

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT FOR CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

19th NOVEMBER 2013

SOCIAL SERVICES QUARTERLY COMPLAINTS REPORT 1st July 2013 – 30th September 2013

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides the Corporate Parenting Board with an overview of the operation and effectiveness of the statutory Social Services complaints procedure between **1st July 2013 – 30th September 2013**.
- 1.2 The report contains information on the number of complaints received, the nature of the complaints and any lessons learnt as well as detailing councilor, A.M and M.P enquiries and the number of compliments received.
- 1.3 As an attachment to the Complaints Quarterly Report is a summary provided by the Welsh Governments Independent Complaints Secretariat of comparative figures from each Local Authority in Wales. The figures show the number of complaints dealt with by each Local Authority at Stage 2 and those that progressed to Stage 3. Whilst the comparison does not indicate the total number of complaints received it provides an indication of how well Local Authorities effectively manage complaints at Stage 1 and 2 thus avoiding them escalating to Stage 3. The total number of complaints for 2011/12 relating to children's services was 77 with only 2 progressing to the next Stage both of which were resolved successfully.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Corporate Parenting Board note the contents of the report and the work undertaken by the Complaints Unit.

3. Background

- 3.1 It is a statutory requirement under the following items of new recently issued legislation for local authorities to have in place a complaints and representations procedure for Social Services:
 - i). Representation Procedure [Children][Wales] Regulations 2005
 - ii). Social Services Complaints Procedure [Wales] Regulations 2005
- 3.2 Each local authority that provides social services is required to produce an annual report relating to the operation of its complaints and representations procedure.

3.3 The statutory complaints procedure Social Services has three stages:

Stage One: Local Resolution – The emphasis at this stage of the process is to resolve the complaint by means of discussion and problem solving, whilst adhering to the 10 working days response time that has been imposed under the Regulations.

Stage Two: Investigation – If the complainant remains dissatisfied after completion of Stage One, they may request that the complaint proceeds to Stage Two of the process. This involves a formal investigation of the complaint with a report being produced by the investigating officer appointed to the case. The timescale for dealing with this stage is 25 working days.

Stage Three: Review Panel – Similarly, if the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage Two, they may request a review panel. The panel consists of 3 people, independently appointed by the Welsh Assembly Government. The focus of the panel is to consider the administration of the complaints process, rather than reinvestigate the complaint.

