



BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

SOCIAL SERVICES REPRESENTATIONS AND COMPLAINTS

ANNUAL REPORT 2015 / 2016



July 2016

**SOCIAL SERVICES
REPRESENTATIONS AND COMPLAINTS 2015/16**

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Why do people complain?
3. Summary of the complaints procedure
4. The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
5. Member referrals
6. Statistical information 2015/2016
7. Customer feedback - Experience of the complaints procedure
8. Lessons learned
9. Achievements in 2015/2016
10. Key aims and objectives for 2016/2017

1. INTRODUCTION

This report covers the period 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016 and relates to representations and complaints received by the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate in relation to services and support provided by Adult Social Care and Safeguarding and Family Support (Children's Services).

Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 requires social services authorities to maintain a procedure for considering complaints and representations (comments and compliments). Any member of the public, including a child who has received or was entitled to receive, a service from social services may make a complaint. The purpose of this report is to provide a review and statistical analysis of the complaints, comments and compliments received by Social Services during the reporting period.

This is the second Annual Report relating to representations and complaints received by the Directorate which have been handled in accordance with the revised Welsh Government Complaint Guidelines "A Guide to Handling Complaints and Representations by Local Authority Social Services" which came into effect on 1st August 2014. The guidance supports the implementation of the Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Representations Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014. The Regulations introduced a new two stage process which replaced the previous three stages and also brings the process for social services into line with the NHS Complaints Procedure.

3. SUMMARY OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

"A Guide to handling complaints and representations by local authority social services" (Welsh Government).

Stage 1 – Local Resolution: As with the previous guidelines, particular emphasis is placed upon swift resolution of the majority of complaints. An offer to discuss the complaint with the complainant must therefore be made to attempt to resolve matters. This discussion must take place within 10 working days of the date of acknowledgement of the complaint. Where this approach leads to mutually acceptable resolution, the local authority must write to the complainant with details of the terms of the resolution within 5 working days of the date on which the complaint or representation was resolved.

Stage 2 – Formal Investigation: Appointment of an Independent Investigator is made and, as with the previous guidelines an Independent Person must also be appointed to oversee the investigation process (children's complaints). Collaborative arrangements have now been established (on a reciprocal basis) with neighbouring Local Authorities to share staff to undertake investigations

The Investigation must be completed and a full written response issued to the complainant within 25 working days. Where this is not possible, the Authority must write to the complainant to explain the reason for the delay and ensure the response is issued as soon as possible and no later than 6 months from the date of receipt of the complaint.

4. THE PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES

Where complainants have exhausted the complaints procedure, the complainant has the right to refer their concern for consideration by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales provides an external independent service for the purpose of considering complaints made by members of the public in relation to all local authority services, including social services. The Public Services Ombudsman also has jurisdiction to examine and determine complaints of injustice as a result of maladministration on the part of the local authority.

The Ombudsman will normally require complainants to have sought redress, in the first instance, via the local authority's complaints procedure prior to accepting and investigating a complaint of maladministration on the part of the local authority.

During 2015/16, 5 complaints were received by the Public Services Ombudsman's Office. 1 complaint related to Adult Social Care and, having considered this, the Ombudsman advised that he did not intend to investigate the case. The remaining 4 cases related to Safeguarding & Family Support/Child Protection. Three of these were reviewed by the Ombudsman and did not proceed to investigation. One complaint was investigated by the Ombudsman and partially upheld. The recommendations made by the Ombudsman have been accepted by the Authority and implemented accordingly.

5. MEMBER REFERRALS

The Representations and Complaints Procedure does not preclude the right of an individual to approach their Local Councillor, Assembly Member or Member of Parliament. They undertake an important role in handling concerns and queries that individual constituents may have. Collectively, these are called Member Referrals and can range from comments and queries to complaints. If an elected Member does not consider it to be appropriate to deal with a concern, the matter can be referred to be dealt with under the Complaints Procedure.

During 2015/16, Adult Social Care received a total of 98 formal Member referrals and Safeguarding and Family Support received 25.

6. USER/CARER ENGAGEMENT AND FEEDBACK

In addition to receiving comments and compliments from service users and their relatives, the Directorate also issues a range of feedback questionnaires from across service areas. A cross-section of the feedback generated from user/carer feedback surveys undertaken during 2015/16 is set out below:-

Adult Social Care:

Homecare - Between 1st April 2015 – 31st March 2016, 354 questionnaires were despatched and 167 were returned completed (a return rate of 47.1%). 70% of service users confirmed that they are very satisfied with the service they receive, 27% were quite satisfied with the remaining 3% indicating that they were neither satisfied/dissatisfied. Some of the comments made by respondents include: -

"I think the service provided is flexible and immensely supportive to help keep my mum safe in her own home where she feels comfortable and safe, without this support I feel would be an extremely difficult situation for myself and more importantly my mum."

