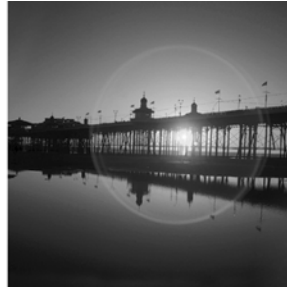


B L A C K P O O L C O U N C I L



Children, Adult & Family Services Annual Customer Feedback Report 2010/2011

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1. Introduction

This report covers the period 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011 inclusive and provides information on customer feedback recorded by the Customer Care Team, both from direct customer contact and/or via a third party.

The report has been compiled using the four quarterly reports for Children, Adult and Family Services Directorate.

There has been some organisation re-structure during the last 12 months and therefore, figure work has been allocated to quarterly timeframes rather than Service Directors.

2. Definitions

The term “complaint” is defined in the Department of Health “Learning from Complaints” guidance as follows:

“an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet about the actions, decisions or apparent failings of a local authority’s provision, which requires a response”

This includes MP & Cllr enquiries for updates on the progress of an application or decision, because it demonstrates that the customer is concerned that their case is not progressing, as they would like. However, in some cases, the complainant will go directly to the MP or Cllr without contacting the Council in the first instance.

With effect from 1st April 2009, the Department of Health issued updated Complaint Legislation, ‘Making Experiences Count’ but did not change the definition.

3. Overall Total of Items Received - 748

Quarter	Comments	Complaints	Compliments	MP Enquiries	Cllr Enquiries	Totals
1	9	22	136	26	5	198
2	9	32	98	21	2	162
3	9	19	136	19	2	185
4	7	60	105	21	10	203
Total 2010/11	34	133	475	87	19	748
2009/10	66	71	1065	62	16	1280
2008/09	not recorded	105	710		61	876

4. Compliments – 475

Compliments have reduced as a result of the changes within Directorates with some teams having been transferred to alternative areas within the Council and therefore their figures are no longer counted within the Children, Adult and Family Services Directorate.

4.1 Sample Compliments

- I’m very pleased indeed, I feel a lot safer now.
- Thank you for your help, support and back up which has been valuable.

- I would like to commend you for the excellent post discharge provision that you have put in place. Helpful staff, good food and clean premises. Overall an excellent standard.
- Thank you very much for supplying the requested information. I'm very grateful to the relevant team for collating the data so carefully.
- Many thanks for coming along today and for giving such an excellent presentation.
- I wish to say that I am so pleased to have this assistance as I feel much safer. Thank you kindly for your help.
- I was glad of the services to take the pressure of myself. Many grateful thanks.
- Carer has proved to be absolutely first class.

5. Comments – 34

Comments are sent to the relevant Service Managers to action within 10 working days. If this process is not undertaken the comment becomes a formal complaint.

6. Complaints – 133

Statutory Legislation dictates that all complaints should be addressed and concluded within a 6 month timeframe. Children, Adults & Family Services feel all complaints should be addressed quickly and efficiently. Therefore, in the first instance, 10 working days has been allocated for a response to be completed. Where complex cases are concerned it is sometimes more appropriate to allocate a longer timeframe for a response. Each case is individual and is viewed on its own merits.

6.1 Timescales

Quarter	1	2	3	4	Total	%
Met timescales - within 10 working days or allocated time period	15	28	14	46	103	78%
Resolved in 11-20 working days	4	-	4	10	18	13%
Resolved in 21-30 working days	2	-	-	2	4	3%
Resolved 31 - 35 working days	1	3	1	-	5	4%
Met Statutory timescale of 6 months	All	All	All	All	All	100%
Withdrawn	-	1	-	2	3	2%
Total	22	32	19	60	133	

It is good practice to keep the complainant informed of progress at all times. Therefore, if for any reason, the Children, Adult & Family Services Directorate is unable to meet the allocated timescale for response - a holding letter should be sent advising of the delay together with a new expected date of response.

The Customer Care Team remains in contact with the relevant Service Manager during the course of each complaint. The Service Manager will advise if the timescale cannot be achieved together with the reasons why this is not possible. Where necessary the Customer Care Manager will raise the issue with the relevant Service Director.

6.2 Outcomes

The decision to record complaints as “upheld”, “partially upheld” or “not upheld” lies with the Complaints Manager for the Department (a statutory function). A complaint will usually be upheld if it is evident that the Department could have done more to support the customer.