Rhondda-Cynon-Taf County Borough Council
Adult and Children's Social Services

Representation and Complaints Unit

2nd Quarterly Report

1st July – 30th September 2013

Summary – Children’s Services

2nd Quarter 2013/14

Informal Complaints

Total Number = 21

**Informal Complaints made by
Parents/adults** = 20
Concluded = 13

**Informal Complaints made by
Children/advocates** = 1
Concluded = 0

Received via Corporate Scheme
Early years = 5
Assessment Care = 1
Management

Formal Complaints

Total Number = 0

Representations

Total Number = 0

Compliments = 10

Appeals = 0

MP/AM enquiries

Total number = 6

Councillor enquiries

Total number = 2

Previous Quarter

Informal Complaints

Total Number = 33

**Informal Complaints made by
parents/adults** = 30
Concluded = 28

**Informal Complaints made by
children/advocates** = 3
Concluded = 3

Received via Corporate Scheme
Early Years = 1
LAC = 1

Formal Complaints

Total Number = 2

**Number made by parents
/adults** = 2

Representations

Total Number = 1

**Number made by parents
/adults** = 1

Compliments = 5

Appeals = 2

MP/AM enquiries

Total number = 5

Councillor enquiries

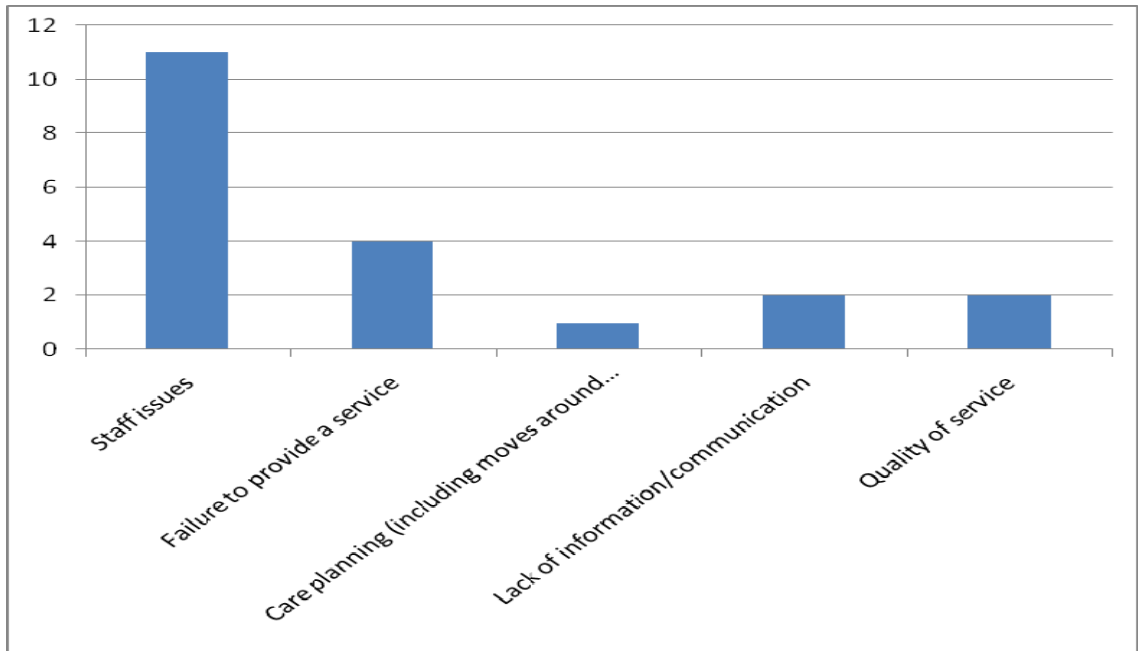
Total number = 1

Children and Young People

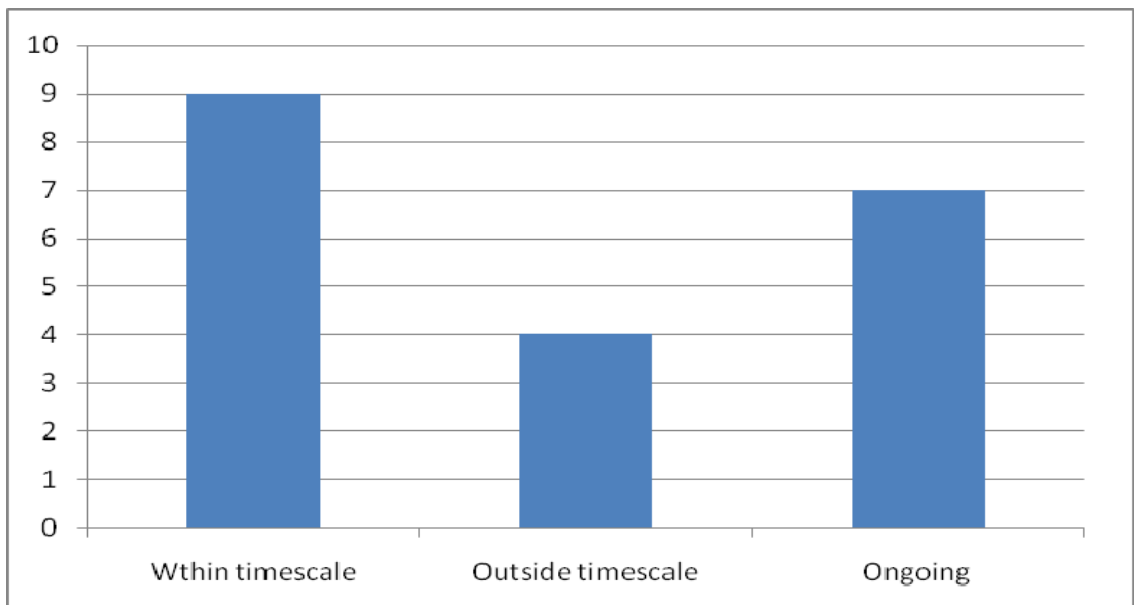
Informal complaints made by Parents/Adults

