



Complaints and Representations Service Social Care and Health Directorate 2008/09 Annual Report

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**Staffordshire County Council
Social Care and Health**

ANNUAL REPORT 2008/2009

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1. Context

This report provides information about complaints made during the twelve months between the 1st April 2008 and the 31st March 2009 under the complaints and representations procedures established under the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 and the Local Authority Act 1970.

This report covers adult social care only; there is a separate report for vulnerable children. In October 2008, the Complaints Service disaggregated and the statutory responsibilities for complaints under The Children Act 1998, the Leaving Care Act 2000 and The Local Authority Act 1970 passed over to the Children and Lifelong Learning Directorate.

Consistent with last year, this year's report follows a 'district' based format in order to provide a more localised and meaningful analysis of complaints and representations within each district.

New Regulations were introduced on 27 February 2009, detailing a single approach for dealing with complaints about NHS and adults social care services in England. The new procedures came into force on 1 April 2009 and see a shift in the previous three stage process to a more flexible two stage process. The focus will be for the organisation to agree a way forward with the complainant. The new system will enable front line managers to risk assess the concerns and make an action plan with the complainant. This is so issues can be resolved efficiently and satisfactorily within an agreed timescale. The new system will also encourage and provide chances for services to learn from individual complaints and improve as a result. The previous three stage system was heavily criticised for being inflexible and process driven, which can be time consuming, costly and bureaucratic. Research has suggested that early local resolution to complaints is the most effective means to a satisfactory conclusion for everyone.

The annual report for next year will take into account these new demands, and will provide a sharper focus on local and joint complaint handling, action planning and organisational learning.

2. Executive Summary

The Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Letter for the year ending 31 March 2009 commends Staffordshire County Council on a further reduction in the number of complaints received and the delivery of an accessible and effective complaints and representations service where organisational learning is evident.

2008/09 saw consistently high numbers of compliments received. A total of **308** compliments were received and the areas of service receiving the greatest numbers of compliments were the Access Teams and Well-being Teams, who provide assessment and care management for older people and adults with disabilities. The high proportion of compliments reflects the type of service provided by the teams and the significant differences it makes to service users' lives and is testimony to the independence, well-being and choice agenda and service reforms.

Following the development of the Respond software package and monitoring forms (SW767) to capture more details regarding outcomes and organisational learning from complaints at local level, this year's report will provide a more detailed overview of how the Directorate of Social Care and Health is using its customer feedback to inform service improvements locally. Some local improvements include:

- The development of a new procedure for dealing with patients attending a privately funded hospital ward and associated literature/information.
- Provision of guidance on criteria for carer's assessment and communication to service user.
- Review of local policy with a view to changing the criteria for accessing blocked bed bookings.
- Improved communication and joint working with independent sector providers – the development of local Forums/information sharing meetings enable issues and concerns to be raised and discussed.

Despite an increase in the number of Stage 1 complaints, the number of complaints escalating to Stage 2 remains consistent with the previous year at **16**. This indicates an improvement in the handling and resolution of complaints at local level. This is also evident in the number of complaints responded to within the statutory timescale. A total of **80%** of all complaints reached a satisfactory conclusion within the statutory 20 working day timescale, and **46%** having been concluded within the target 10 working day timescale compared with **75%** and **58%** respectively during the previous year. An improvement of 5% overall when compared with the previous year.

The year saw a marginal increase in the number of Stage 2 (Investigations) complaints from **27** to **30**. The increase being attributed to legislation affording complainants opportunities to accelerate complaints from Stage 1. This slight increase is seen in the number of complaints progressing to Stage 3 Review Panel. A total of **10** Complaints Review Panel's were held during 2008/09 (including 2007/08 carry over).

The Directorate has reviewed a number of policies and implemented a number of changes to take account of the complaints it received during the year, both at local and formal investigative level.

Some recommendations and improvements made following formal investigation (Stage 2) include:

- The development of a collective protocol with all Independent Sector Domiciliary Care Agencies with whom the Local Authority contracts with for non-response calls to enable a consistent approach.
- Improved information for service users concerning the parameters of service provision. In particular, what the Council and its contracted service can and cannot do.
- The development of a county-wide protocol for the transfer processes relating to Continuing Health Care and Ordinary Residence rules.
- The requirement for one professional to be identified at the initial review meeting as a key worker to accept responsibility for communicating with family members.
- The development of a multi-agency protocol regarding the lead agency taking responsibility for a service user with an illness or disability which does not fit current service remits.
- Recommendation for the development of a formal policy to assist in the determination of personal allowances for people who still live at home and who have access to their funds frozen.

Mick Patten/Kate Bullivant
Complaints Services Managers

What is a Complaint?

As a working guide, a complaint may generally be defined as:

“An expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet about the actions, decisions or apparent failings of the local Authority’s adults social services provision which requires a response”
(Learning from Complaints DoH July 2006)

The intention here is not to be too rigid in the way that complaints are considered.

Complaints might be about:

- An unwelcome or disputed decision
- The quality or appropriateness of a service
- Delay in decision making or provision of a service
- Delivery or non-delivery of services
- Quantity, frequency, change or cost of a service
- Attitude or behaviour of staff
- Application of eligibility and assessment criteria
- The impact on an individual of a change of policy
- Assessment , care management and review

Who can make a Complaint?

The Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, Section 7B describes who may make a complaint.

““A person is eligible to make a complaint where the local authority has a power or duty to provide, or to secure the provision of, a service for him/her, and their need or possible need for such a service has (by whatever means) come to the attention of the local authority...or a person acting on such a person’s behalf.”

The Regulations provide for a representative to act on behalf of an eligible person where the eligible person has asked the representative to act on their behalf or where the person is not capable. The local authority has discretion to decide whether or not the person is suitable to act as a representative.

What is a Compliment?

A compliment is thanks for something done or done particularly well. They are only recorded if the person has taken the time and effort to inform the Department of their thanks for the service provided.

3. Stages of the Complaints Procedure

The complaints procedure has three stages.

Stage 1 Local Resolution

The complaints procedure aims to resolve complaints at stage 1 within 10 days (with an extension to a further ten days where necessary).

The current guidance suggests that the majority of complaints should be resolved at this stage and first-line managers are encouraged to meet with complainants and attempt to address complaints in a speedy and effective manner.

Stage 2 Investigation

This stage is usually implemented where the complainant is dissatisfied with the findings of Stage 1. The Stage 2 investigation is conducted either by an internal Complaints Investigation Officer or an external Investigating Officer, who produces a formal report with conclusions and recommendations. The relevant District Director adjudicates the report and provides the Directorates' 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.

Stage 3 Review Panel

Where complainants continue to be dissatisfied following Stage 2 of the process they can request that the Council convene a Complaints Review Panel. Complaints Review Panels are made up of three independent panellists and are clerked by a solicitor from the resources section. The panel provides a report to the complainant and invites the Corporate Director (Adult Services) to respond to any findings or recommendations.

There timescales relating to stage 3 complaints are:

- setting up the Panel within 30 days producing the Panel's report within a further 5 days; and
- producing the local authority's response within 15 days

Local Government Ombudsman

A further option for complainants is the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) who is empowered to investigate where it appears that a Council's own investigations have not resolved the complaint. Complainants can refer their complaint to the LGO at any time during the complaints process, although the Ombudsman will usually consider the complaint 'premature' if it has not been considered under the statutory process first.

4. Compliments Received

During 2008/2009 a total of **308** compliments were recorded with the Complaints & Representations Service relating to adults social care and support services.

The table below shows a break down of the compliments received for service areas in each District by Service type.

District Service	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	Area Unknown	Total
Access Team	18	7	11	5	6	-	1	22	-	-	70
Well-being Older People	17	3	6	5	6	4	3	6	-	-	50
Well-being Disability	12	15	5	6	2	5	2	2	-	1	50
Community Living – Older Peoples Residential	-	2	5	13	1	7	1	2	-	-	31
Enablement	5	2	6	4	4	1	4	1	-	-	27
Community Living – Day Services	19	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	21
Community Living – Home Care	3	1	-	1	2	2	-	8	-	-	17
Community Living – Disability Residential	-	-	-	9	-	-	1	-	-	-	10
Community Living – Older Peoples Day Centre	-	-	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Welfare Benefits Service	1	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	1	-	6
Mental Health Team	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	1	4
Substance Misuse Team	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4
Administration	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
County Equipment Centre	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Joint Finance Unit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Complaints Team	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Service unknown/unidentifiable	2	1	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	6
Total	77	31	38	49	23	24	15	41	8	2	308

5. Total Complaints

Stage 1 Complaints

Between 1 April 2008 and 31 March 2009, the Complaints Service received **198** stage 1 complaints.

At the time of producing this report:

180 complaints were closed with outcomes.

Of these, **16** complaints progressed to Stage 2 (Investigation) of the process.

Of those **16** Stage 2 complaints, **4** proceeded to Stage 3 (Review Panel).

Corporate Customer Feedback Complaints

A total of **11** complaints relating to adults social care and support services were considered and responded to under the councils Customer Feedback procedure during 2008/09.

Of the **11** complaints received, no complaints were formally investigated and responded to under Stage 2, however **2** complaints did escalate from Stage 1 to Stage 3 as the Deputy Corporate Director had already responded at Stage 1 of the Customer Feedback procedure.

Comparison with the preceding year

This year's figures indicate a **27%** increase in Stage 1 complaints relating to both Adults and Older People's Services and Support Services when compared to the previous year.

A total of **16** complaints progressed from Stage 1 to Stage 2 which is consistent with the previous year along with the total number of complaints investigated at Stage 2 Investigation has remained fairly consistent with the 2007/08 at **28** and of these **10** progressed to a Complaints Review Panel indicating a slight increase.

2008/09 saw an increase in the number of corporate complaints relating to Adults and Older People's Services. A total of **11** complaints were considered during 2008/09 when compared with **6** complaints the previous year. However, no complaints were formally investigated at Stage 2, but **2** complaints were responded to at Stage 3. This was due to the Deputy Corporate Director responding to two complaints at Stage 1.

Outcomes of Complaints

Stage 1 Complaints

67% of complaints were upheld (either fully or partially), **28%** were not upheld the remaining **5%** are either ongoing at the time of producing the report, remain unresolved, withdrawn by the complainant or outcomes have not been communicated to the Team.

In comparison with 2007/2008, **69%** of Stage 1 complaints were either partially or fully upheld and **22%** not upheld.