"As a retired senior nursing officer and midwife, I am only too aware of the pressures which build up when dealing with ill, infirm or elderly people. I have nothing but the highest praise for the home care I am receiving. I am of the firm opinion that the services provided by my carers are beyond reproach. Unfortunately I believe that their contribution is seriously undervalued, and hope that this will change in the near future. As a retired senior nursing officer and midwife, I am only too aware of the pressures which build up when dealing with ill, infirm or elderly people. I have nothing but the highest praise for the home care I am receiving. I am of the firm opinion that the services provided by my carers are beyond reproach. Unfortunately I believe that their contribution is seriously undervalued, and hope that this will change in the near future."

Community Integrated Services

The **Community Care survey** is forwarded to all who have accessed an integrated service and have an active Care and Support Plan. Between 1st April 2015 and 31st March 2016, 351 surveys were distributed, 93 were returned completed (26.5%). 93.5% of respondents confirmed they had received either excellent/good services. The remaining 7% did not answer this question. General comments provided include:-

"On behalf of my wife and myself we have nothing but praise for the help and professionalism of all the staff who have visited us. They have been polite and caring and we would like to thank them for all the care and help they have given us."

"It is always good to see the person who is your social worker. Also to have their phone number if there should be a problem with myself or family member, to put a face to whom I talk to. I was very grateful for the visit. Thank you!"

"We are delighted with the outcome and realised it was a situation that was going to take a little more time to sort."

Bridgestart: Provides short term (usually 6 weeks) personal care to service users in their homes. 96% of respondents indicated that the service they received was very good, whilst the remaining 4% felt that it was fairly good. Comments provided include:-

"Quite simply they made the 'Impossible' 'Possible' It enabled me to carry on with daily tasks with minimal disruption whilst meeting the needs to follow hospital instructions aiding healing."

"All staff who come to help me have been outstanding, very polite, understanding, caring and loving towards me. I couldn't fault any of them, I loved them all and very sorry to see them go. Love to all of them."

The **Reablement Service** provides support to service users usually following hospital admission to help them regain their independence to remain living in their own home. Comments received on feedback questionnaires include:-

"The excellent service provided to my mum was very much appreciated. Mum suffered with dementia and it was becoming increasingly difficult to care for her."

We were reluctant about people she didn't know caring for her. We need not have worried - from the moment the team arrived and delivered the care it was excellent and mum and dad looked forward to the nurses and carers visiting. They were so professional and treated mum with so much respect and dignity. We would like to thank 'X' and her team for making the last few weeks of mum's life so comfortable."

"I would rate the service as excellent. All of it has been very helpful to me and I couldn't be more thankful."

The **Early Response Service** provides emergency assistance to service users in their home. Comments received include:-

"When mum became ill and her health deteriorated we were reluctant to accept help from people she didn't know, particularly because of the dementia. The Early Response Team were excellent. 'X' provided us with relevant information and discussed a plan of care for mum. The carers were so brilliant with mum and she and dad began to look forward to their visits. They treated mum with such respect and made the last weeks of her life so comfortable. We would like to thank the Early Response Team for the wonderful service they provided to mum. They were so professional and caring."

"You have a wonderful team, I couldn't have been looked after any more than I was. I am so grateful to the Early Response service they certainly put my life back on track."

Telecare: Provides a support service within the home (also in emergency situations), via use of wireless technology and sensors/pendant buttons. Comments received include:-

"Telecare equipment is no longer required and the SU's son has asked in particular if thanks can be passed on to the telecare team and especially the MRT as he is aware a lot of support was provided to keep his mum at home. He especially asked for thanks to be passed on."

"Mrs X just phoned to say "Thank you" to Y & Z who were called out early hours of Wednesday morning. Her Husband had fallen & the team arrived very quickly & she was very appreciative of the help she received."

"If I fall in my home I am confident that someone is there to help and come to my aid or contact my family."