Quarter	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Withdrawn	Total	%
1	5	3	14	0	22	17%
2	5	6	20	1	32	24%
3	4	4	11	0	19	14%
4	3	4	51	2	60	45%
Total	17	17	96	3	133	100%
%	13%	13%	72%	2%	100%	

6.3 Complaints made by Service Users or 3rd Parties

Quarter	Service User	3rd Party	Total
1	11	11	22
2	17	15	32
3	6	13	19
4	26	34	60
Total	60	73	133
%	45%	55%	

Complaints may be made by those accessing Council Services or on Service Users’ behalf by third parties. Consent is addressed as appropriate, dependent on individual complaints.

6.4 Complaint Themes

Alphabetical

Themes	Amount
Administration	2
Appeals Process	4
Assessment Undertaken	2
Bully/Racist Incident	1
Child Safety	1
Confidentiality Issues	2
Concerns about Welfare of Adult	1
Council Cuts	18
Custody of Child	3
Financial	1
Funding	2
Lack of Communication	6
Other Service User's Behaviour	1
Policies & Procedures in Place	2
Quality of Service Provided	52
School	1
Social Worker Complaint	3
Staff Attitude	19
Staff Attitude/Treatment of Customer	12
Total	133

Numerical

Themes	Amount
Bully/Racist Incident	1
Child Safety	1
Concerns about Welfare of Adult	1
Financial	1
Other Service User's Behaviour	1
School	1
Administration	2
Assessment Undertaken	2
Confidentiality Issues	2
Funding	2
Policies & Procedures in Place	2
Custody of Child	3
Social Worker Complaint	3
Appeals Process	4
Lack of Communication	6
Staff Attitude/Treatment of Customer	12
Council Cuts	18
Staff Attitude	19
Quality of Service Provided	52
Total	133

6.5 Lessons Learnt

- All staff to be aware of their clients' and their families' circumstances before making any decisions.
- Reduce waiting time when matching up carers.
- Team Leaders to follow up risk assessments and ordering of equipment to ensure delivery, and specific training if required.
- Review of EDT processes regarding appropriate home visits.
- Fact sheet to be issued regarding funding due to poor communication.
- Check standards of letters for use of jargon, spelling and concise information being delivered.
- Communication issues with partnering agencies and Council staff has been addressed, improved and monitored.
- Carers to follow policy and procedure at all times, paying particular attention to confidentiality, understanding disciplinary repercussions.
- Careful and accurate recording of information/incidents
- Once training undertaken, ensure staff are monitored further to ensure compliance with requirements and good practice followed.
- Use supervision and team meetings to aid communication issues.
- Good record keeping resulted in quick and effective action.
- Remain polite and professional at all times.

7. Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)

There have been three contacts regarding the LGO:

- 1 case progressed to the LGO – outcome awaited.
- 1 premature enquiry made via the LGO – which was then placed in the complaints system – outcome not upheld.
- 1 Service Enquiry made by the LGO – resulting in collation of information and processes with no further action required.

8. MP & Cllr Enquiries – 106

Blackpool Council's Chief Executive maintains that all MP & Cllr Enquiries must be actioned and resolved within 5 working days.

8.1 MP Enquiries - 87

Quarter	MP Enquiries	Met Timescale- 5 working days	%	Response within 6-10 days	%	Response within 11-15 days	%
1	26	23	89%	2	8%	1	3%
2	21	15	72%	4	19%	2	9%
3	19	18	95%	-	-	1	5%
4	21	11	53%	10	47%	-	-
Total	87	67	77%	16	19%	4	4%

8.2 Cllr Enquiries - 19

Quarter	Cllr Enquiries	Met Timescale-5 working days	%	Response within 6-10 days	%	Response over 11 days	%
1	5	5	100%	-	-	-	-
2	2	2	100%	-	-	-	-
3	2	2	100%	-	-	-	-
4	10	6	60%	3	30%	1	10%
Total	19	15	79%	3	16%	1	5%

9. Gender Breakdown

	Male	Female	Joint	Unknown	Total
Comment	12	22	0	0	34
Complaint	48	80	5	0	133
Compliments	102	268	26	79	475
MP & Cllr Enquiries	42	49	9	6	106
Total	204	419	40	85	748

10. Ethnicity

Ethnicity forms are distributed to complainants with acknowledgement letters. The returns from this exercise are minimal. It would appear that customers do not want extra paperwork and feel the request for this anonymous information is an intrusion into their privacy. The Customer Care Team is considering alternative ways in which to capture this information.

11. Advocacy Services/Children's Rights

In line with standard procedures, 5 cases were referred from or to the above inclusive services:

- 1 for Adult Services
- 4 for Children Services.

12. Training

The Customer Care Team provides Complaint training as and when requested, tailoring the training to specific area requirements. Evaluation forms are completed at each event. Due to changes in the Directorates, further training will be offered by the Customer Care Team for 2011/2012.