Corporate Complaints

Of the **11** complaints considered at Stage 1 of the Corporate Complaints procedure **55%** were upheld, the remaining complaints were recorded as being not upheld.

Response times

Stage 1 Complaints

The Directorate responded to **83 (46%)** Stage 1 complaints within the target 10 working days under the new Regulations, and **63 (34%)** within the 20 working day deadline.

Corporate Customer Feedback Procedure

Of the **11** complaints considered at Stage 1 of the Corporate Complaints procedure **4 (36.4%)** were responded to within the 15 working day timescale. The remaining **7 (63.6%)** were outside of the timescale.

Reasons for delay include; availability of complainant, requirement to seek additional information or clarification; annual leave or sickness absence of key personnel or complainants.

It is essential that all teams delivering services (including the Department's contractors) formally capture and record complaints. It is only by doing so that complaints can be tracked and where things have gone wrong managers can ensure that matters are put right. Senior management therefore regularly encourages teams to recognise and record complaints and report these to the Complaints Service.

6. **Stage 1 Complaint - Adults & Older Peoples Services & Strategic & Support Services – Stage 1 by Service Type:**

District Service	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	<u>Total</u>
Wellbeing Disability	7	4	4	10	5	9	7	1	-	47
Wellbeing Older People	-	6	3	9	4	8	8	3	-	41
Access	4	4	2	6	3	1	10	1	-	31
Enablement – Hospital Team	1	4	-	2	2	3	1	1	-	14
Strategic Centre - Joint Finance Unit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	12
Enablement – District Team	-	1	-	-	3	2	1	3	-	10
Community Living – Home Care	1	1	-	2	4	-	-	1	-	9
Community Mental Health Team	1	2	-	2	-	1	4	-	-	10
Administration	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	4
Strategic Centre – Fairer Charging Team	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
District Finance & Contracts Team	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	3
Community Living – Day Services	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Community Living – Older People’s Residential	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	2
Welfare Benefits Information Service	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Community Living – Disability Residential	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2
Community Living – Respite Unit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Complaints Service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
County Equipment Centre	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Independent Sector – Meals on Wheels	-	-	-	1*	-	-	-	-	-	1
Independent Sector – Private Nursing Home	-	-	-	-	-	1*	-	-	-	1
Strategic Centre – Direct Payments Team	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total	20	23	10	32	23	28	33	11	18	198

* 2 complaints related to independent sector providers, however, the District Teams were able to resolve the issues directly with the provider.

Number of Stage 1 Complaints by Service User Type:

District	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	Total
Service User Type										
Older Person 65+	4	13	7	16	17	15	17	6	12	107
Adult with Physical Disabilities	9	3	1	7	4	6	5	3	3	41
Adult with Learning Disabilities	4	2	2	2	1	4	4	1	-	20
Adult with MH Needs	2	3	-	3	-	1	4	-	1	14
SU Deceased	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	2	6
Adult with Multiple Disabilities	-	1	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	5
Adult with Sensory Disabilities	-	1	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	4
Older Person with MH Needs	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	20	23	10	32	23	28	33	11	18	198

Equalities information

Service User Type

District Ethnicity of Service User	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	<u>Total</u>
White British	20	19	9	31	23	27	32	10	18	189
Black Black Caribbean	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Asian Indian	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Sikh	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Unknown/Unseen	-	3	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	6
<u>Total</u>	20	23	10	32	23	28	33	11	18	<u>198</u>

Where Complaint Received:

Complaint Received	District	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	Total
Complaints Service		18	21	10	31	20	26	31	10	17	184
District/Area Office		2	1	-	1	4	1	2	1	-	12
Director's Office			1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
County Equipment Centre		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
	Total	20	23	10	32	24	28	33	11	18	<u>199*</u>

92% of all complaints were received via the Complaints Service in the first instance. Where complaints are received into other locations staff are required to record the complaint and advise the Complaints Service as soon as possible in order for the complaints to be recorded and monitored in accordance with the procedure.

*Some complaints may have been sent to multiple offices.

STAGE 1 COMPLAINT OUTCOMES

Of the **198** Stage 1 complaints received **180** have been investigated and responded to by 1 April 2009 the remaining **18** stage 1 complaints are in process of being investigated. The following statistical analysis will only include the data for 180 complaints that have been responded to.

RESPONSE TIMES

Stage 1 Complaints

District	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	Total
Response time										
Within 10 working days	6	10	5	16	6	9	12	8	13	83
Within 20 working days	9	6	2	8	10	8	11	3	5	63
Over timescale	5	4	-	5	8	8	4	-	-	34
										180

Reasons for delay include: The availability of the complainant or staff due to annual leave and sickness absence or the diversion into other procedures, such as vulnerable adults procedure or disciplinary procedures.

