

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**18 July 2014**

**SOCIAL SERVICES QUARTERLY COMPLAINTS REPORT  
1<sup>st</sup> April – 30th June 2014**

**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 **1<sup>st</sup> April – 30th June 2014**.
- 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 Councillor, 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**

**1st Quarterly Report CYP**

**1<sup>st</sup> April – 30th June 2014**

**Summary – Children’s Services****1st Quarter 2014/15****Informal Complaints**

Total Number = 14

**Informal Complaints made by  
Parents/adults = 14**

Concluded = 8

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

Concluded = 0

**Received via Corporate Scheme  
= 3****Formal Complaints**

Total Number = 1

**Representations = 1****Compliments = 13****Appeals (car badge) = 3****MP/AM enquiries**

Total number = 7

**Councillor enquiries**

Total number = 1

**Previous Quarter****Informal Complaints**

Total Number = 29

**Informal Complaints made by  
parents/adults = 26**

Concluded = 19

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

Concluded = 2

**Received via Corporate Scheme  
= 1****Formal Complaints**

Total Number = 0

**Representations = 0****Compliments = 8****Appeals (bus pass) = 0****MP/AM enquiries**

Total number = 4

**Councillor enquiries**

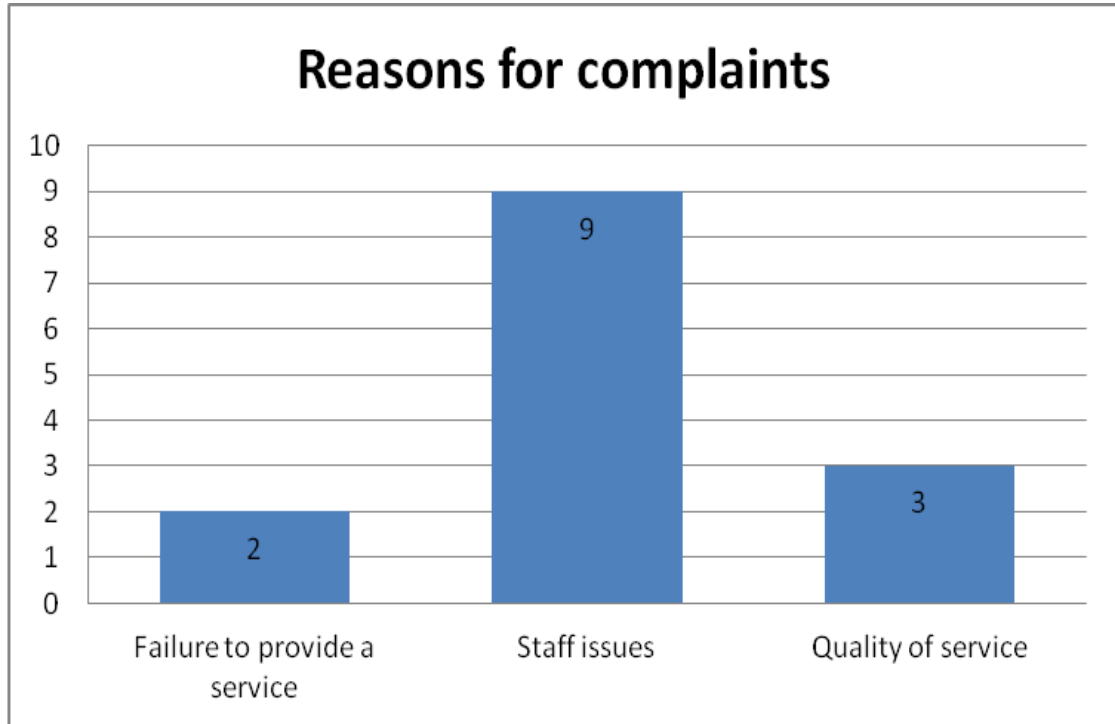
Total number = 0

## Children and Young People

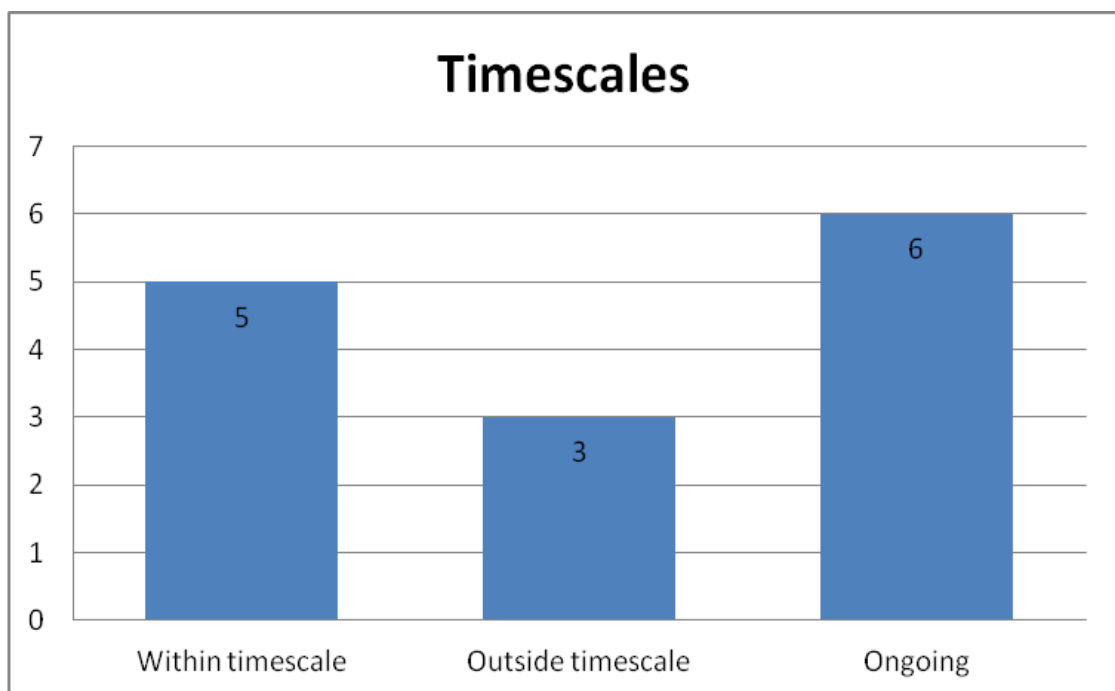
Informal complaints made by Parents/Adults

