

Appendix A – Further Category Analysis

In previous years the Committee have requested a more detailed analysis on the categories of complaints being made and examples of the sort of complaints that have been received and upheld in the main categories.

Complaints about Children’s Social Care in 2017-18 were being received predominantly about three main categories:

- Delayed Failed Service
- Staff Attitude/Conduct
- Not to Standard

These are the same top 3 categories as the previous three years.

Delayed/Failed Service Complaints

The most common cause of complaint was Delayed/Failed Service.

32 complaints were received where the customer believed that there had been a delay or a failure in the service they were expecting. Although the complaint numbers have reduced this category has gone up and equates to nearly 50% of all complaints made.

Illustrated in Table 7 are the 3 teams within Children’s Social Care that receive the majority of these complaints. The team that has the highest number remains unchanged from last year and a higher percentage of the complaints are being upheld in full or part.

Table 7.

Delayed/Failed Service Complaints					
Team	Complaints Received	Complaint Upheld	Complaint Partially Upheld	Complaint Not Upheld	No Finding/Withdrawn
Children in Care & Leaving Care	13	5	7	1	0
Family Support	8	1	4	3	0
Assessment Team	4	1	1	0	0

Further detail on delayed/failed service complaints:-

Children In Care and Leaving care team

These teams have the highest number of complaints about delayed and failed service and there is a higher uphold rate than in previous years.

Examples are

- Young person in care unhappy with lack of contact from her social worker leaving no one to talk to but their foster carer
- Young person unhappy with their placement, found foster carer unpleasant toward their friends and did not keep enough food in the house
- Young person unhappy that funding for further education had not been made as promised leaving them financially stretched

8.4.2 Family Safeguarding

A slight increase in complaints about delay have been received by family safeguarding this year. A high volume were either upheld or partially upheld this year for Family Support and examples of these are as follows.

Examples are

- Delays in department authorising psychological help for children under an SGO
- Social worker should have visited every 10 days but only visited once per month
- Lack of support from social worker and not attending important meetings.

8.4.3 Assessment Team

This service had four complaints about Delays and Failed service. One was fully upheld and 3 partially upheld.

Examples are

- Failure to fully pass details of the case to another Authority when the family moved out of the area
- Failure to support young person who needed help with finding suitable housing

Staff Conduct/Attitude Complaints

The number of complaints received in this category was 12 and this is fewer than in previous years.

There were four teams who received some complaints of this type this year. Many of these complaints are about multiple issues but the young person or parent feels the predominant issues is the staff members attitude or conduct.

Only 3 of these complaints were upheld and 7 were partially upheld but not on the issues of staff conduct.

Where the complaint was upheld the following were the complaint issues. but one team received six, which of which was Family Safeguarding of which 4 were upheld or partially upheld:

- Social worker came across as intimidating and impolite as they would not provide their full contact details on a phone message and the parent felt coerced into signing an agreement

- Young person said that a staff member tried to coerce her into discussing her family on the phone without properly introducing who they were and not recognising the young person felt intimidated by the line of questioning.
- Young person unhappy that the foster carer they were living with was not supportive especially when the young person's parents died.

'Not to Standard' Complaints

This is the third highest category of complaints.. This is where the customer is generally dissatisfied with the service provided and does not think it is acceptable. There were 11 complaints in this category, a similar number to the previous year.

The following table shows the complaint outcomes for the 3 teams with the majority of these complaints.

Not To Standard					
Team	Complains Received	Complaint Upheld	Complaint Partially Upheld	Complaint Not Upheld	No Finding
Family Support	7	1	3	2	1
First Response	3	0	2	1	0
Looked After and Leaving Care	3	0	2	1	0

One complaint was upheld with the following outcome

- Apology given for the delay in allocating a specialised piece of work and the distress caused to the family.

There were 7 cases Partially upheld in this category. An example of some of the outcomes were which included outcomes of:

- Apology for late assessment and spelling inaccuracies in the report.
- Apologies for errors in minutes of a Children in Need meeting
- Apology that there was inconsistency in the advice given to estranged parents about contact arrangements.

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