Contract Monitoring and Commissioning:

Rota Visits to independently managed residential care settings have been undertaken by Elected Members who engage with residents. There is an established programme of rota visits and the programme was extended to include some independent sector adult establishments. In 2015/16, there were 18 independent sector homes included on the rota. Members observations included:-

"Visited and spoke to service users and staff. The four service users were in the minibus looking forward to a trip to Porthcawl, They were very happy to be at the home for the evening and having their trip and told us they were looking forward to getting a new larger minibus in a few months' time."

"I was impressed with the wonderful provision and the affection shown to the clients by staff. The clients I spoke to told me they were very comfortable, not only with their rooms but with the warm and experienced staff."

Domiciliary Care Services: During 2015/16, it was agreed to pilot visits to service users receiving homecare from both the council and from independent sector providers. An evaluation of the success of this has been undertaken and it has been agreed to extend this with visits being planned for April/May and September / October 2016. Comments obtained during the pilot included:-

“ I am extremely happy with the service and its reliability.”

“ The carers always turn up and their timeliness is good. They have only been delayed on two occasions and they rang ahead to warn me each time.”

Learning Disability Services

Bridgend People First have continued to organise and hold the ‘Having a Say’ sessions with service users. Some of the comments received during the sessions include:-

BLeaf: "I enjoy the work. I have lots of friends there. I love all the staff. I like my job there and have learnt a lot."

Wood B: "I like making things in public and I like people coming to the workshop. It is a proper factory. I like doing real work - I do woodwork. I like having a laugh with the boys."

Valleys Gateway Localised Service: "I like going to the cinema, having lunch out and helping staff."

Mental Health: Service user and carer engagement has been an integral component in developing services for adult mental health. Engagement with service users and carers is improving. A stronger partnership group brings together service users and carers across the Western Bay region. Officers regularly attend service user and carer forums to improve communication and engagement. Comments include:

Local Primary Mental Health Service: “my life is so much better with these tools and I am slowly on the road to recovery”.

“It has helped me come off my medication and keep my job”,

“I would have liked the service for longer”.

ARC Service: “My new interests will help me negotiate my blackest days”.

Glyn Cynffig is a hostel run by Bridgend County Borough Council with accommodation for 16 adults with a poor mental health, some of whom have a co-occurring diagnosis of substance or alcohol misuse. Residents were asked to provide feedback on their experiences of the hostel. Some of the comments received include:-

“Yes I am very happy with the service, they are very good.”

“Glyn Cynffig is a homely/good place to live. The staff always treat the residents fairly with compassion and understanding. The staff always provide the residents with the things they need”.

Safeguarding & Family Support:

Rota visits are undertaken by elected Members to the Department's residential homes, following which a report is submitted which focusses on the quality of care provided to service users. Feedback for visits undertaken during this reporting period included:-

Sunnybank Complex Needs Unit provides accommodation for children and young people who display complex needs and require intensive work to stabilise behaviours to allow them to move on and settle into suitable permanent or long term placement.

"Our view is that Sunnybank is providing security and warmth more effectively than the best out of county placement. Parental contact is offered under supervision without adverse incident".

"The premises were very homely and the children were enjoying playing in a clean, well-equipped play room with staff who were interacting and very hands on. We felt confident in their ability to do the job and were glad to see the children feeling comfortable and at home."

Bakers Way provides a short breaks service which provides regular planned short break stays for disabled children and young people ages 0-18yrs.

"Four children were present who were all playing separately eg: using the sensory area. Spoke to the children who were quite happy. Wonderful calm efficient resident-centred staff".

"Two children were there when we visited, one of whom was able to engage and was obviously happy and contented in the home".

Newbridge House is a residential unit that supports young people through transition to independence.

The unit was very clean and the staff were very knowledgeable of their residents. Each resident had their own room which had a sink, fridge and TV/dvd. However they were encouraged to eat together and take part in a more communal life. We were extremely fortunate to speak to a resident. It was very encouraging to see how the unit was having a positive impact on their life and how it was going to affect their future decisions."

"Toured the facility and spoke to young residents and heard how they learn independent skills. Variety of activities available".

Fostering Services: A survey is undertaken annually in respect of experience of the overall service. Feedback is collated for foster carer annual reviews from the carers themselves, their own children (if applicable), the children in placement and LAC reviews. Information and consultation events are regularly held on specific topics. Foster carer surgeries are held at which issues can be raised which are followed up with a written response. Foster carer support groups and a liaison carer are in place who feedback to the Team. Feedback forms are completed following each foster panel.