Total = 14

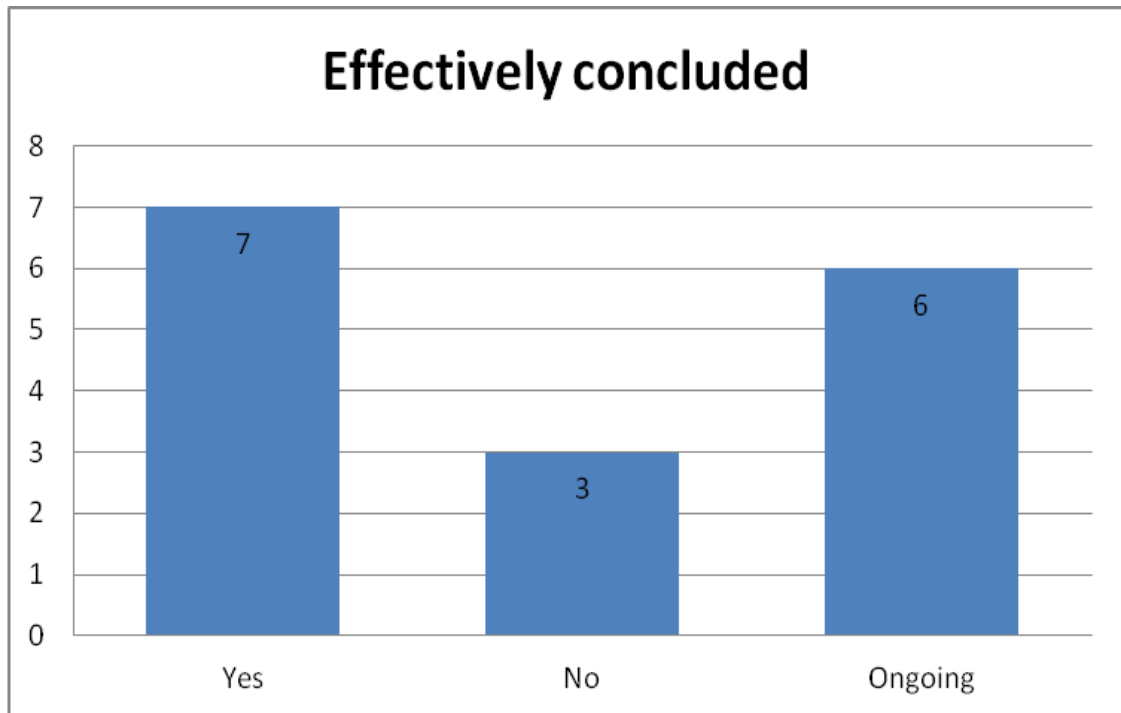
Reasons for complaints



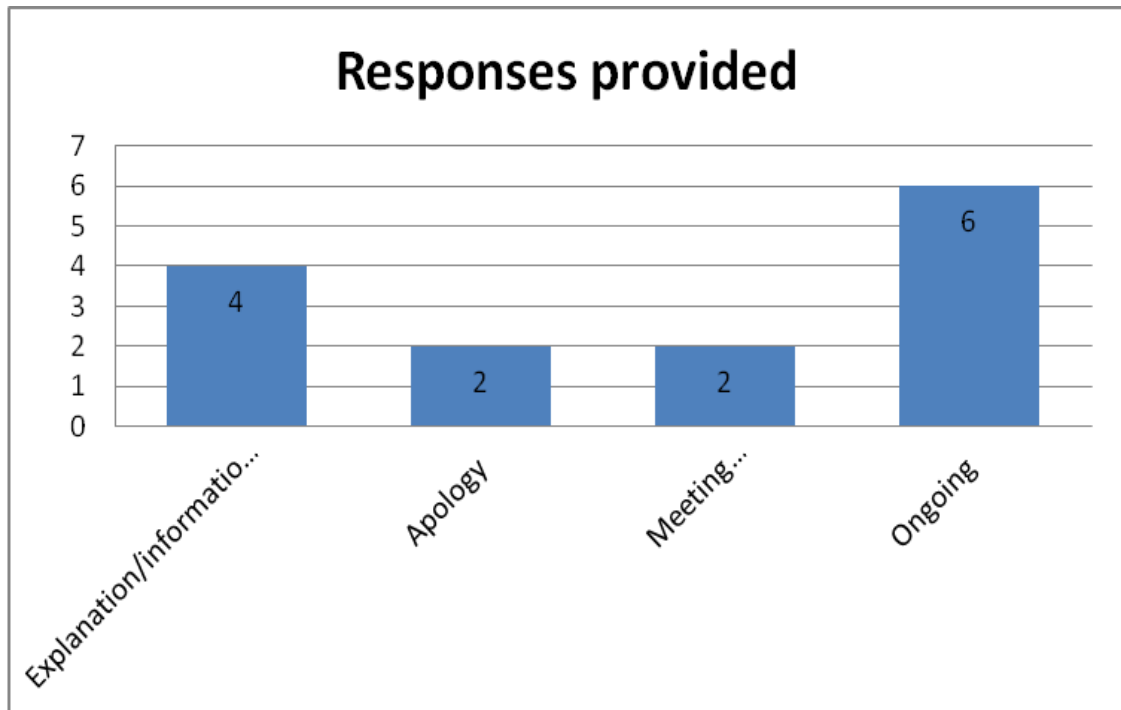
Timescales



### Effectively concluded



### Responses provided



**Informal complaints made by Parents/Adults****Total = 14****Section areas**

Assessment Care Planning = 14

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Code of outcome
Complaining that S.W. Is having a personal relationship with a party involved in his child's case which he feels is a conflict of interest.		Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Rhondda	Parent	<b>ONGOING</b>
Complaining about the delay in returning her child to her care and the impact this is having on the family.		Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Rhondda	Parent	<b>ONGOING</b>
Unhappy with Team Manager for her granddaughter's case who she feels is rude and lacking in compassion and understanding of people's circumstances.	Team Manager has discussed issues with complainant. She was offered a meeting but declined and stated that she felt the discussion had resolved the issues.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Rhondda	Relative	Meeting offered
Complaining that Children's Services are not carrying out the agreed conference recommendations with regards to his son having contact with his mother's current partner.		Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Taf	Parent	<b>ONGOING</b>
Claims to be excluded from planning and involvement with his son by his Social Worker.		Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Cynon	Parent	<b>ONGOING</b>
Complaining about how she is being treated by the S.W. who never returns her calls or is on leave. Feels excluded from planning for her daughter.	TM has investigated and feels that the SW has acted professionally. Delays around her daughter's planning have been unfortunate, but unavoidable. Complainant is able to contact SW urgently on her mobile or is able to speak to other staff in her absence.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Rhondda	Parent	Explanation/information provided

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Code of outcome
Unhappy with the Team Manager's comments/attitude towards him. Also says that he doesn't have regular updates regarding his children and that he is unclear as to what the SGO means.	Apology offered for any comment made by TM. Also explanation provided around the implications of SGO. Children's Services only visit the children every 3 months and so are unable to provide regular updates, however the carers have been asked to do so.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Taf	Parent	Apology
Feels S.W. Is not listening to them and that appropriate work & planning is not taking place.		Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 3 Cynon	Parent	<b>ONGOING</b>
