

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT FOR CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

17th NOVEMBER 2014

**SOCIAL SERVICES QUARTERLY COMPLAINTS REPORT
1st July – 30th September 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 **1st July – 30th September 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 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. Recommendation

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 2014

Summary – Children’s Services**2nd Quarter 2014/15****Informal Complaints**

Total Number = 26

**Informal Complaints made by
Parents/adults = 25**

Concluded = 23

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

Concluded = 1

**Received via Corporate Scheme
= 0**

Formal Complaints

Total Number = 0

Representations = 1**Compliments** = 9**Appeals (car badge)** = 2**MP/AM enquiries**

Total number = 10

Councillor enquiries

Total number = 0

Previous Quarter**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 (bus pass)** = 3**MP/AM enquiries**

Total number = 7

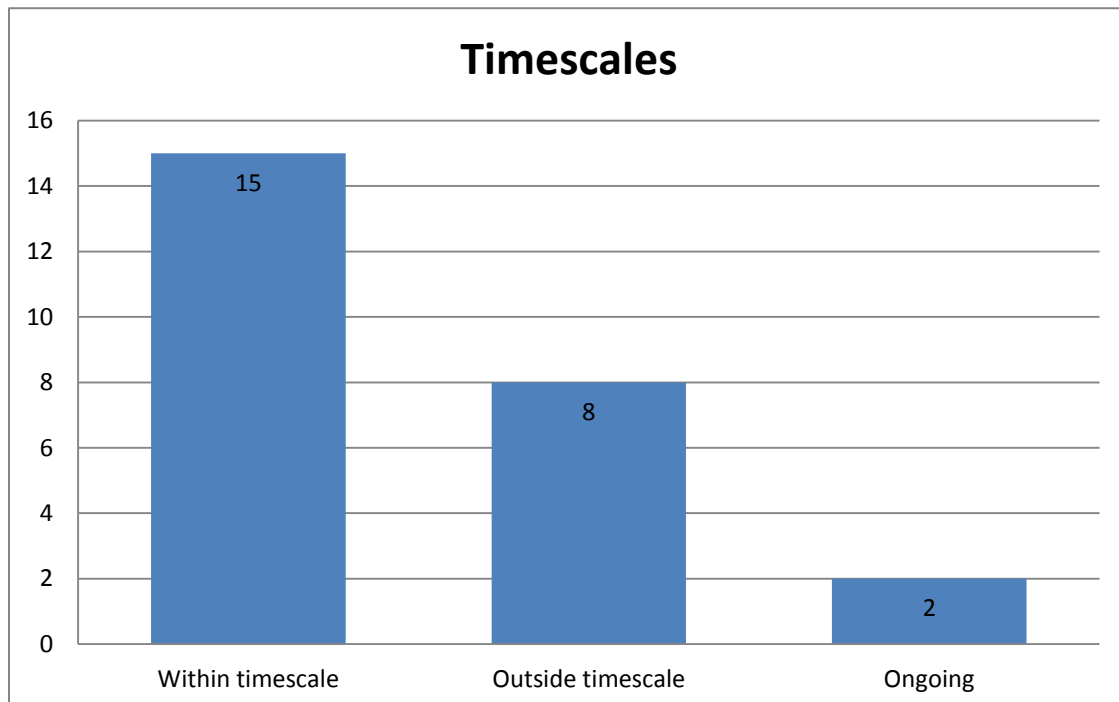
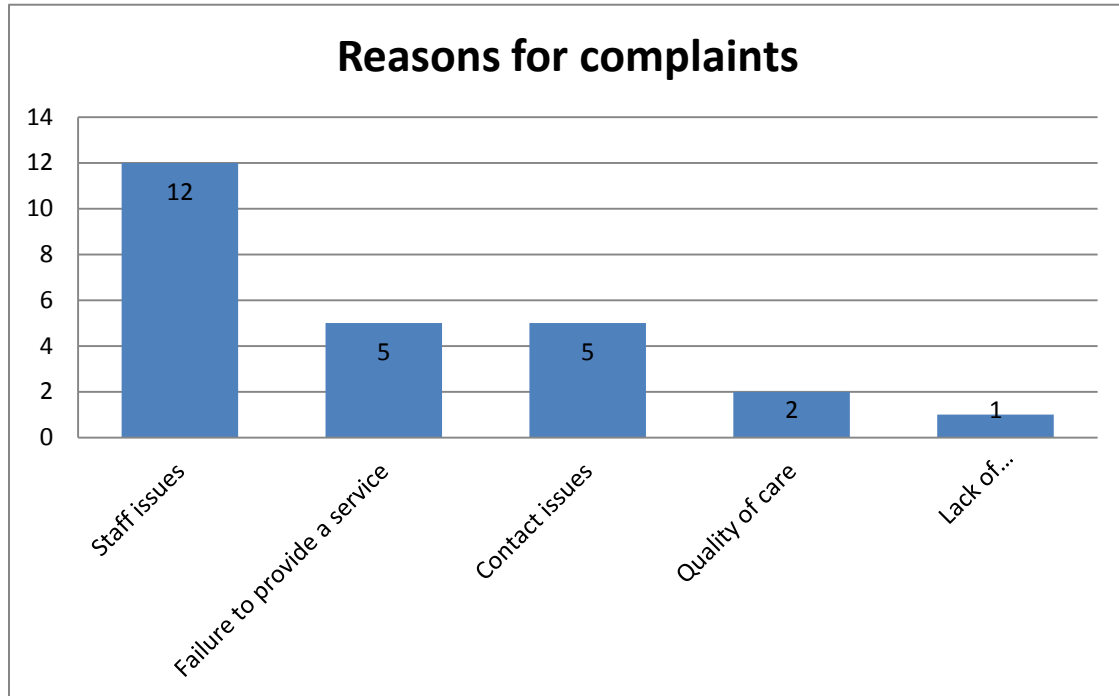
Councillor enquiries