OUTCOMES

Number of Stage 1 Complaint's upheld by Service Type

District Service	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	<u>Total</u>
Well-being Disability	5	1	-	4	1	5	1	1	-	18
Well-being Older People	-	4	-	1	1	4	5	1	-	16
Access Team	-	2	1	2	1	-	5	1	-	12
Joint Finance Unit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	7
Community Living – Home Care	-	1	-	-	4	-	-	1	-	6
Community Mental Health Team	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	3
Enablement - District Team	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	3
Enablement – Hospital Team	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	3
Administration	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	3
Community Living – Day Service	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Community Living – Residential Disability	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Community Living – Residential Older People	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Complaints Service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
County Equipment Centre	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Direct Payments Team	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Independent Sector – Nursing Home	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Independent Sector – Meals on Wheels	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Finance & Contracts Team	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Total	9	11	1	9	9	12	15	4	10	<u>81</u>

Number of Stage 1 Complaints Partially Upheld by Service Type

District Service	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	<u>Total</u>
Well-being Disability	2	2	1	-	-	3	-	-	-	8
Access Team	2	1	1	2	1	-	1	-	-	8
Well-being Older People	-	-	-	-	1	3	2	1	-	7
Enablement – Hospital Team	1	-	-	2	1	1	-	-	-	5
Enablement – District Team	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	-	4
Community Living – Day Service	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Community Living – Home Care	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Community Living – Residential Respite Unit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Community Mental Health Team	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Emergency Duty Service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Fairer Charging Team	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Finance & Contracts Team	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Joint Finance Unit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Welfare Benefits Information Service	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	7	4	3	4	4	8	4	4	3	<u>41</u>

Number of Stage 1 Complaints Not Upheld by Service Type

Service \ District	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	<u>Total</u>
Well-being Older People	-	-	2	6	1	1	1	1	-	12
Well-being Disability	-	1	1	3	3	-	2	-	-	10
Access Team	2	1	-	2	1	-	2	-	-	8
Enablement – Hospital Team	-	2	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	5
Joint Finance Unit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
Enablement – District Team	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	3
Community Living – Home Care	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Fairer Charging Team	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Community Living – Residential Older People	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Community Mental Health Team	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Administration	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Finance & Contracts	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Welfare Benefits Information Service	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	4	4	3	14	8	4	5	3	5	<u>50</u>

Other Outcomes

<u>East Staffs</u>	Community Mental Health Team – Complaint withdrawn
<u>Newcastle</u>	Well-being Disabilities Team – Unknown
<u>South Staffs</u>	Well-being Older People’s Team – Complaint withdrawn
	Well-being Disabilities Team - Unresolved
<u>Stafford</u>	Access Team – Complaint withdrawn
<u>Staffs Moorlands</u>	Access Team – Complaint withdrawn
	Community Mental Health Team – Complaint withdrawn
	Well-being Disabilities Team – Unresolved
<u>Strategic Centre</u>	Joint Finance Unit – Unknown

Stage 1 Complaints - Area of Complaint by District:

District	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	Total
By Area of Complaint										
Service Issues <i>Eg. Lack of, Standard of, delays etc</i>	19	19	5	23	24	17	22	10	1	140
Financial Issues <i>Eg. Charging issues, Direct Payments process, etc</i>	1	2	4	5	5	10	4	3	12	46
Information Issues <i>Eg. Poor communication, delay in receiving information, etc</i>	6	6	-	5	5	3	5	-	3	33
Staff Conduct <i>Eg. Attitude, Inappropriate action, abuse, etc</i>	5	2	1	2	-	5	2	2	2	21
Policy Related issues <i>Eg. Charging Policy, Change of Policy, etc</i>	2	-	-	3	1	1	4	-	-	11
External Factors <i>Eg. Lack of Agency Capacity, Lack of Placements, etc</i>	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	3
Complaints Procedure <i>Eg. Delay, access to procedure</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2
Physical Environment <i>Eg Access to Building, Faulty Equipment, etc</i>	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Protection of Adults <i>Abuse from Service other SU, VA Protection process</i>	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Total	34	29	11	38	37	38	37	15	19	*258

* Total number is higher than 180 due to some complaints relating to more than one area of complaint.

Stage 1 – Highest Area of Complaint by Service Type

By Area of Complaint \ Service	Well-being Older People's Team	Well-being Disability Team	Access Team	Enablement Hospital Team	Joint Finance Unit	Enablement District Team	Community Living Home Care	Fairer Charging Team	Community Living – Residential Older Peoples	<u>Total</u>
Service Issues <i>Eg. Lack of, Standard of, delays etc</i>	29	36	37	12	1	4	8	-	4	131
Financial Issues <i>Eg. Charging issues, Direct Payments process, etc</i>	10	8	2	3	11	6	-	3	-	43
Information Issues <i>Eg. Poor communication, delay in receiving information, etc</i>	1	8	7	3	1	2	1	-	-	23
Staff Conduct <i>Eg. Attitude, Inappropriate action, abuse, etc</i>	1	3	3	2	-	1	2	-	1	13
Policy Related issues <i>Eg. Charging Policy, Change of Policy, etc</i>	3	1	4	-	-	2	-	-	-	10
External Factors <i>Eg. Lack of Agency Capacity, Lack of Placements, etc</i>	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Complaints Procedure <i>Eg. Delay, Access to Procedure etc</i>	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
Physical Environment <i>Eg Access to Building, Faulty Equipment, etc</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Protection of Adults <i>Abuse from Service other SU, VA Protection process</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
<u>Total</u>	47	58	53	20	14	15	11	3	6	<u>227</u>

Stage 1 – Resolution/Remedy Offered by District

The chart below details the remedies and resolutions offered locally in order to resolve concerns.