Unhappy that his children have been placed on CPR, but the work recommended has not been carried out. This means he is unable to return to family home. Also there have been 4 changes of S.W.	Issues resolved; risk assessment completed to allow complainant to move back home and referral made to the Caring Dad's Programme.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 3 Cynon	Parent	Meeting offered
Unhappy with attitude of S.W. And T.M. Claiming that they have made false allegations about him being aggressive and verbally abusive.	SM has investigated and found that complainant appeared to act in an aggressive manner in person to SW and over the phone to the TM. Case has now been transferred to a different SW in an attempt to avoid any relationship difficulties for the sake of the c	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 3 Cynon	Relative	Explanation/information provided
Claims he is being discriminated against by Children's Services based on lies which his ex-partner has told about him. Says that this is being used against him in his court application for custody of his daughter.		Assessment and Care Planning	Duty Rhondda	Parent	<b>ONGOING</b>
Complaining that the	Report cannot be struck	Assessment	Duty	Adoptive	Explanation/in



Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Code of outcome
report of Child Protection Conference was inaccurate, inconsistent and factually incorrect.	out as the main body of report is accurate, however, TM will contact the Chair to ensure that complainant's concerns are noted in the summary.	and Care Planning	Rhondda	Parent	formation provided
Complaining that S.S. has written to his ex-partner asking questions about his contact with his children. He feels that she has provided false information which has had a negative effect on his contact arrangements. He wants an explanation & an apology.	Letter sent providing explanation and apology for error and distress caused. Unhappy with response, awaiting further contact from complainant.	Assessment and Care Planning	Duty Taf	Parent	Apology
Complaining that Children's Services had agreed to financially support them to look after their nephew as they needed to move to a larger house and buy a larger car. They have received no financial support to date.	Fostering service has provided financial support to decorate bedrooms and purchase bedding/bedroom equipment to help settle their nephew into their home. However, financial policy does not allow the provision of financial assistance to purchase vehicles.	Assessment and Care Planning	Foster care	Relative	Explanation/information provided

There were **no Informal complaints made by Children/Advocates** for this quarter.

