

CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO DECISION SCHEDULE



Tuesday, 27 September 2011

at 10.00 am

in Committee Room C, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

As delegated by The Mayor Stuart Drummond Councillor H Thompson, Cabinet Member responsible for Performance will consider the following items.

1. KEY DECISIONS

No items

2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 2.1 Grayfields – Revision of the 3G Synthetic Pitch Pricing Structure – *Director of Child and Adult Services*

3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 3.1 Annual Complaints Report 1st April 2010 – 31st March 2011 – *Director of Child and Adult Services*

CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder

27th September 2011



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: GRAYFIELDS – REVISION OF THE 3G SYNTHETIC PITCH PRICING STRUCTURE

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to seek Portfolio Holder approval for the revision of the hire fees and charges in relation to the use of the 3G Synthetic Pitch at Grayfields, effective October 1st 2011.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

Details of the current charges are given as well as those for local competitors and the reasons for needing to revise these to provide better accessibility through greater flexibility of use. It is envisaged that this should assist with income generation at the site.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio includes Sport and Recreation.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non-Key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio, 27th September 2011.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

The Portfolio Holder is recommended to:

- (i) Approve the revised fees and charges detailed in **Appendix 2** of the report for introduction from 1st October 2011.

Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: GRAYFIELDS – REVISION OF THE 3G SYNTHETIC
PITCH PRICING STRUCTURE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek Portfolio Holder approval for the revision of the hire fees and charges in relation to the use of the 3G Synthetic Pitch at Grayfields, effective October 1st 2011.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As the Portfolio Holder will be aware, the management of Grayfields Recreation Ground moved to Sport & Recreation from Parks & Countryside in 2010. Prior to this, in 2006, significant improvements to the infrastructure had been made when the Pavilion and the floodlit 3G Synthetic Pitch were added as new features to the site.
- 2.2 A full-scale revision of all hire fees and charges across all Sport & Recreation services was undertaken in the Autumn 2010 as part of the comprehensive spending review process. However at that time, Officers replicated the existing charging model for the use of the full sized synthetic 3G Pitch only whereas in hindsight, more consideration should have been given to creating more flexible use of the pitch to allow improved accessibility and use and thus revise charges accordingly.
- 2.3 It is with this in mind that Officers now wish to offer more flexible use of the playing surface and revise charges.

3. PRESENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The existing 2011/12 hire charges for the use of the 3G Pitch that came into effect from April 1st 2011 are attached at **Appendix 1** and as can be seen, there are currently 19 different ones in existence. Despite this, there is no existing option built in to allow teams to train or play upon half the pitch only which is the case with other similar facilities locally. As a result, smaller clubs and groups are finding it financially impossible to use the facility and we are losing custom to these other facilities who do offer this sort of opportunity.
- 3.2 In addition to loss of custom, it is also considered that:-
- The pricing structure needs streamlining as it is currently confusing with the myriad of prices available for example, with floodlights / without floodlights
 - There is difficulty in marketing the facility due to the range of different prices

- Unlike our competitors, there are no “Half Pitch” prices limiting accessibility to smaller groups.
- 3.3 A survey was recently carried out asking those groups who have used or might use the 3G Pitch at Grayfields with regard to what changes / improvements they would like to see at the site. Unfortunately only 11 responses were returned thought to be due to it being conducted outside of the football season. Whilst the responses only therefore represented a minority view, pricing and flexibility of use did feature as an area of concern.
- 3.4 Additional research was carried out locally into what adult casual hire fees are being charged by other synthetic football pitch operators, details of which are tabulated below. From the research it is apparent that the facility hire fees compare very favourably with other operators of 3G synthetic football pitches and in a lot of cases are significantly cheaper.
- 3.5 Also of note is that no other operator distinguishes charges by the use of floodlighting or not whereas at Grayfields, this is currently the case.