Resolution/ Remedy Offered	District	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	Total
Apology		7	15	6	10	9	15	12	8	11	93
Explanation		9	7	4	14	11	15	9	7	9	85
Improved Communication/Info		1	3	1	2	1	2	2	3	1	16
Meeting/Review arranged		1	4	2	1	2	2	-	1	-	13
Re-assessment		1	2	-	2	1	1	1	2	-	10
Allocation of New Worker		3	2	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	9
Charges Reduced/Waived		1	1	-	-	1	3	-	1	2	9
Monitor situation		-	1	-	1	3	2	-	1	-	8
Financial Recompense		-	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	2	6
Funding Agreed		1	-	-	1	-	1	2	1	-	6
Adjustment of Care Plan		-	1	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	4
Assessment Completed		-	-	1	1	1	-	-	1	-	4
Change of decision		1	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	4
Blue Badge issued		2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Change of Service Provider		-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2
Review Procedures		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Service Resumed		-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Adaptation ordered		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Amendment/Destruction of Records		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Replacement of Broken/Damaged items		-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Review		-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Review local Policy		-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Risk Assessment		-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Safeguards put in place		-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Total		28	36	15	38	33	46	32	27	27	282

Stage 1 – Organisational Learning by District

The chart below details how front line services are continually learning from complaints in order to review and improve service delivery.

Organisational Learning	District	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	Total
Information sharing with Team		10	8	2	16	12	4	8	4	6	70
Reinforce existing Procedures/Practice		2	4	-	1	-	3	5	4	4	23
Supervision		3	4	1	-	2	5	2	4	1	22
Staff Training		1	2	-	1	2	2	-	3	1	12
Reinforce Policy		-	-	1	-	3	1	4	1	-	10
Review existing Procedures/Practice		-	2	1	-	2	1	1	1	1	9
Develop new Procedures/Practice		-	1	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	6
Develop new Policy		1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
Review existing Policy		-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Develop new Information/Literature		-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Revise Information/Literature		-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
	<u>Total</u>	17	21	6	19	23	20	22	17	13	<u>158</u>

7. STAGE 2 - INVESTIGATION

A total of **30** complaints entered Stage 2 of the complaints procedure during 2008/09. There were **28** Stage 2 complaints relating to Adults and Older People's Services, compared to **24** last year and **2** complaint investigations relating to Strategic and Support Services compared to **3** the previous year.

16 complaints proceeded to Stage 2 via the Stage 1 process and the remaining **14** complaints entered directly into Stage 2

9 investigations were concluded in 2008/09 which had entered the Stage 2 process in the previous reporting year (2007/08).

In relation to the **9** complaints carried over from 2007/08, **1** complaint was resolved by the District Manager agreeing to waive charges and **1** complaint is still ongoing due to representations about a policy decision.

For complaints received and concluded in 2008/09, **1** complaint was withdrawn by the complainant following the decision to continue in-house home care provision.

6 complaint investigations were ongoing post-31 March 2009 and the outcomes will be included in next year's report.

External independent investigating officers carried out **18** Stage 2 complaint investigations, compared to **8** last year, the increase being attributable to the deletion of an Internal Investigation Officer post and disaggregation of the Complaints Service in October 2008.

Of the **33** complaints which were fully investigated and a report prepared, **(24 08/09 + 9 07/08)** Stage 2 complaint investigations that were considered (including 2007/08 carry over). **9** complaints were completed within 65 days under the statutory timescale.

1 complaint has been ongoing since 2006/07 and was delayed due to disciplinary proceedings.

Of the **33** complaint investigations completed (including 2007/08 and 2006/07 carry over) with outcomes, there were **179** areas of complaint investigated 48% were fully upheld; 18% were partially upheld; 37% were not upheld and 4% were unsubstantiated or unable to make a finding on the evidence available. Following investigation a total of **206** remedies or recommendations were offered and made in order to resolve the complaint and provide for organisational learning.

Adults & Older Peoples Services & Strategic & Support Services – Stage 2 by Service Type

Investigations carried over from 2007/08 completed in 2008/09

Service \ District	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	<u>Total</u>
Community Living – Home Care	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Community Living – Older Peoples Residential Enablement	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Finance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	*1
Community Mental Health Team	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Wellbeing Disability	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
Wellbeing Older People	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Total	-	2	-	-	1	3	1	1	1	<u>9</u>

*1 investigation relating to Finance is ongoing due to representations about a Policy decision.

Stage 2 Complaints - Requests received during 2008/09 (30)

District Service	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	<u>Total</u>
Well-being Disability	-	1	1	1	3	-	2	1	-	9
Well-being Older People	1	1	-	3	1	3	-	-	-	9
Community Mental Health Team	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	3
Independent Domiciliary Care	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
Community Living – Disability Residential Enablement	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Independent Residential Home	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Access Team	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Emergency Duty Service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Joint Finance Unit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Strategic Centre	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total	2	3	2	6	4	4	5	1	3	<u>30</u>

Of the **30** Stage 2 requests received, **1** complaints was resolved prior to investigation commencing. **6** complaint investigations are ongoing at the time of writing this report.

Outcomes from ongoing complaints received during 2008/09 will be reported on in 2009/10 Annual Report.

