

London Borough of Bromley

PART 1 - PUBLIC

**Briefing for Care Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee
18 June 2013**

ECHS COMPLAINTS REPORT 2012/13

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1. Summary

This report provides PDS Members with a summary of complaints activity from this year's annual report detailing social care, housing and education complaints received April 2012 to March 2013 (Appendix 1).

2. **THE BRIEFING**

- 2.1 The annual report (Appendix 1) details complaints information received by the Education Care and Health Services Department under the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) regulations, 2009; 'Getting the Best from Complaints' and the Children's Act 1989 and LBB corporate complaints procedure.
- 2.2 This report paints a picture of more clients being satisfied with our services and less complaints being investigated, lower than in any of the last three years. We received 229 formal complaints and of those, following investigation, 63 (28%) complaints were fully or partially upheld
- 2.3 The number of complaints and representations in all service divisions decreased although referrals to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) increased, at least in part due to a change in legislation which has, rightly, made this route increasingly accessible.
- 2.4 Often we see clients when they are at their most vulnerable with often very complex cases and when a complainant does not feel their concerns have been adequately redressed by us they refer it on to the LGO. 29 representations were made to the LGO and 7 were upheld. Although the number of complaints and representations has decreased overall, we have noticed this year an increase of complainants taking their complaints to the Health & Care Professionals Council (HCPC) and requests to LBB under the Data Protection Act 1998 to access records.

| Complaints and Representations received by Education, Care and Health Department 2012-13 | | | | | |
|--|-----------|----------|---------|---------------------|-------|
| | Education | Children | Housing | Adult Care Services | Total |
| Formal Complaints (Statutory) | n/a | 46 | n/a | 91 | 137 |
| Formal Complaints (Corporate) | 10 | 13 | 44 | 25 | 92 |
| Informal Complaints | n/a | n/a | n/a | 30 | 30 |
| Comments/Enquiries | 7 | 20 | 32 | 53 | 112 |
| Ombudsman Enquiries | 1 | 4 | 10 | 14 | 29 |
| | | | | | |

- 2.5 The significant reduction in complaints and representations is due not just to better relationships with clients: when we receive a contact, officer's work hard to prevent escalation and do all they can to resolve a complaint informally. We also resolved the majority of complaints within our 20 working days target. This year the Quality Assurance Team implemented its in-house training programme and trained over 20 officers to deal with complaints in the front line so as to resolve concerns without the need for clients to use the formal complaints process.

| Complaints and Representations Trends | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------------------------------------|-------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | | Total |
| Adult Social Care | 351 | 323 | 213 | | 887 |
| Housing | 114 | 109 | 86 | | 309 |
| Children's Social Care | 122 | 95 | 83 | | 300 |
| Education | | | | Not collected under equivalent system | |
| Totals | 587 | 527 | 382 | | 1496 |
| | | | | | |

- 2.6 We also collect compliments. This system is underdeveloped across the new directorate and we are looking at new ways to collect this information. However, trends are shown below.

| Compliments Trends | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------------------------------------|-------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | | Total |
| Adult Social Care | 30 | 43 | 19 | | 92 |
| Housing | 8 | 17 | 3 | | 28 |
| Children's Social Care | 36 | 14 | 22 | | 72 |
| Education | | | (34) | Not collected under equivalent system | |
| Totals | 74 | 74 | 78 | | 192 |
| | | | | | |

- 2.7 Listening to our service users is an integral part of making improvements to services and we always tell the complainant what has changed or been improved as a result of their complaint. We invite our customers to complete feedback questionnaires and 60% told us they thought the complaint response was well written and they were treated with respect and courtesy by those who handled their complaint.
- 2.8 More details of how we received and addressed complaints is provided in the Annual Report Appendix 1.