Total = 20

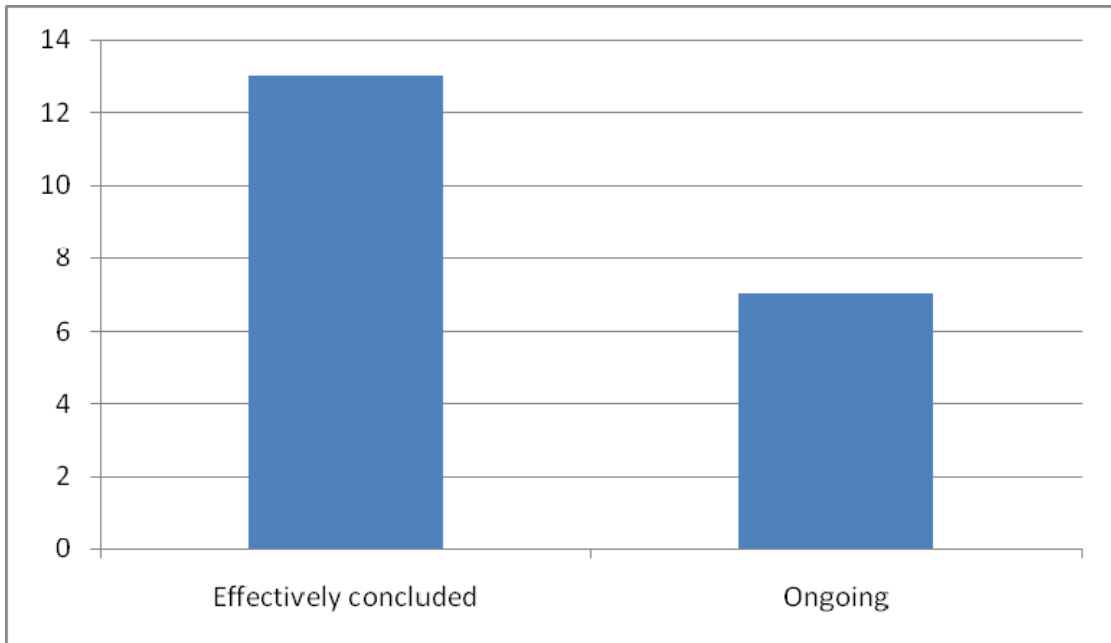
Reasons for complaints



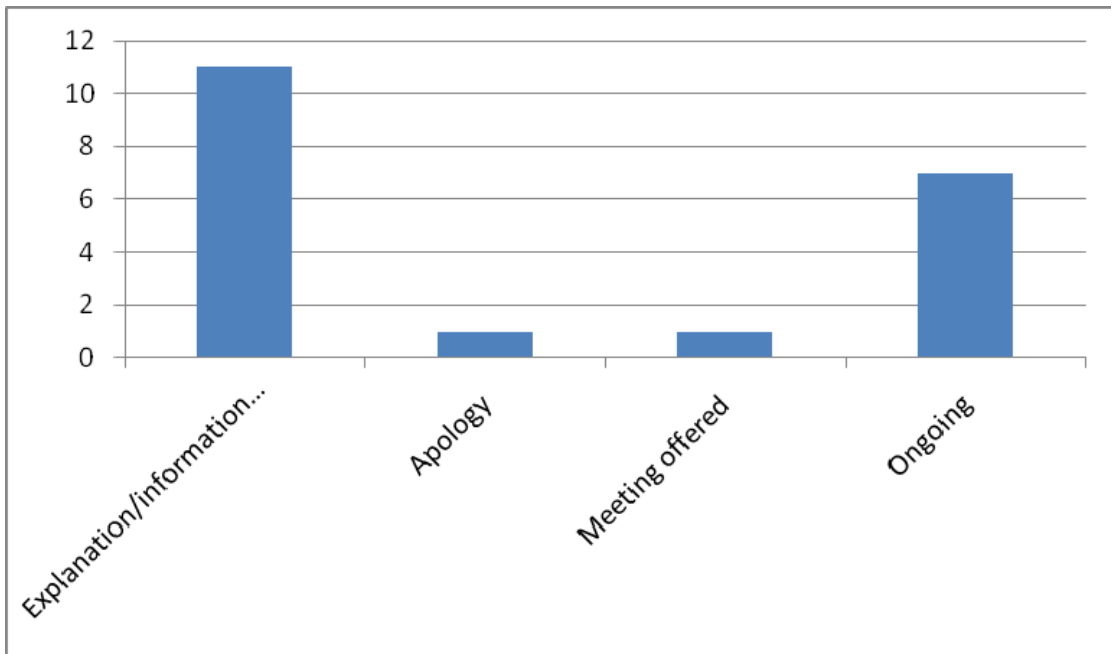
Timescales for complaints



Effectively concluded



Responses provided



Informal complaints made by Parents/Adults**Total = 20****Section areas**

Assessment Care Planning = 19

LAC = 1

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Code of outcome
Complaining about the attitude of SW who she feels is exerting undue pressure on her and her family. Also unhappy with communication with TM which she feels is awkward.		Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Cynon	Parent	Ongoing
Complaining that the Council initially refused to assess his son for services as he was not considered eligible. He feels the eligibility criteria is discriminatory and that a number of criteria 'scored' within his son's assessment were incorrect.	TM agreed there is a gap in provision of services for YP with high functioning Aspergers - this is being raised with senior managers. Description of the criteria/tools used in undertaking the assessment.	Assessment and Care Planning	Disabled Children's Team	Parent	Explanation/information provided
Complaining that he has contacted the team raising concerns about the safety of his children, but that his concerns are being disregarded. Also feels initial assessment is biased towards his ex-partner.	TM has investigated and can find no evidence to support concerns raised in complaint. TM satisfied that information collated to date shows that the children are safe & well in their mother's care. Meeting held 29/09/13 to discuss further.	Assessment and Care Planning	Duty Taf	Parent	Explanation/information provided
Grandmother unhappy with the attitude of S.W. working with her daughter & grandchildren. She feels she has been rude, unprofessional and dismissive of problems faced by her daughter.	Service Manager felt L.A. has offered support in an attempt to ensure that the needs of each child are met through the new care plan. Apology offered if contact with Dept has left	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 3 Taf	Relative	Explanation/information provided