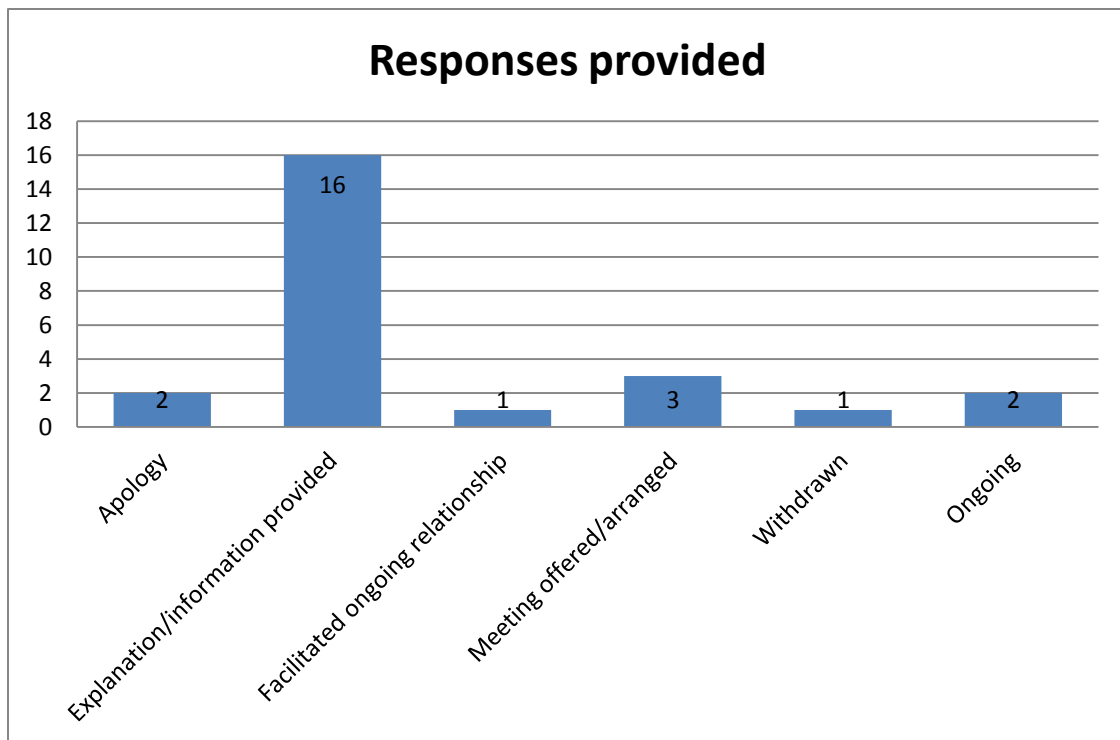
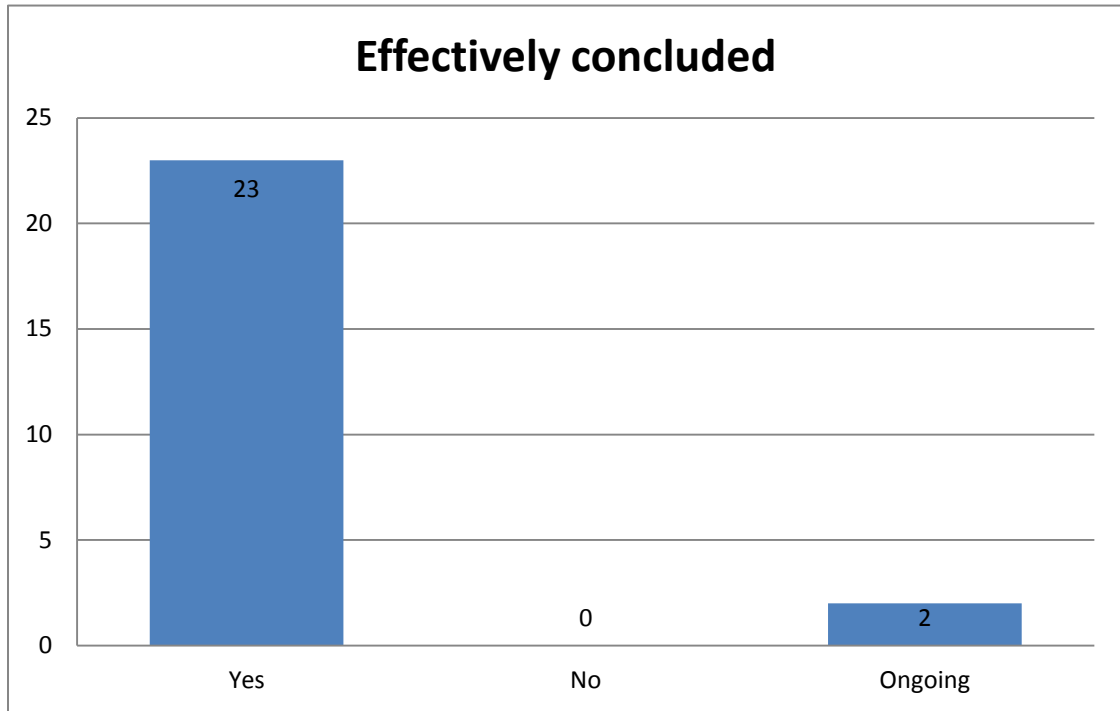
Total number = 1