There were 3 **Informal Complaints** received through Corporate Scheme for this quarter.

### Section areas

Early Years = 3

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Code of outcome
Complaining about the raise in fees for Penygawsi Day Nursery. Claims the costs of Council run nurseries are exceptionally high in comparison with other establishments. See Cllr contact CYP/189.	Council nurseries are non profit making and have been heavily subsidised. The Council is unable to continue subsidising nurseries at this level. Other childcare providers do not provide their staff with equivalent terms & conditions or levels of training.	Early Years	Day Nursery	Parent	Explanation/information provided
Complaining about the raise in fees for Penygawsi Day Nursery. Claims the cost of Council run nurseries are exceptionally high in comparison with other establishments.	Council nurseries are non profit making and have been heavily subsidised. The Council is unable to continue subsidising nurseries at this level. Other childcare providers do not provide their staff with equivalent terms & conditions or levels of training.	Early Years	Day Nursery	Parent	Explanation/information provided
Complaining about the raise in fees scheduled for this April. Claims the cost of Council run nurseries are exceptionally high in comparison with other establishments. 2nd letter rec'd 22/04/14.	Explanation provided that decision to increase fees by 7.3% was made by Council's Cabinet Committee on 19/03/14. 2nd letter sent 02/05/14 giving more depth explanation for need to raise cost of childcare provision in RCT.	Early Years	Day Nursery	Parent	Explanation/information provided

There was 1 **Formal complaint** received from parents/adults during this quarter.

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Code of outcome
Complaining that issues raised regarding their adoptive child's foster carer were not investigated.		LAC	Foster care	Adoptive Parent	<b>ONGOING</b>

There was 1 **Representation** received from parents/adults during this quarter.

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Code of outcome
Requesting a written apology for upset caused by S.W. regarding a misunderstanding around her son and an incident which was flagged up by a police a check.	TM provided written apology on behalf of her member of staff for any distress caused by her mistake.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Taf	Relative	Apology

There were 3 **Appeals** against assessment received from parents/adults during this quarter.

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Code of outcome
Appealing against decision not to issue a car badge.	Appeal unsuccessful. Does not meet the criteria for a Car badge.		Complaints Unit	Parent	Eligibility criteria not met
Appealing against decision not to issue a car badge.	Appeal unsuccessful. Does not meet the criteria for a Car badge.		Complaints Unit	Parent	Eligibility criteria not met
Appealing against decision not to issue a car badge.	Appeal successful. Car badge issued.	Assessment and Care Planning	Disabled Children's Team	Parent	Services arranged