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Code of outcome
	complainant feeling concerned and opportunity offered to discuss further.				
Complaining that the SW has failed to see his son on 3 occasions. Also that his mother has taken him to Kent and that the SW would not tell him where they had gone. Feels his son is at risk.	SW did not share children's whereabouts at the request of ex-partner who had informed Dept of incidents of domestic violence. No concerns have been raised by agencies involved, although a referral has been made to new L.A. to provide advice/support.	Assessment and Care Planning	Duty Taf	Parent	Explanation/information provided
Complaining about the handling of her daughter & grandchildren's case which she feels has been influenced by a personal dislike from the Team Manager.	Service Manager has investigated. Team Manager felt that discussions held with the family had been very positive. Apology offered if complainant was made to feel disliked by Team Manager.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Cynon	Relative	Apology
Complaining that no one has visited to arrange contact with her sons. Also the boys have not had contact with each other. She would like to know why.		Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Cynon	Parent	Ongoing
Complaining that her daughter is being returned early from respite at Nantgwyn as she is becoming unsettled. She has advised staff how to deal with her when she gets upset/agitated but they still bring her home early meaning she is not getting a break.	Manager has investigated and found that staff have acted in line with risk assessment to use the management techniques for 15 mins, but that if they were unsuccessful S.U. would have to be returned home. An alternative respite placement	Assessment and Care Planning	Disabled Children's Team	Parent	Explanation/information provided