Childrens Services (SNAP) Questionnaires: A total of 1013 questionnaires were sent, 14 (2.3%), were returned. Responses included:-

- 50.0% Thought general contact with the Department was very good.
- 62.5% Thought the information provided verbally was very good.
- 25.0% Thought the written information provided was very good.
- 62.5% Felt the overall service was very good

A few comments/compliments from the SNAP Questionnaires include:-

“Made myself and my child more aware of seriousness of are situation at the time.”
“They worked with me and my partner and never give us any false hope.”
“Our social worker helped us and pointed us in the right direction everyone deserves a 2nd chance.”
“Although this has been a very distressing time for us. We are grateful for X patience and time. Giving us coping strategies to work with.”

Safeguarding and Family Support – Advocacy Services: All young people who wish to make a complaint are offered the assistance of an advocate. A total of 5 young people were supported by an advocate during the reporting period. Advocacy services for 4 of these was provided via Tros Gynnal, and one via Voices for Care (Cymru). All complainants indicated that they were happy with the advocacy service provided.

7. STATISTICAL INFORMATION 2015/2016

Number of Representations Received and Timescales (Statutory Procedure)

Table 1

No. Representations Received Statutory Complaints Procedure – April 2015 to March 2016			
	Comments	Complaints	Compliments
Adult Social Care	1	6	181
Safeguarding and Family Support	0	7	15
Business Support /Finance	0	1	1
Total	1	14	197
	Stage 1	5 (ASC) 1 (Finance)	
	Stage 2	1(ASC)	

Timescales: 100% Stage 1 complaints were resolved within the prescribed timescale of 10 working days.

Timescales: All Stage 1 complaints were acknowledged in writing within 2 working days of the date of their receipt. 100% were resolved within the prescribed timescale of 10 working days and written responses provided within 5 working days of the date of resolution. Both Stage 2 complaints investigations are ongoing at the time of writing this report. There were no complaints received outside the 12 month time limit for investigation.

Complaints Resolved Informally (pre-Complaints Procedure Stage 1)

Bridgend County Borough Council complaints processes have, for a number of years, involved successful early resolution of complaints where possible. Recently, the new Complaint Guidelines emphasise that the complaints process

will provide for a more straightforward and citizen centred approach. Swift and effective complaints handling is also encouraged with an expectation that the majority of complaints and representations should be resolved by Local Resolution.

Complaints staff therefore undertake a significant amount of work liaising with managers to identify and agree swift resolutions to the satisfaction of the complainant (by the end of the working day following the day on which the complaint was made).

Table 2

No. Complaints Resolved prior to invoking the formal Complaints Procedure(s) 2015/2016	
Adult Social Care	55
Safeguarding and Family Support	96
Business/Finance Support	4
Total:	155

Corporate Complaints Procedure

There are instances whereby aspects of a complaint do not fall within the remit of the social services statutory complaints procedure and, in these instances, the Authority's Corporate Complaints Procedure is utilised. Only 7 complaints were received that were deemed appropriate to be addressed in accordance with the Corporate Complaints Procedure during 2015/16. 2 related to Adult Social Care and 5 to Safeguarding & Family Support.

Total Representations Received 2015/16

The total number of representations received by Adult Social Care and Safeguarding & Family Support is as follows:-

Table 3

2015/16 - Total No. Representations Handled via:	
Statutory Social Services Complaints	14
Corporate Complaints	7
Complaints Resolved at pre-Complaints stage	155
Total:	176

The total number of complaints received and addressed in accordance with the Statutory Complaints Procedure by Social Services during 2015/2016 was 14 compared with 27 in 2014/15. The number of people receiving a service from Adult Social Care during the reporting period was 5136 and 1304 from Safeguarding and Family Support.

Complaint Outcomes (Statutory)

Complaint outcomes are identified within the categories: Upheld, Partially Upheld and Not Upheld. Outcomes for each service area have been recorded during 2015/16 as follows:-

Table 4 – Complaint Outcomes (St. 1 - Statutory Complaints Procedure)

2015/16	Adult Social Care	Safeguarding and Family Support	Business /Finance Support
Not Upheld	1	4	--

Partially Upheld	--	-	--
Upheld	3	3	1

(Stage 2 investigation ongoing – outcome not known)

NATURE OF COMPLAINTS

The nature of complaints received was as follows (in order of frequency):-

Table 5

2015/16 – Most Common Complaints Received
Quality / Level of Service / Standard of Care
Lack of / Poor Communication
Disagreement with Assessment / Care Plan
Unacceptable Delays
Poor advice / misinformation
Staff attitude / conduct
Policy / Procedure Non-compliance
Missed / Late Appointments / Times of Visits
Charges for Care Services
Disagreement with Policy / Procedure

9. HOW COMPLAINTS WERE RESOLVED & LESSONS LEARNED

A variety of methods were used to resolve complaints, including:-

- Liaison by complaints officers with senior managers to identify/agree immediate/informal resolution;
- Meetings by senior officers with complainants to discuss/resolve their concerns;
- Provision of explanation of reasons for decisions (verbal and/or written);
- Provision of an apology (written), where appropriate;
- Corrective actions, e.g. change of decisions, review of procedures;
- Reassessments (independent)
- Advocacy services/support;
- Independent investigation;
- Staff training.