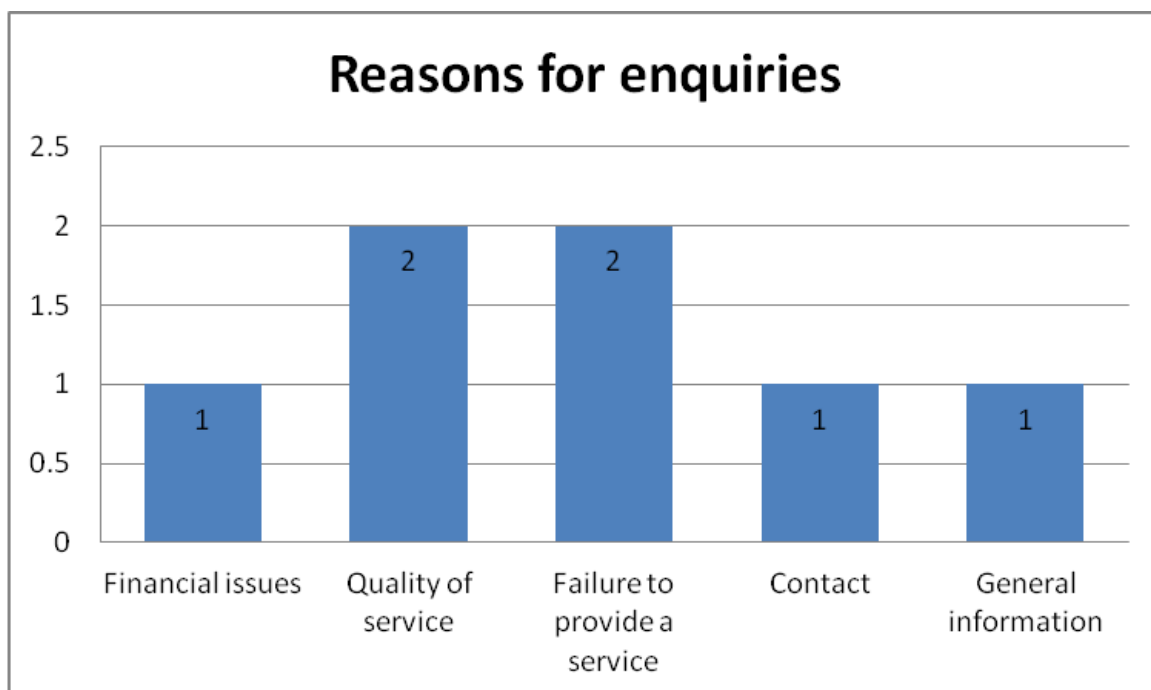
**Compliments****Total = 13****Service areas**

Early Years	= 4	Children with Disabilities	= 3
Assessment Care Planning	= 3	Foster Care	= 2
Business Support	= 1		

Nature of Compliment	Team	Area
'I can't thank you enough for putting together such an excellent and comprehensive programme for us. It was extremely valuable for us. You gave us such a good range of projects and settings to visit so it was an extremely constructive day for all of us. '	Early Years	Family Support
'I just wanted to pass on some positive feedback about Wendy, since joining the authority I have been impressed by her minute taking skills. The minutes are always presented to a high standard and I am aware the team share similar views. I feel she should be commended for this and her hard work. '	Business support	Cynon
'Jenny has kept us informed about everything throughout this placement'. 'Jenny has helped to prepare the children for the move very well'. 'I am very pleased with the introductions that have been put in place'.	Assessment and Care Planning Service	ACP Rhondda 1
Regarding an assessment carried out, 'This assessment was commended by the Judge and seen as 'very thorough...obviously taken a great deal of time and effort.' He went on to comment that 'it was a far more useful assessment than many others he had seen.'	Foster Care	
Stating that Belinda was a very impressive witnesses, who conducted herself very professionally and had an excellent knowledge of the application before the court.	Foster Care	
'It is also evidence of the continuing high quality service provided to parents and professionals throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf by the FIS team.'	Early Years	Family Information Service
'Jan Owen is an exceptional social worker, her commitment to getting both myself and NAME to get the right support and package of care was second to none.'	Children with Disabilities	
'thank you for your support help and guidance working with u I got to know u your caring understanding and dedicated and your strait talking and hands on approach was outstanding your a true roll modal to myself. '	Assessment and Care Planning Service	ACP Taf 3
'I am very lucky to have Helen Morris as my tutor, the support, guidance and commitment she has given to me to help me achieve this qualifications has been outstanding and I am very grateful to Helen.'	Early Years	Training
'I would like to take this opportunity to state that NAME's social worker has done an excellent job in working with her and her family. They have a very positive and mutually respectful relationship, and Ms Rees is able to advocate for NAME effectively. Ms Rees has also engaged very well with NAME's family members and enjoys a good working relationship with NAME. It is in no small way down to Ms Rees that such a positive outcome seems to have been achieved for NAME'.	Assessment and Care Planning Service	ACP Taf 2