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Code of outcome
	has now been found				
Complaining about the attitude of the Social Worker and her Manager. Would like a change of Social Worker.	Explanation offered around S.W.s concerns regarding the levels of aggression displayed by complainant at conference. Explanation also as to why previous incidents needed to be discussed. Referral made to CMT to offer additional support at this time.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Cynon	Relative	Explanation/information provided
Unhappy that, after making arrangements, she has been told by SW that it is too soon to arrange an overnight stay for her son who is in care. Feels she is being bullied into not allowing her son to visit by the threat of Dept withdrawing services.	Meeting arranged 10/09/13 to discuss son's care plans, current contact arrangements and involving complainant in decision making in respect of any further plans/contact considerations.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Cynon	Parent	Meeting offered
Unhappy with behaviour of staff who she feels have been rude and not given her appropriate advice. Feels her son may be at risk and says that she has received no feedback or communication from Dept since he was placed in care.	Explanation of events provided around her son going to live with his aunt. Apology offered if complainant was upset by conversation with TM, but this was not the intention.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Taf	Parent	Explanation/information provided
Complaining that SW pressured her into signing documents which she hadn't been able to read. Also that the same member of staff had spoken inappropriately to her in relation to contact with	Explanation of events provided whereby the contract regarding her granddaughter residing with her daughter was read through and agreed by complainant.	Assessment Care Planning	Disabled Children's Team	Parent	Explanation/information provided

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Code of outcome
her daughter & granddaughter.					
SW not keeping complainant informed of significant events concerning his daughter, not discussing the issue of potential carers, also the issue of contact with his daughter.	Info provided re:contact - complainant often does not attend, also information has been shared via PLO meetings. A further PLO meeting is due to be held to look at longer term planning. It was noted that solicitors have been present at all PLO meetings.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Taf	Other professional	Explanation/information provided
Complaining that SW placed her granddaughter with her aunt despite her having 3 other children to look after including a child with autism. When raising this, the family were told that it was not their concern.	Explanation of events provided, as both her daughter and granddaughter were happy with the arrangement it was agreed that she would stay for the weekend and that a meeting would then be arranged to explore placement issues.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 3 Taf	Relative	Explanation/information provided
Complaining that information included in a Section 37 Report for Court is inaccurate and has blackened his name. He feels it is unfair that no-one has approached him for his view or input into the report.	Whilst it was acknowledged that complainant states that some of the allegations on record are untrue, explanation was provided that background information held on Dept's records had to be included in the report for Court.	Assessment and Care Planning	Duty Cynon	Parent	Explanation/information provided
Complaining about how the reunification of her granddaughter with her parents was conducted. Also feels that the Dept are ignoring her		Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Rhondda	Relative	Ongoing

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Code of outcome
concerns that her granddaughter is at risk from being returned to her parents' care.					
Feels that Children's Services have ignored her concerns regarding her daughter's father and his family. She feels she is at risk.		Assessment and Care Planning	Duty Taf	Parent	Ongoing
Unhappy with information contained in report which she feels was negative & contained personal information which should not have been shared. Felt they should have had the opportunity to discuss findings of the report and would like to meet with TM & SW.		LAC	Foster care	Relative	Ongoing
Unhappy with time taken to respond to his request for assessment. Also unhappy with attitude of TM. Ultimately want to gain unsupervised access to his son.		Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Rhondda	Parent	Ongoing
Unhappy with attitude of SW. Also with the level of contact with her daughter and the way she is excluded from important events and appointments.		Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Rhondda	Parent	Ongoing

Informal complaints made by Children/Advocates Total = 1

There was just 1 complaint made by an advocate on behalf of a young person which relates to Care Planning (including moves around placements). This was for the Assessment Care Planning section and the complaint is still ongoing.