Children and Young People

Informal complaints made by Parents/Adults

Total = 25





Informal complaints made by Parents/Adults**Total = 25****Section areas**

Assessment Care Planning = 24

Looked After Children = 1

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complain t source	Date rec'd	Code of outcome
Claims his son's S.W. has informed his workplace that both he & his son are a danger to others and as a result he has lost his job & his son has lost his placement.	It was the decision of the Safeguarding Board to contact complainant's employers following discussions with the Police and after taking legal advice. Arrangements now in place for him to continue his job. A 2nd strategy meeting is to be held shortly.	LAC	Aftercare	Parent	02/07/2014	Explanation /informatio n provided
Complainant's 3 grandchildren have recently been placed with her son who also has 3 other children from his current relationship. She feels that he has had no support to help him care for them and that he is at the end of his tether.	TM explained that it was not felt that there were any parenting issues concerning complainant's son and so no referral was made for a support worker. Parents advised to discuss any future issues around coping with the children with their S.W.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Cynon	Relative	01/07/2014	Explanation /informatio n provided
Unhappy with the conduct and attitude of S.W.	Meeting arranged for 18/07/14 - DNA. Did not respond to telephone messages. Complaint closed.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 3 Taf	Parent	07/07/2014	Meeting offered
Complaining that staff aren't supporting her or keeping her informed of progress regarding her daughter. Also SW is not promoting contact.	Young person does not wish to have contact. Complaint closed.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Taf	Parent	04/07/2014	Explanation /informatio n provided
Complaining that the S.W. involved is providing false	Meeting arranged for 31/07/14 to discuss issues raised.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Cynon	Parent	08/07/2014	Meeting offered

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Date rec'd	Code of outcome
information for conference, is missing appointments and is not giving the family a chance to prove they can change.	Complainant did not attend.					
Complaining that false information has been used against her and that contact with her grandchild has been stopped.	Explanation offered concerning information regarding previous contact with Social Services which was provided to court. Advised to discuss contact with Social Worker, Carol Mainwaring.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Rhondda	Relative	16/07/2014	Explanation/information provided
Complaining that Children's Services keep cancelling meetings & holding up the planning process. She has not had contact with her grandchildren for 7 weeks which she feels is unreasonable.	TM has checked records and found that only 1 meeting has been cancelled. Children's Services' priority is for children to have regular contact with their parents and due to her daughter's wishes, contact with complainant cannot be considered a priority.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 3 Rhondda	Relative	22/07/2014	Explanation/information provided
Complaining that contact has been cancelled at short notice. Also the system for confirming contact is not working as she finds it very difficult to get through to the correct number.	Process for confirming contact re-iterated as it was in June 2014. Complainant is in regular contact with S.W. and Independent Reviewing Officer. It is hoped that she will continue to work with the Department in her child's best interests.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 3 Cynon	Parent	25/07/2014	Explanation/information provided
Complaining that he is not being kept informed of his child's case, he does not receive reports and is not invited to core groups. Feels generally disregarded and	Complainant was invited to attend two meetings (14/08/14 and 04/09/14) to discuss his complaint, but failed to attend. Complaint closed.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Cynon	Parent	25/07/2014	Withdrawn

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complain t source	Date rec'd	Code of outcome
excluded from involvement in the process.						
Complaining that contact is not taking place and that the social worker isn't doing enough to promote it.	DCT has no legal power to compel his son to attend contact and at present, he does not wish to see his father. SW has provided father with details of a free monthly legal advice session held at CAB, Pontypridd.	Assessment and Care Planning	Disabled Children's Team	Parent	11/08/2014	Explanation /informatio n provided
Unhappy with Children's Services response to his claims of poor & abusive parenting by his wife and of her deceit and abuse towards his son.	Details provided on previous responses to concerns raised. Current assessment is ongoing and if the conclusion is that it is unsafe for complainant's son to remain in his mother's care, appropriate action will be taken.	Assessment and Care Planning	Duty Rhondda	Parent	12/08/2014	Explanation /informatio n provided
Complaining about the number of S.W.s who have been involved with his daughter & grandchild, which has been distressing for them. Also unhappy with the welfare visits which have been requested by the S.W. which he feels is unreasonable.	Meeting held 27/08/14 to discuss further. SW to update information systems re: child's surname. SW to process necessary police checks. Core Group meeting cannot be rearranged due to set timescales, however, complainant's views can be raised in his absence	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Cynon	Relative	14/08/2014	Meeting offered
Complaining about support provided by Children's Services and carers with regard to his children who are all currently placed in Foster Care. Also unhappy about the behaviour of specific	Details given on support provided to complainant's children by Children's Services. TM did not agree with complainant's view concerning the Foster Carers and stated that they are adequately	Assessment and Care Planning	Disabled Children's Team	Parent	21/08/2014	Explanation /informatio n provided