Stage 2 Complaints - Response Times including investigations from 2007/08 completed in 2008/09:

District Timescale	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	Total
Investigation concluded within 25 days	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investigation concluded within 65 days with agreement to extend timescale	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Investigation concluded outside of timescale	-	2	-	1	1	2	1	-	1	8
Total	-	2	-	1	1	3	1	-	1	9

Stage 2 - Response Times of investigations received and completed during 2008/09:

District Timescale	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	Total
Investigation concluded within 25 days	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investigation concluded within 65 days with agreement to extend timescale	1	1	-	-	-	1	3	1	1	8
Investigation concluded outside of timescale	-	1	2	4	3	3	1	-	2	16
Total	1	2	2	4	3	4	4	1	3	24

Reasons for delay include: The availability of staff due to annual leave and sickness absence. The diversion into other procedures, such as disciplinary procedures or 'access to files' and the complexity and length of complaints and numbers of parties involved; also the associated delays in getting a formal response.

Stage 2 - Outcome from areas of Complaint including investigations from 2007/08 completed in 2008/09:

A total of **166** individual areas of complaint were investigated and outcomes are as follows:-

Outcome \ District	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	<u>Total</u>
Not Upheld	1	4	4	11	2	29	11	-	-	62
Upheld	-	15	3	32	6	15	4	3	2	80
Partially Upheld	-	-	2	3	2	6	5	-	-	18
Unable to make finding	-	1	-	1	-	4	-	-	-	6
Total	1	20	9	47	10	54	20	3	2	<u>166</u>

Stage 2 - Area of Complaint – Areas of Complaint by District

Area of Complaint	District	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	<u>Total</u>
Service Issues <i>Eg. Lack of, Standard of, delays etc</i>		1	16	-	18	9	28	7	1	1	81
Staff Conduct <i>Eg. Attitude, Action, Abuse etc</i>		-	-	7	7	2	16	9	-	-	41
Information Issues <i>Eg. Poor communication, delay in receiving information, etc</i>		-	6	1	6	2	4	3	2	-	24
Financial Issues <i>Eg. Charging issues, Direct Payments process, etc</i>		-	-	-	7	-	5	-	-	1	13
Adult Protection process		-	-	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	6
Data Protection issues <i>Eg. Access to Record, Breach of Confidentiality</i>		-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	3
Complaints Process <i>Eg. Access, delay, information etc</i>		-	3	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	5
Policy Related issues <i>Eg. Charging Policy, Change of Policy, etc</i>		-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
External Factors <i>Eg. Lack of Agency Capacity, Lack of Placements, etc</i>		-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Total		1	25	11	45	14	55	20	3	2	<u>176*</u>

* Some complaints may have multiple categories applied.

Stage 2 – Recommendations/Remedies from Complaints by District

District	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	<u>Total</u>
Remedies/ Recommendation										
Review, reinforce or develop new Procedure/Practice	-	8	5	10	1	11	6	2	1	44
Apology Offered	1	8	5	8	5	7	3	3	2	42
Further explanation or info provided	-	1	-	-	-	10	-	1	-	12
Improved Communication	-	4	-	2	1	1	1	-	-	9
Meeting or review	-	3	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	7
Review, reinforce or develop new Policy	-	1	-	3	-	2	1	-	-	7
Reimbursement for arrears or monies	-	-	-	2	-	2	1	-	-	5
Reassessment	-	1	-	-	3	-	1	-	-	5
Share findings of report	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Compensation	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	1	4
Staff training	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	3
Mediation	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Adjustment/review of Care Plan	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	3
Time & trouble payment	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
Charges waived/reduced	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2
Access to files	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Financial review/audit accounts	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
Staff de-brief	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	2
Risk Assessment	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Monitor	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Correct records on file	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Review literature/information	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Social worker allocated	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Unsubstantiated/Unfounded/No evidence	-	2	4	4	2	22	9	-	-	43
Total	2	35	14	38	14	61	30	7	5	<u>206</u>

8. STAGE 3 COMPLAINTS – COMPLAINTS REVIEW PANEL

There were **11** requests made by Complainants for Stage 3 Complaints Review Panel this year. This compares with **7** requests last year. **4** requests related to complaints received during 2007/08 and **1** complaint which was received during 2006/07.

Of the 11 Review Panel requests made in 2008/09:

6 Panels were held;

1 Panel is currently being convened;

1 Panel has been deferred due to legal proceedings;

1 Panel request is pending resolution;

2 Panels have been arranged for 2009/10 and findings from those Panels will be reported on in next year's report.

Timescales relating to statutory social services Stage 3 complaints include:

- A Complaints Review Panel should be established within 30 days. For the **6** Panel's held during 2008/09 reporting year none of the Panels were arranged within 30 days. Delays were due to unavailability of the complainant, Panel Members and staff involved in the Panel.
- The Panel is required to produce a report within 5 working days detailing its findings, but local procedures state that Panel papers would be produced within 24 hours of the Panel and this happened in all of the **6** Panels held.
- Of the **6** Panels held, **1** received a response within 15 days of the Panel's report. The local authority is required to send a response within 15 days of the Panel's report.