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Code of outcome
Boys feel that they are really settled at their current placement and have made good friends. They do not want to move to a new placement at Ynysybwl and feel it would 'wreck our lives'.		Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 3 Rhondda	Advocate	Ongoing

Informal Complaints received through Corporate Scheme Total = 6**Section areas**

Early Years

= 5

Assessment Care Planning

= 1

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Code of outcome
Unhappy that the Out of School Club at Evan James School is closing down.	Explanation provided that the outbuildings used by the group were condemned and no other suitable accommodation could be found.	Early Years	Out of school Club	Child	Explanation/information provided
Unhappy that the Out of School Club at Evan James School is closing down and querying if other venues have been considered.	Explanation provided that the outbuildings used by the group were condemned and no other suitable accommodation could be found.	Early Years	Out of school Club	Parent	Explanation/information provided
Unhappy that the Out of School Club at Evan James School is closing down. Also querying why there has been no consultation with the parents or children.	Thorough investigation of alternatives has taken time but parents were informed asap. Decision to close was made in the knowledge that there is an alternative provider on site providing after school care.	Early Years	Out of school Club	Parent	Explanation/information provided
Unhappy that the Out of	Thorough investigation of	Early Years	Out of	Parent	Explanation/in

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Code of outcome
School Club at Evan James School is closing down. Also querying why there has been no consultation with the parents or children.	alternatives has taken time but parents were informed asap. Decision to close was made in the knowledge that there is an alternative provider on site providing after school care		school Club		formation provided
Group of 6 parents unhappy that they will have to use the Flying Start provision at Cwlych Meithryn Nant Dyrys (2 miles away), when they have an adequate setting within walking distance at Cylch Meithryn Tynewydd.	Explanation provided that Cylch Meithryn Tynewydd did not submit tender to become a service provider. They will be invited to meet with Flying Start Manager in Sept to discuss the possibility of becoming an 'approved provider' under next tendering process	Early Years	Flying Start	Parent	Explanation/information provided
Complainant feels that L.A. have failed to provide a duty of care concerning a looked after child. Child/young person is in a sexual relationship with complainant's daughter who is 14 yrs old.		Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Rhondda	Public	Ongoing

There were no **Formal complaints** received from either parents/adults or children/advocates during this quarter.

There were no **Representations** received from either parents/adults or children/advocates during this quarter.

There were no **Appeals** against assessment received from either parents/adults or children/advocates during this quarter.

