a complete review of all the recording systems/forms in the service.

Supported Housing are further reviewing their policies and procedures in partnership with the Health Protection Agency, as a result of a complaint about dealing with increased amounts of incontinence products/foul linen.

In addition, arrangements are being put in place to train all scheme support staff in wheel chair handling. Spare wheel chairs are being purchased for some supported housing schemes for one-off use; as well as the employment of a project officer to have a brief for facilitating activities in supported housing.

Following complaints about appropriate housing for people with Physical Disabilities, the Service has formed partnerships with the housing department, to rectify these problems. The Practice Manager and Housing Advice Officer in the Physical Disabilities Team, meet with representatives from the Housing Department to identify solutions to the lack of housing available for people with a Physical Disability.

The Physical Disabilities Service held a consultation for HIV service users with regards to concerns about the HIV Drop-In. Following feedback from service users that the hours of the Drop-In did not adequately meet the needs of the people using it, the Drop-In hours were increased, so that it was open later on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The consultation event highlighted a gap in the provision of services for women, which resulted in the running of a Women’s Group at the Drop-In.

Older People’s Services received concerns about the quality of an external home care provider. The Council addressed these concerns, which subsequently led to the agency withdrawing from the contract. A user led initiative followed this that has led to a pilot for changes in the commissioning and delivery of home care. “Outcome Based” home care puts the delivery of care firmly in the control of the service user. Commissioners agree outcomes with the provider, who then negotiates with the service user how those outcomes are achieved.

Service users and carers are enabled through the complaints procedure to have their concerns heard. Adult Services has been able to clearly demonstrate to its users/ carers that these complaints are acted on and do make a difference to how services are delivered.

9. Initiatives for 2007/08

An updated Social Care training course will be developed this year. This course will be for staff and will enable staff to become familiar with the new guidelines that were introduced last September. We are also planning to develop a training course for senior managers who investigate Stage 2 complaints and also for the adjudicating officer.

- Produce a web page on the Council's website that will promote the use of advocacy and then link to all the community based advocacy service providers.
- Revise and implement the Complaints Improvement Plan, this would include:
 - i. Developing and embedding the importance of learning from complaints to improve our services
 - ii. Achieve the performance targets
 - iii. Ensuring that investigators of stage 1 complaints are briefed on the importance of resolution at stage 1
 - iv. Ensure that complainants are kept informed through out the procedure
 - v. Ensure that stage 1 responses cover all issues raised
 - vi. Publicise the complaints procedure where ever possible.

10. Reform of the Complaints arrangements across Health and Social Care

The Individual Voices for Improvement (IVI) Policy Forum (including Department of Health (DOH), Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), the Healthcare Commission, the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) and the Office of the Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman (OPHSO), has launched a national action learning network to support complaints staff working across health and social care.

There have been a number of meetings in relation to Voices for Improvement Action Network (VIAN).

In the White Paper '*Our health, our care, our say*' (January 2006) was not only to develop a comprehensive system across health and social care, but to develop one that will '*focus on resolving complaints locally with a more personal and comprehensive approach to handling complaints*'.

Health care is becoming increasingly community-based, with a much stronger focus on the PCT role as commissioners of all health services, on practice-based commissioning, and with greater joint commissioning with local authorities. The reforms also need to reflect the new delivery of services provided by Children's Departments, joint health and social care teams, and the relationships between local authorities and the regulators, and the Local Government Ombudsman.

One aim is to seek to address the current fragmentation in complaints systems within the NHS (between primary and secondary care), between the NHS and private and third sector health care providers, as well as between health and social care.

The focus therefore is on the development of more easily accessible, simple and straightforward arrangements for both health and social care that will encourage and empower people to come forward with compliments and constructive views as well as complaints; and which will ensure lessons are learnt and applied to organisational learning.

The DOH feel that this is a challenging agenda and they envisage it will take several years to embed thoroughly into the health and social care services of the future. The DOH believes that any new complaints arrangements should meet the following criteria:

- **open and easy to access** - flexible about the ways people can complain and with effective information and support for people wishing to do so, including specialist advocacy as appropriate;
- **fair** - emphasising early resolution and minimising the strain and distress for all those involved;
- **responsive** - providing appropriate and proportionate response and redress;
- **providing an opportunity for learning and developing** - ensuring complaints are treated as a positive opportunity to learn from service users' experiences and views to drive continual improvement in services.

The consultation document on the new regulations in relation to the above was launched on 18 June 2007 the closing date for consultation will be 17 October 2007.

To view the full consultation document please view the following website link.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_075652

11. Conclusion

We take our complaints, compliments and suggestions feedback very seriously. We appreciate the need to act on this feedback to continue to improve our services by listening properly to our service users.

We endeavour to encourage all services to support early intervention and emphasis on preventing problems is paramount. We aim to provide services that will help maintain the independence for the individual whilst providing a well-trained workforce.

Early resolution of complaints is a priority, which we are aiming to achieve by implementing initiatives such as 'Learning from Complaints', and training. All Adult, Culture & Community Services staff are committed to the Council's vision of high performance and improvement. The initiatives referred to in paragraph 9 will help to achieve this.