Stage 3 - Complaints by Service Area, Timescales and Outcome

Complaint Received	District	No. of Panels	Service Unit	Setting up Panel Within 30 day timescale)	Panel report produced (5 day timescale)	Council Response (15 day timescale)
2006/07	Staffs Moorlands	1	Community Mental Health Team	-	1	1
2007/08	Stafford	1	Community Living – Older Persons - Residential	-	1	-
	South Staffs	1	Community Living – Home Care Provision	-	1	-
	Stafford	1	Community Mental Health Team	-	1	-
2008/09	Newcastle	1	Wellbeing Disability Team	-	1	-
	Stafford	1	Wellbeing Older Peoples Team	-	1	-
Total				-	6	1

9. Social Care & Health Corporate Complaints

The definition of a Corporate complaint is:

“a member of the public makes a complaint about service Staffordshire County Council provides which they are not directly in receipt of”

The following information provides statistical analysis for the number of complaints received and investigated under the Corporate Complaints Procedure.

Stage 1 of the Corporate Complaints Procedure

Service Type

District Service Type	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	Total
Joint Finance Unit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
Well-being Older People	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Day Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Community Mental Health Team	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
District Enablement Team	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Well-being Disability Team	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Administration	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Community Ambulance Transport	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total	-	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	4	<u>11</u>

Person making the complaint:

Complainant \ District	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	<u>Total</u>
Not a Service User	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	3	5
Relative	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	2
Solicitor	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Registered Manager	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Carer	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Independent Case Manager	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	-	1	1	1	-	1	2	1	5	<u>11</u>

*This includes two complaints which were considered and responded to directly at Stage 3

Ethnic Origin of Complainant by District:

Ethnicity of Complainant \ District	Cannock	East Staffs	Lichfield	Newcastle	South Staffs	Stafford	Staffs Moorlands	Tamworth	Strategic Centre	<u>Total</u>
White British	1	1	-	1	-	1	1	1	1	7
Unknown/Unseen	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	4
Total	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	4	<u>11</u>

Response timescales

Of the **9** complaints considered at Stage 1 of the Corporate Complaints procedure **4 (36.4%)** were responded to within the 15 working day timescale. The remaining **7 (63.6%)** were outside of the timescale.

Stage 2 of the Corporate Complaints Procedure

No complaints were considered at Stage 2 under the Corporate Customer Feedback Procedure during 2008/09.

Stage 3 of the Corporate Complaints Procedure

2 complaints progressed to Stage 3 of the corporate customer feedback procedure and were not upheld as both complaints related to Charging Policy issues. Both complaints were responded to by the Corporate Monitoring Officer following escalation from Stage 1, both complaints were Not Upheld.

Both complainants had received a response from the Deputy Corporate Director at Stage 1.

10. Ombudsman complaints and enquiries.

It is documented in the Ombudsman's Annual letter that the number of 'premature' complaints the Ombudsman received this year is significantly below the national figures, this indicates the Complaints Procedure is easily accessible to service users.

The Local Government Ombudsman's Office received **8** complaints/enquiries during 2008/09 relating to adult and social care services compared to **12** the previous year.

1 complaint was premature and referred the complainant back to the Local Authority for the complaints to be considered via the statutory procedure in the first instance.

1 was settled by offering advice to the complainant.

2 complaints are ongoing and a decision is yet to be reached at the time of producing this report.

Decisions taken on **6** complaints relate to complaints received by the Local Government Ombudsman during 2007/08.

The Ombudsman had reached a decision on **10** of the complaints with the following outcomes:-

2 complaints was settled by offering a local settlement

3 complaints were resolved by way of the Local Government Ombudsman exercising its discretion.

5 complaints were found to have no evidence of maladministration or injustice.

No complaints were subject to formal report.

Corporate Complaints

1 Corporate complaint was considered by the Local Government Ombudsman but the Local Government Ombudsman's Office decided there was no evidence to substantiate a further investigation against the Council.

11. Percentage escalation

The following table indicates how many complaints have escalated from Stage 1 to Stage 2 and how many have progressed from Stage 2 to Stage 3. By measuring these figures as a percentage we are to gauge customer satisfaction with our responses to their complaints.

	Adults & Older People's Services		Corporate Complaints Procedure	
	2008/09	2007/08	2008/09	2007/08
Stage 1 to Stage 2	16 (8%)	16 (10%)	0	2 (33%)
Stage 2 to Stage 3	11 (37%)	7 (22%)	0	1 (17%)
Stage 1 to Stage 3	0	0	2 (18%)	0

12. Expenditure

There are ongoing costs attached to delivering an effective complaints service for the Department. These costs should be seen against the inherent costs of not providing this service (users will continue to be dissatisfied if there was no complaints procedure or team, but the Directorate would not have a strategic approach and there would be fewer opportunities for resolution).

The Complaints Service has a total responsible officer budget of £310,970 of which £278,200 is for employees and their associated costs and a further £32,770 represents the Independent Persons budget which is used for employing Independent People to oversee investigations; external investigators and a variety of miscellaneous expenses such as printing and maintenance of the RESPOND database. This expenditure is for both Adult and Children's services. 2009/10 will see the disaggregation of the budget in line with the staffing changes.

Cost of delivering stages:

Stage 2	£
Independent Investigating Officers costs (average per investigation)	1,510
Stage 3	£
Review Panellists' Expenses	1,745
Independent Investigating Officers costs for attendance at Panel	280
Complainants' Expenses	0
Stage 3 Total	2,025
Total	£3,535

13. Alternative Dispute Resolution

The complaints service has embraced the principles of ADR and will explore the approach with complainants wherever possible. The most popular option is mediation, an intervention where a third party helps the parties reach a new, common understanding. It gives space to resolve issues, preserve ongoing relationships and time to defuse or calm heightened situations.