Key lessons learned during 2015/165 were as follows:-

Table 6

Service Area	Lessons Learned/Actions Implemented
Adult Social Care: Integrated Referral Management Centre	Review of Integrated Referral Management Centre Service / staffing requirements / structure undertaken to address the unacceptable delays being experienced by callers. To achieve this the social work structure across the Community Integrated

<p>Adult Social Care:</p> <p>Ty Cwm Ogwr – Residential Care Home for Elderly</p>	<p>Network Teams, Community Resource Team and the Hospital will be reviewed.</p> <p>Refresher training for staff undertaken in relation to Safeguarding and Administration of PRN Medications to ensure that all staff are aware of and are able to follow the procedures appropriately.</p>
<p>Safeguarding and Family Support</p>	<p>Review of Out of County Placement Panel process to ensure inclusion of process for yps/advocates to raise concerns in regard of decisions taken.</p>
<p>Safeguarding & Family Support:</p>	<p>Review of IA documentation /process to improve standard of recording. .</p>

Welsh Language Standards

There have been no complaints received during this reporting period that have been communicated via the medium of Welsh, nor have there been any complaints in relation to the Welsh language.

To ensure compliance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards all complaints publicity material, including leaflets and the complaints website have been translated and are readily available in the medium of Welsh. Complaints staff have also attended basic Welsh Language training.

Compliments

Compliments are regarded as important information which can be used to identify good practice. All compliments are therefore recorded centrally and details provided in management reports. As mentioned above, 197 compliments were received during 2015/16, a selection of which is set out below:-

Table 7

<p>Compliments - Adult Social Care:</p>
<p>Community Reablement Team: "I would like to thank the CRT Team for all the help and kindness that they have shown me over the past 6 weeks since I came out of hospital. The care that I have received has been excellent from each of the carers. They have been friendly and helpful at all times and I much appreciate all that they have done to help me get back on my feet again."</p>
<p>Integrated Community Network Team: "can I thank you with all my heart for everything you did for y mother. I am truly grateful to you and the fantastic Bridgend adult services for The Care you provided to the most wonderful lady I have ever known. I will never ever forget all your hard work and effort I would sincerely like to thank you all. you are truly marvellous people, thank you so much for allowing me to have some beautiful memories of the care provided to my mother in the autumn of her life."</p>
<p>Community Integrated Wellbeing Team (CIWT): Re: CIWT - "...I wanted to THANK YOU VERY MUCH for everything you have both done for Mum & Dad. I am VERY grateful to you both for all your efforts, above & beyond the call of duty.</p>