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Date rec'd	Code of outcome
staff members and with arrangements around contact.	trained. The issue of extra contact was discussed and explained.					
Claims that following a Child Protection Conference she was personally attacked by a member of staff who misinterpreted what she had said and called her a 'liar'.	TM has investigated claims. Senior Practitioner was also present at the meeting and felt that the S.W. was direct, but not rude or aggressive. Expressed regret for any upset and acknowledged it was a difficult time for the family.	Assessment and Care Planning	Disabled Children's Team	Relative	21/08/2014	Explanation/information provided
Complaining that the SW challenged foster carer accusing her of lying at a recent LAC review meeting. States that the SW had been verbally abusive during the visit and that they had to threaten to contact the police unless he left.	Meeting held between T.M., S.W. And Foster Carers. Both had different view relating to the incident, although S.W. acknowledged that issues could have been worded differently. It was agreed to move forward & that panel feedback to date would be written up	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Rhondda	Foster carer	02/09/2014	Facilitated ongoing relationships
Complaining that the SW is working against her rather than with her, that it is unfair that she has to have supervised contact with her children and that she is unhappy that the children have been placed with carers in Neath.	Meeting held 05/09/14. Complainant and ex-partner share parental responsibility as sanctioned by Court. Parents have agreed to children residing with parental grandparents. It has been agreed that they will not change GP or dentist.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Cynon	Parent	04/09/2014	Explanation/information provided
Complaining that she has asked for her son's property back, but it has not been returned to her. Also that she has not been kept		Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Rhondda	Parent	05/09/2014	

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complain t source	Date rec'd	Code of outcome
informed of progress with her son's adoption & that she is being discriminated against because she has learning difficulties.						
Complaining that he has made several referrals regarding neglect of his granddaughter but that the S.W. has done nothing about it. Also wants to know why the S.W. didn't visit to discuss the child protection report and doesn't let him know what is going on		Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Taf	Relative	05/09/2014	ONGOING
Unhappy that her granddaughter continues to live with her father despite complainant having a residence order. Feels that Children's Services are treating her harshly and are not answering her questions, namely has her granddaughter been taken off her?	Decision around where granddaughter resides has not been taken by Children's Services. This has been agreed between complainant & the child's father. If she is unhappy with the arrangement, she will need to address the matter through the Family Court.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Taf	Relative	11/09/2014	Explanation /information provided
Contact with his son was stopped following allegations which were later dropped. Contact has now resumed but he claims the situation has caused his son distress & affected his behaviour. An assessment was due to be undertaken by CS, but has not happened.	Apology offered for the fact that the assessment had not been undertaken. Ex-partner has been advised that contact between complainant and son should resume as per previous arrangement.	Assessment and Care Planning	Duty Taf	Parent	12/09/2014	Apology
Unhappy with the SW who she claims has lied about how contact	Meeting held 23/09/14. Apology offered for any	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 3 Rhondda	Foster carer	15/09/2014	Apology