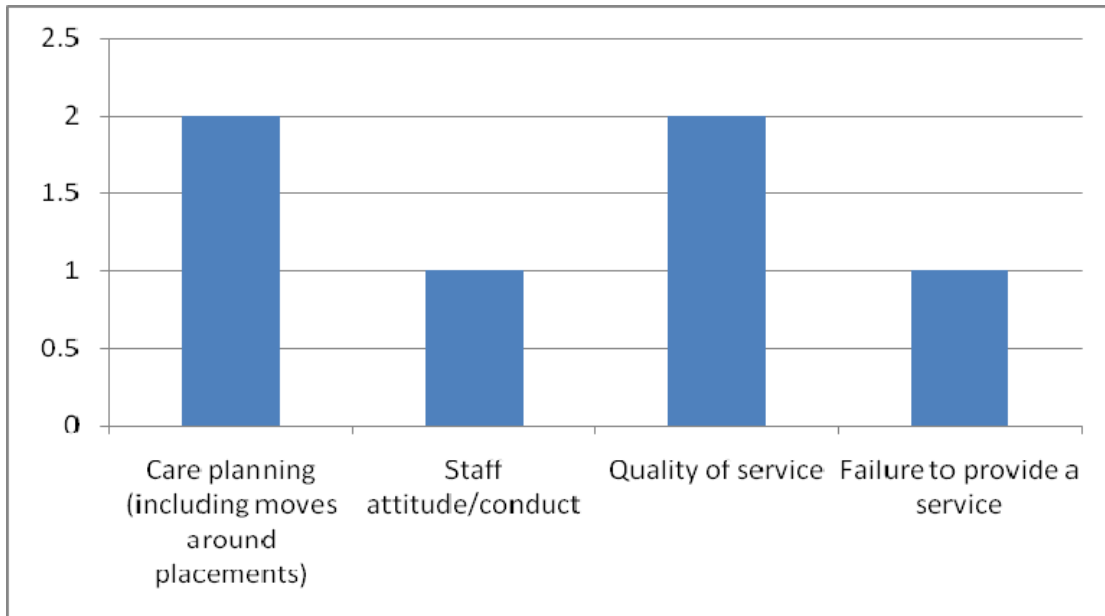
Compliments Total = 10**Service areas**

Early Years = 5 Training Unit = 1
 Assessment Care Planning = 4

Nature of Compliment	Team	Area
'Thank you so so much Sal for everything you have done...you are not only the best social worker but a miracle worker!'	Assessment and Care Planning Service	ACP2 Taf
'I just want to say how much I have appreciated the support I have received from Lyn, my assessor, and Charlotte (my IQA). Lyn has gone over and above what she needed to do and is looking in to other areas of support for me. If other foster carers knew what the support was like, more may come forward for the qualification. Both Charlotte and Lyn are very approachable and have offered different ways of supporting me as an individual.'	Training Unit	Heddfan
'You are the most down to earth and common sensical social worker that has been on board during this whole process and it's been a real pleasure to know you. You were clearly born to do this job and help others and I know you will go very far in child services.'	Assessment and Care Planning Service	ACP2 Taf
'The teachers, Karen, Kelly & Charlotte are wonderful people & teachers...they take the time to discuss any issues with parents and have excellent communication with the children.'	Early Years	Flying Start, Trealaw
'She has always been on hand for help, advice and support.'	Assessment and Care Planning Service	Children with Disabilities west
Regarding her son, 'He has learnt so much...He has learned to express himself and the time you have taken to observe, listen and nurture him is so valued.'	Early Years	Genesis Project
'I thought I would drop you an e-mail to say... how much I appreciated your support...last week a family in need benefitted from good working practice via a good multi agency approach.'	Early Years	Flying Start
Regarding Leanne Jones, Childcare worker, she wanted to say that she has consistently followed her advice and has implemented a programme of support which has led to visible progress. Her early liaison with the school will benefit the child on transition and the paperwork that she is keeping will contribute to the school's application for additional funding.	Early Years	Flying Start
Small gift of appreciation.	Early Years	Training Team
'She is caring, professional as are all the team, they are always helpful and pleasant when I ring.'	Assessment and Care Planning Service	ACP3 Rhondda

Member of Parliament/Assembly Member Enquiries

Reasons for enquiries



Total Number = 6

Service Areas

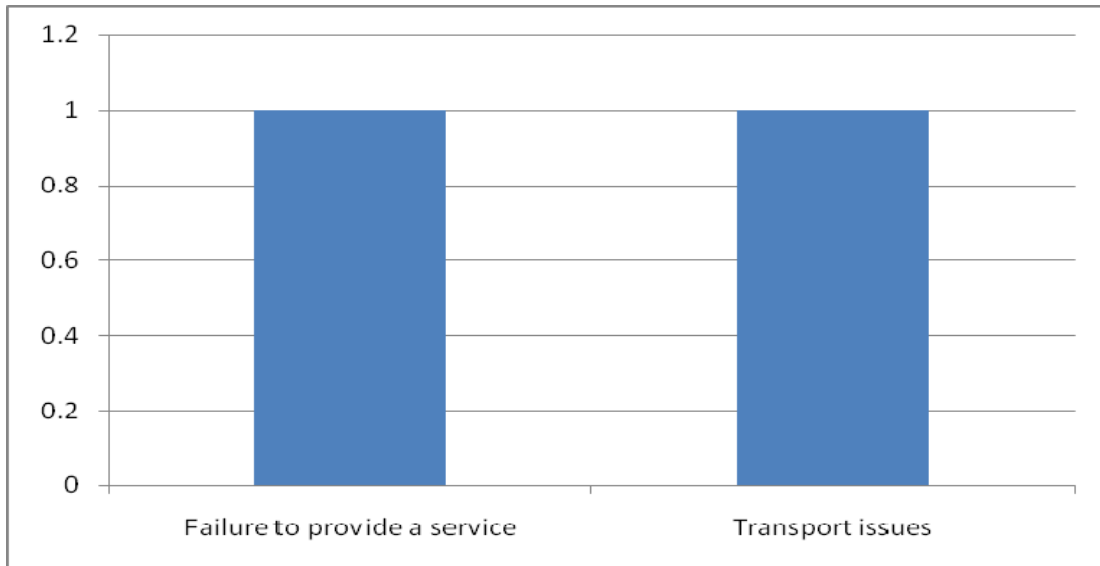
Assessment Care Planning = 5 Looked After Children = 1