During 2008/09 a total of **3** complaints were formally resolved by way of mediation. However, the Complaints Service actively mediate throughout the process by attending meetings or via the telephone in order to achieve positive outcomes and resolutions to complaints.

14. Learning Lessons and Themes

Complaints provide senior managers with useful information in respect of the way that services are delivered. Each Complaint report makes recommendations to the service about how they can resolve the complaint and also raises recommendations for improvements. Where identified, recommendations are also considered at local Management meetings, District Director's meetings and Performance meetings to ensure county-wide consideration. Some recommendations are being taken forward as part of wider service reviews.

In addition to service improvements made following Stage 1 complaints detailed earlier in this report, 2008/09 saw a number of recommendations made following Stage 2 complaint investigations. As the Directorate moves closer towards partnership working with Health agencies and the increased use of commissioned services from the independent sector, a number of complaints have highlighted cross boundary issues. Therefore a number of joint working protocols and development work has taken place via the information sharing forums and meeting networks already in place.

In recognition of the need to ensure we are safeguarding service users within the independent sector, where the Local Authority is aware and involved in any arrangements, the Complaints Service have been involved in the development of a joint protocol with the Joint Commissioning Unit and Safeguarding Co-ordinator to ensure information concerning current complaints and vulnerable adult procedures are shared and any action taken is agreed and followed up accordingly.

Some examples:-

- ❑ **The development of a collective protocol with all Independent Sector Domiciliary Care Agencies with whom the Local Authority contracts with for non-response calls to enable a consistent approach.**

The development of minimum standards for all Independent Sector Agencies taken forward by the Joint Commissioning Unit at the Domiciliary Care Operational Partnership Group.

- ❑ **The development of a county-wide protocol for the transfer processes relating to Continuing Health Care and Ordinary Residence rules.**
- ❑ **In addition to the above, the requirement for one professional to be identified at the initial review meeting as a key worker to accept responsibility for communicating with family members.**

- ❑ **In addition to the above, the development of a protocol regarding the lead agency taking responsibility for a service user with an illness or disability which does not fit current service remits**

The above recommendations/issues were taken forward via the Continuing Health Care Group Meeting.

- ❑ **In addition to the above, the development of a protocol regarding the lead agency taking responsibility for a service user with an illness or disability which does not fit current service remits.**
- ❑ **Improved information for service users concerning the parameters of service provision. In particular, what the Council and its contracted service can and cannot do.**
- ❑ **Recommendation for the development of a formal policy to assist in the determination of personal allowances for people who still live at home and who have access to their funds frozen.**
- ❑ **Poor Stage 1 complaint handling and issues around access to the complaints process and information**

Continued roll out of training programme during 2008/09 in relation to complaint handling by way of briefings and ad-hoc events, targeting Managers and Support staff and all new staff. Events have proven successful in raising profile of the Team and the development of specific training material for staff groups including a staff toolkit and responding framework. It is also being reviewed as part of the new staff Induction Pack as part of organisational learning. Customer feedback can also feature as a standing item on Team Meeting and Management Meeting agendas.

- ❑ **Poor Communication with service users, staff and other agencies**

A number of complaints highlighted poor or lack of communication with service users, their carers or agencies. In order to improve communication generally with key stakeholders Managers were required to reinforce this via supervision sessions with staff members concerned and remind staff via team meetings.

15. Other Activity

General Enquiries

In addition to the recording and administering of Statutory and Corporate complaints, the Complaints Service have formally acknowledged and monitored an additional **42** enquiries each requiring redirection to other organisations/authorities or action into other procedures.

Domiciliary Care Complaints

A total of **19** complaints about private sector domiciliary care agencies were received directly by the Complaints Service during 2008/09 when compared to **12** last year. The increase is directly attributable to the greater use of contracted domiciliary care services. All complaints were acknowledged and passed to the agency for consideration and response under their own complaints procedure in the first instance. The Joint Commissioning Unit, Care Quality Commission (previously Commission for Social Care Inspection) and District Social Work Team are alerted to the complaint to ensure appropriate action can be taken if necessary. **1** complaint directly entered Stage 2 of the Statutory Complaints Procedure this was due to the seriousness of the issues being raised and the proportionate response required for the complaints being raised.

A joint protocol has been developed between the Complaints Service, Joint Commissioning Unit and Safeguarding Co-ordinator also for information sharing across the organisation regarding complaints and concerns about contracted providers. This is to ensure we are all safeguarding service users effectively and to ensure all departments take an appropriate role in dealing with and resolving concerns and complaints about contracted providers.

16. Service Approach for 2009/10

Aim	Target / detail
Implement the new integrated Complaints procedure.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Procedure ratified by DLT by August 2009<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Incorporate explicit working arrangements between safeguarding and contracted services.b. Strengthen arrangements for organisational learning
Promote early and effective resolution to complaints.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Mediation training attended by Complaints service staff (grade 9 and above). By June 20092. Provide training to all managers required to address complaints at Local Resolution. (By October 2009)
Review all existing and associated publicity in light of New regulations, Access, EIA, customer care and safeguarding requirements.	July 2009 (To accompany procedure for ratification)

*Mick Patten/Kate Bullivant
Complaints Services Manager
June 2009*