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complain t source	Date rec'd	Code of outcome
between the children in her care and their siblings has been conducted. SW has also made arrangements without her knowledge which would have a great impact on the children in her care.	distress caused. S.W. will follow up any future communication via e-mail or phone call. Details provided on new contact arrangements.					
Unhappy with the way their granddaughter has been treated by Childrens Services and with the way that child protection matters have been addressed.	S.M. feels that the involvement of Social Services in this case has been totally appropriate. Daughter did not attend CP conference which would have been an ideal opportunity for her to share her views. TM and new SW to meet complainants to discuss issues	Assessment and Care Planning	Duty Taf	Relative	29/09/2014	Explanation /information provided
Unhappy with SW's attitude which she describes as bullying, intimidating and unprofessional and who she feels is pursuing a vendetta against her.		Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Cynon	Parent	23/09/2014	ONGOING
Unhappy with the response from SW when advised that safe care arrangements for her son were not being adhered to, in particular the need to supervise him.	Both T.M. & S.W. agreed with complainant's concern regarding her children being unsupervised whilst in their father's care & have already addressed this with their father. A further written agreement highlighting safe care arrangements will be drawn up.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 3 Cynon	Parent	23/09/2014	Explanation /information provided
Funding for equipment and books for her catering course has been agreed but there	Application to college was made at very short notice. Details provided on orders	LAC	Aftercare	Child	19/09/2014	Explanation /information provided

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Date rec'd	Code of outcome
has been a delay in providing the payment. This has impacted on her ability to undertake her course and she feels she is slipping behind.	completed for uniform and knives and when it is expected the company will provide them.					
Unhappy that his children are on CPR but they have no allocated worker. Also meeting today was cancelled at short notice, initial assessment contains inaccurate information and delays in Core Assessment means he cannot return to the family home.	SW has liaised with parents who have parental responsibility and so make any decisions around contact with grandchild. Concerns raised by complainant are addressed via Child in Need Plan but there are limitations to the information which can be shared.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 2 Taf	Parent	26/09/2014	Explanation /information provided

There was 1 **Informal complaint made by Children/Advocates** for this quarter which was resolved within timescale and was effectively concluded.

Details of complaint	Outcome of complaint	Service area	Team	Complaint source	Date rec'd	Code of outcome
Funding for equipment and books for her catering course has been agreed but there has been a delay in providing the payment. This has impacted on her ability to undertake her course and she feels she is slipping behind.	Application to college was made at very short notice. Details provided on orders completed for uniform and knives and when it is expected the company will provide them.	LAC	Aftercare	Child	19/09/2014	Explanation /information provided

There were no **Informal Complaints** received through Corporate Scheme for this quarter.

There were no **Formal complaints** received during this quarter.

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

Details of representation	Outcome of representation	Service area	Team	Source	Date rec'd	Code of outcome
Complaining that they have not been judged fairly in their request to be considered to Foster/Adopt their grandson.	Team Manager met with complainants. Children's Services will not be undertaking another viability assessment. They have been advised to speak to a solicitor if they wish to take matters further.	Assessment and Care Planning	ACP 1 Taf	Relative	10/07/2014	Meeting offered

There were 2 **Appeals** against assessment received from parents/adults during this quarter. Both were in respect of Car Badges and both were successful.