Name of MP/AM	Detail of enquiry	Action taken	Effectively concluded	Service area	Code of enquiry
Chris Bryant	Constituents want an explanation why their grandchild was placed with her maternal grandparents and not them.	Constituent & their son were assessed as part of the court proceedings. Unfortunately there were issues around the son's drug use and so the assessment was halted. Extra contact for grandparents is currently being considered.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Care Planning (including moves around placements)
Chris Bryant	Constituent unhappy with behaviour and treatment by staff involved with her daughter. She states that they	Constituent has previously complained about the same issues and has been advised that they are subject to Court Proceedings (copy of response enclosed).	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Staff attitude/conduct

Name of MP/AM	Detail of enquiry	Action taken	Effectively concluded	Service area	Code of enquiry
	treat her with contempt and do not listen to her.				
Ann Clwyd	Constituent unhappy with a Section 37 Report in respect of his daughter which he had no input into and which he feels blackens his name.	Constituent has made a complaint of the same nature as this enquiry. This is being considered and constituent will be responded to directly.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Quality of service
Ann Clwyd	Constituent unhappy that her son has been placed to live with his grandmother and that she is taking him on holiday without her permission.	Constituent's son lives with his grandmother at his request following difficulties at home. Permission was granted by court for her to take him on holiday. Dept are working towards improving relationships within the family.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Care Planning (including moves around placements)
Chris Bryant	Constituent unhappy that he & his wife have had their application to be foster parents turned down.	Constituent's application was refused due to past criminal convictions. There is an appeals process against this decision but it is unlikely that this would be successful due to convictions disclosed by the Criminal Records Bureau Check.	yes	Looked After Children	Quality of service
Owen Smith	Constituents requesting support for their son who has Asperger's Syndrome. They have previously been told that he does not meet eligibility criteria for service.	Son does not meet eligibility criteria for DCT, however, he has been referred to the Team Around the Family which will provide support to the family.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Failure to provide a service

Local Councillor Enquiries

Reasons for enquiries



Total number = 2

Service areas

Assessment Care Planning = 2

Name of MP/AM	Detail of enquiry	Action taken	Effectively concluded	Service area	Code of enquiry
Margaret Tegg	Constituent requesting a letter of support from his daughter's SW to assist him with finding a 2 bedroom property (to enable to apply for custody of his daughter).	Councillor Annette Davies to contact Councillor Tegg with regards input from Children's Services.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Failure to provide a service
Mark Adams	Constituent's son receives respite at Ash Square. On 2 occasions the arranged transport (Laser Cabs) has failed to collect him. Wants the previous company (Kay Cabs) to collect him	Passed to Corporate Transport to respond.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Transport

Analysis of customer feedback Questionnaires

Numbers of satisfaction questionnaires returned remained similar to the previous quarter (with 54% of them being returned).

Of those returned:

23% were satisfied with the outcome
62% were dissatisfied with the outcome
15% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

23% were satisfied with the way the complaint was handled
69% were dissatisfied with way the complaint was handled
8% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

Contacts

The Complaints Unit also dealt with 5 other contacts during this quarter.