With sincere thanks and best wishes."
Local Community Co-ordinator - "She's been my lifeline, she's so compassionate. I feel like I was a dead flame, and 'X' has been like a spark to light it again. I'll never go back on the drugs now – she's made me determined to be a survivor, not a victim".
Home Care: "You all put so much thoughtfulness into everything you did, thank you so much. With so much thanks for all your support over the years. You were all dad's friends in the end, he missed you all..."
Glyncynffig Hostel:
B:Leaf: Re: BLeaf - "I enjoy the work. I have lots of friends there. I love all the staff. I like my job there and have learnt a lot."
Glanyrafon:
Pyle & Porthcawl Day Centre: - "We were present at the St Davids Day Coffee Morning and find it essential to write and tell you all what a lovely morning it was. The choir consisting of staff and service users accompanied by 'X' on the trumpet and 'Y' on the guitar was so entertaining. The feeling that staff and everybody, staff and service users alike, were so happy it created a wonderful atmosphere. The refreshments we loved and all this to raise money, not for the Day Centre, but for someone in the community with their own severe disability. What wonderful people you all are."
Community Support Team (Joint LD): - "I just wanted to say thank you from all the family for all that you do for 'X', you always show your caring nature towards him and it is recognised by the family. You are genuine and this shows when you are assisting the needs for your client, there are not many that care in the professional manner that you do. Thank you very much
Mental Health Crisis Team: "How come you never show or mention any of the staff from the Crisis team, there are some brilliant nurses there and their manager 'X' and liaison nurse, and 'Y' have been a great support to myself and many others. It would be nice to see the mental health crisis team mentioned for their hard work."
Bridgestart: - To all you wonderful care girls - you cannot imagine how apprehensive I was of returning home and getting on with my life, but thanks to all of you and the help and encouragement you have given me, life is slowly returning to normality, my confidence is returning and I am learning what I can do and more importantly when I need to ask for help. I class you all as much more than carers and if ever any of you are passing I would love to see you, my thanks as always..."
Better@Home: "I rang Mrs 'X' back to provide the information about the calls going back in tonight and she was very grateful. She also asked me to pass on her thanks for the support they have been receiving and said that the carers are wonderful."
Telecare/Early Response: Mrs 'X' activated the alarm on Saturday 6th February as her husband had fallen. The Response Team attended. Mrs 'X' wanted to thank the two ladies who attended who were very kind and helped get Mr 'X' up off the floor; she also stated that they advised her to ring a doctor to check him over. A doctor later attended and Mr 'X' had to be taken to hospital
Compliments – Safeguarding & Family Support:
Assessment Team: Compliment received from maternal grandmother of young persons in respect of the social worker "X has been open and honest in her approach to child protection procedures and safeguarding my two grandchildren
Safeguarding MaestegTeam: Compliment received from young person via Service User Feedback Form in respect of the social worker - "she is really sympathetic, I get confused with words but she knows what I am on about. She's very good, very approachable. She has been open and honest about what was

going to happen and which agencies were going to be involved".
Safeguarding Bridgend Team: Compliment received from maternal grandmother of young persons (child protection case) in respect of the social worker allocated to the case - ' she has been professional in gathering information, while remaining professional and warm. I have felt that I can be open and direct which is important to help my family - it is reassuring that there are excellent practitioners out there such as x who can be so insightful, compassionate and professional'
Disabled Children's Team: Compliment received from parent of young person in respect of support provided " without the support of this team X and myself would be lost".
Child Protection: Compliment received in respect of CSE training session - 'all thought the session was excellent and look forward to more great presentations'.
Compliments - Business Support/Finance:
Direct Payments: "Thank you for all your help and support over the past few months. You have been brilliant. Hope you have a lovely Christmas and New Year. Thank you again

8. CUSTOMER FEEDBACK – THEIR EXPERIENCE OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Questionnaires were forwarded to all complainants (statutory complaints). Complainants were provided with 'reply paid envelopes', unfortunately, the return rate was low. Comments received included:-

"Although initially frustrated at the way social services were progressive with my mother's care, after having followed the complaints procedure the eventual outcome was satisfactory and everyone was satisfied."
"Inform people when they just start using a service run by BCBC how to make complaints, I had to look on the website to find out."

10. ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2015/2016

Achievements during 2015/16 include:-

- Complaints staff have continued to encourage and work with managers/staff to aim to resolve complaints locally and as swiftly as possible. This is reflected in the high number of complaints resolved at the pre-complaints stage (Table 2);
- Continue to monitor and improve Stage One timescale compliance rates;
- A Complaints Awareness E:learning module has been developed. This is aimed at all new and existing staff employed by the Directorate to ensure that they are equipped with knowledge and understanding of the complaints procedure and what they should do in the event that they receive a complaint. The module was launched and made available for staff to access with effect from 1st June 2016
- Translation of complaints publicity material has been translated and is now readily available in the medium of Welsh.

11. OBJECTIVES FOR 2016/2017

Plans for 2016/17 include:-

- Continue to encourage and work with managers/staff to aim to resolve complaints locally and as swiftly as possible;
- Continue to monitor and improve Stage One timescale compliance rates;
- Develop an E:Learning module to be aimed at managers responsible for investigating and responding to complaints.

12. EQUALITIES

A screening for equality impact has been carried out in relation to the representation and complaints procedure. There is no negative impact on the protected equality characteristics.

There have been no complaints received during the reporting period in relation to the Social Services Representations and Complaints Procedure.

Complainants are now requested to provide information in relation to the Equality Act 2010. This data includes information relating to ethnicity, gender, marital status and disability. The feedback is currently low, but we will continue to pursue this.

**Report prepared for Susan Cooper
Statutory Director of Social Services
By the Designated Complaints Officer
May 2016**