Compliments**Total = 9****Service areas**

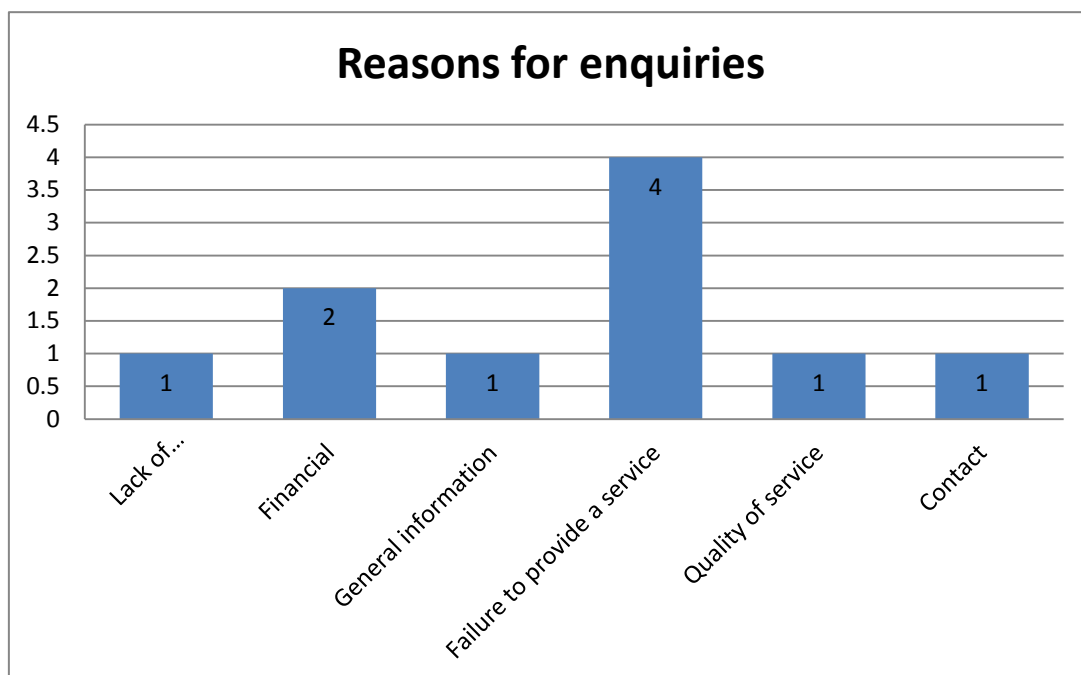
Early Years

= 8

Children with Disabilities = 1

Name of Staff Member	Nature of Compliment	Team	Area	Date Received
All staff	'My husband and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff.... He has been very happy and settled there from the beginning and we are grateful that he has had such a positive experience.'	Early Years	Genesis Project	08/07/2014
Katie Willdridge	'Katie each time has reassured staff members that we have done the right action by making the referral. Katie has given many actions, strategies and advice on how we can encourage the individual children to continue to develop within the Play Group.'	Early Years	Family Support	04/07/2014
All staff	'Would just like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Messy Monsters staff team and let you know how much our setting enjoyed the creative play session. All parents/carers/children and staff members were actively involved for the full hour. Many parents/carers commented on such great ideas.'	Early Years	Family Support Talk & Play Team	24/07/2014
Clare	'She was great and does a fabulous job with the families. I will definitely be using this as part of my research and will inform others in WG of the issues families and children have to deal with on a daily basis.'	Early Years	FAST	25/09/2014
Louise Walsh	'Louise Walsh was amazing with her. Lucy and our family got more out of those sessions than I could put into words.'	Children with Disabilities	West	08/09/2014
All staff	'You are an absolute credit to RCT. Wishing you all the very best for the future.'	Early Years	Genesis Project	17/09/2014
All staff	'You have not only looked after them you have genuinely cared for them.'	Early Years	Genesis Project	17/09/2014
All staff	'Thank you for all the time and energy you have put into NAME since January, I am truly thrilled with the progress she has made.'	Early Years	Sure Steps	17/09/2014
Amie, All staff	'The job you are doing is great, I will always remember how you helped my little girl so much when she needed it.'	Early Years	Sure Steps	17/09/2014

Member of Parliament/Assembly Member Enquiries



Total Number = 10

Service Areas

Assessment Care Planning = 9 Looked After Children = 1

Name of MP/AM	Detail of enquiry	Action taken	Effectively concluded	Service area	Code of enquiry	Source	Date received
Chris Bryant	Requesting information on behalf of his constituent concerning a diagnosis of her grandson's behaviour so that suitable treatment can be arranged.	Grandson has a diagnosis of Oppositional Defiance Disorder for which there is no medication or defined treatment. 1:1 support has been reinstated and his behaviour has settled. He is due to have an Independent Psychology assessment shortly to assist staff.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Lack of information/communication	Member	26/09/2014
Ann Clwyd	Constituents querying whether or not financial help is available for	ONGOING		Assessment & Care Planning	Financial	Member	25/09/2014