Nature of Compliment	Team	Area
'Jan Owen is an exceptional social worker, her commitment to getting both myself and NAME to get the right support and package of care was second to none. As I am "in the trade" I have come across all sorts of good and bad social workers, Jan really deserves some recognition for how she helped me and my family get through the most dreadful eighteen months. '	Children with Disabilities	
'I would certainly recommend any families with a young child with autism to attend the Early Bird Course as I feel that it has been totally beneficial to our family and without it I don't feel that NAME would have developed to the level that he has today.'	Children with Disabilities	Early Bird Programme
As a volunteer she has 'gained so much experience through working with the girls at the setting and without the support and encouragement of the staff at the setting and my tutor I would not have achieved what I have today and I am so very grateful to them all.'	Early Years	Flying Start

### Member of Parliament/Assembly Member Enquiries



**Total Number = 7**

#### Service Areas

Assessment Care Planning = 6      Early years = 1

Name of MP/AM	Detail of enquiry	Action taken	Effectively concluded	Service area	Code of enquiry	Source
Ann Clwyd	Constituent is having problems re: her ex-partner's contact with her daughter. SW assured her that the problem would be resolved, however, she has now been told that the SW no longer has any concerns.	There have been no concerns raised about either party's care of their daughter. Both parents have been advised to consult legal representatives with regard to contact arrangements and have been given info on services which may be able to offer support.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Contact issues	Member
Chris Bryant	Requesting information regarding his	Background information provided. Parenting	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	General information	Member

Name ofMP/AM	Detail of enquiry	Action taken	Effectively concluded	Service area	Code of enquiry	Source
	constituent who is trying to get custody of his baby son.	assessment was undertaken and was negative resulting in an application to the court for an Interim Care Order.				
Mark Drakeford	Constituent claiming that concerns she has raised about the care of her grandchildren are not being taken seriously by Children's Services.	Magistrates Court has placed the grandchildren in the custody of their father. Child Protection investigation identified that there were no concerns around their care. Staff & key agencies continue to monitor their wellbeing.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Failure to provide a service	AM
Christine Chapman	Unhappy with response to his stage 1 CYP/665, feels there are still unanswered questions. Unhappy with accuracy of S.W. reports, also requesting assistance to arrange contact with his children.	Complaint was responded to and closed on 20/06/14. Complainants have 20 working days to request their complaint progress to Stage 2. It was felt that Constituent has had a reasonable period of time to express any dissatisfaction with the response.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Quality of service	AM
Chris Bryant	Constituent unhappy that her son is not receiving support from Dept, particularly re: his development. Also requesting assistance with the recommendation that she needs to replace carpet with flooring	High level of support is being provided by DCT. Issues raised are being addressed through regular Multi Agency meetings. Agreement has been made to fund wooden flooring, Dept is awaiting a quote from complainant.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Failure to provide a service	Member
Ann Clwyd	Unhappy with the	Constituent's	yes	Assessment	Quality of	Member

Name of MP/AM	Detail of enquiry	Action taken	Effectively concluded	Service area	Code of enquiry	Source
	way Social Services have intervened and handled her children's cases. Feels that this has caused her a lot of stress.	children have been included on the Child Protection Register and are now subject to a Multi Agency Child Protection Plan. It is hoped that she will continue to work with Children's Services to secure a positive outcome.		& Care Planning	service	
Owen Smith	Constituent unhappy with the % rise in care costs for Genesis Day Nursery which she feels is above inflation and higher than the cost of using a privately owned nursery.	Copy of complaints response forwarded for Cllr Hanagan which explains the increase in costs.	yes	Early years	Financial	Member

There was 1 **Local Councillor Enquiry** received for this quarter.

Name of MP/AM	Detail of enquiry	Action taken	Effectively concluded	Service area	Code of enquiry	Source
Sue Pickering	Constituent unhappy with the % rise in care costs for Genesis Day Nursery which she feels is above inflation and higher than the cost of using a privately owned nursery.	Copy of complaints response forwarded which explains the increase in costs.	yes	Early years	Financial	Councillor