Name of MP/AM	Detail of enquiry	Action taken	Effectively concluded	Service area	Code of enquiry	Source	Date received
	adaptations & furniture needed to care for their children.						
Chris Bryant	Unhappy with the way Children's Services have handled her granddaughter's case, particularly with regard the delay in processing the 'special guardianship' application and financial support.	Constituent's granddaughter was placed with her under a private arrangement. The delay in completion of the Special Guardianship report has already been addressed with her in Nov 2013. Payments agreed as part of this allowance will be backdated.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Financial	Member	16/07/2014
Christine Chapman	Requesting clarification on the care package provided to constituent and also the position regarding her accommodation.	Constituents have been awarded a DFG to provide a downstairs extension with wet room. This is near completion. They receive a DP package to meet daughter's needs and have support from social worker from Disabled Children's Team.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	General information	AM	17/07/2014
Owen Smith	Constituent concerned that his son is under emotional stress from his mother and would like Children's Services to monitor his wellbeing.	Constituent's son has been allocated under a Child in Need plan which will address the concerns resulting from the ongoing conflict between the parents and the impact this is having on his emotional wellbeing.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Failure to provide a service	Member	17/07/2014
Chris Bryant	Constituent unhappy that information	Information provided on	yes	Looked After	Quality of service	Member	22/07/2014

Name of MP/AM	Detail of enquiry	Action taken	Effectively concluded	Service area	Code of enquiry	Source	Date received
	provided by Social Services, that he is a danger to others, has led to him losing his job.	circumstances leading to the strategy meeting held under the All Wales Child Protection Procedures where the decision was made to 'bar' constituent from working with children & young people.		Children			
Owen Smith	Requesting Children's Services contact his constituent with a view to providing her with some assistance in caring for her son (who has Aspergers and challenging behaviour).	Constituent contacted Children's Services 04/04/14 requesting support. She was provided with details of organisations which may be able to help her manage her son's behaviour. Advised to contact Duty Officer if she is continuing to experience difficulties	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Failure to provide a service	Member	22/07/2014
Mark Drakeford	Constituent again claiming that concerns she has raised about the care of her grandchildren are not being taken seriously by Dept, in particular their father's plans to take them abroad for 3 weeks.	Dept only able to provide advice to parents. Father has a Residence Order which entitles him to take the children away. If this impacts on mother's contact she will need to seek legal representation.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Failure to provide a service	AM	29/07/2014
Chris Bryant	Constituent concerned about the welfare of child who lives nearby. Child's mother has supervised contact with her, but	This case is currently being monitored by Children's Services and the concerns reported by	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Contact issues	Member	12/08/2014

Name of MP/AM	Detail of enquiry	Action taken	Effectively concluded	Service area	Code of enquiry	Source	Date received
	constituent has seen her with the child, walking unsupervised through Treherbert.	constituent are being investigated.					
Wayne David	Constituent feels she is being intimidated and bullied by children who are fostered at an address nearby. 2nd letter received 14/10/14, issues still ongoing.	TM has visited constituent to discuss concerns. TM will visit family on their return from holiday and feedback the outcome to constituent. TM to keep close watch on the situation.	yes	Assessment & Care Planning	Failure to provide a service	Member	20/08/2014

There were no **Local Councillor Enquiries** received for this quarter.

Analysis of customer feedback Questionnaires

Numbers of questionnaires returned remained low for this quarter with again just 20% being sent back.

Of those that were returned:

71% were dissatisfied with the outcome to their complaint.

29% were satisfied with the outcome to their complaint.

71% were dissatisfied with the handling of their complaint.

29% were satisfied with the handling of their complaint.

The Complaints Unit also dealt with 8 other **contacts** during this quarter.

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