Full Pitch - 7 aside (Adult Casual Rate per hour)						
Grayfields 3G (with floodlights)	Grayfields 3G (without floodlights)	Dyke House School (3G)	Durham Soccer Arena (3G)	Goals Sunderland (3G)	Power League Stockton (3G)	Conyers Secondary School, Yarm (3G)
£54.00	£48.90	£90.00	£75.00	£77.00	N/A	1/3 of pitch £40.00

4. PROPOSED PRICING STRUCTURE EFFECTIVE 1ST OCTOBER 2011

- 4.1 First, it is proposed to only have one set of charges for the use of the full size 3G pitch whether floodlights are required or not and these charges will be retained at the current floodlit price.
- 4.2 Further to this, it is proposed to introduce charges for the use of a half-sized pitch. Details of all proposed charges are given in **Appendix 2** of the report.
- 4.3 The research detailed in section 3 indicated that other operators were offering the use of a reduced size pitch as detailed below, thus the proposed charge of £32.40 for a Casual Adult booking per hour compares very favourably and should be very attractive to potential hirers.

Half Pitch – 5 aside(Adult Casual Rate per hour)					
Proposed Grayfields (3G)	Dyke House School (3G)	Durham Soccer Arena (3G)	Goals Sunderland (3G)	Power League Stockton (3G)	Conyers Secondary School, Yarm (3G)
£32.40	1/3 of pitch £30.00	£52.00	£52.00	£43.00	1/3 of pitch £40.00

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The cost of supporting the Grayfields operation is obviously reliant on the ability to be able to income generate. The more that can be generated, the greater the opportunity to reduce budget subsidies.
- 5.2 Whilst any proposed pricing alterations carry an element of financial risk, it is considered to be minimal in this particular case. It is believed that these changes will actually help to increase income.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The Portfolio Holder is recommended to:
 - (i) Approve the revised fees and charges detailed in Appendix 2 of the report for introduction from 1st October 2011.

CONTACT OFFICER: Pat Usher, Sport and Recreation Manager

Background Papers: Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio 15th February 2011 – Fees and Charges Increase 2011/12.

GRAYFIELDS - CURRENT PRICING

2.1 APPENDIX 1

	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>Charge to customer 2011/2012 £ @ 20% vat</u>	<u>2011/12 charge net of VAT</u>
<u>SECTION: GRAYFIELDS</u>			
Full size 3rd Generation Pitch with Floodlighting	Casual Adult	54.00	45.00
	Casual Junior	40.00	33.33
	Active Card Member Adult	45.00	37.50
	Active Card Member Junior	33.00	27.50
	Active Card Concession Adult	33.50	27.92
	Active Card Concession Junior	18.80	15.67
	Adult Club	45.00	37.50
	Junior Club	33.00	27.50
	Private Block Booking	54.00	45.00
Full size 3rd Generation Pitch without Floodlighting	Casual Adult	48.90	40.75
	Casual Junior	36.45	30.38
	Active Card Member Adult	41.00	34.17
	Active Card Member Junior	28.50	23.75
	Active Card Concession Adult	30.75	25.63
	Active Card Concession Junior	17.20	14.33
	School Use	17.20	14.33
	Adult Club	41.00	34.17
	Junior Club	28.50	23.75
	Private Block Booking	48.90	40.75

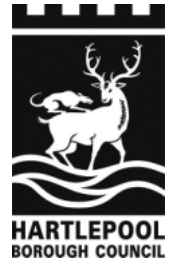
GRAYFIELDS - PROPOSED
PRICING

2.1 APPENDIX 2

	ITEM	2011/2012 charge £ Gross @20% VAT	2011/12 charge net of VAT
SECTION: GRAYFIELDS	-		
Full size 3rd Generation Pitch with/without Floodlighting	Casual Adult	£54.00	£45.00
	Casual Junior	£40.00	£33.33
	Active Card Member Adult	£45.00	£37.50
	Active Card Member Junior	£33.00	£27.50
	Active Card Concession Adult	£33.50	£27.92
	Active Card Concession Junior	£18.80	£15.67
	Adult Club	£45.00	£37.50
	Junior Club	£33.00	£27.50
	Private Block Booking	£54.00	£45.00
	School Use	£18.80	£15.67
Half size 3rd Generation Pitch with/without Floodlighting	Casual Adult	£32.40	£27.00
	Casual Junior	£24.00	£20.00
	Active Card Member Adult	£27.00	£22.50
	Active Card Member Junior	£19.80	£16.50
	Active Card Concession Adult	£20.10	£16.75
	Active Card Concession Junior	£11.28	£9.40
	Adult Club	£27.00	£22.50
	Junior Club	£19.80	£16.50
	Private Block Booking	£32.40	£27.00
	School Use	£11.28	£9.40

CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
27th September 2011



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT
1ST APRIL 2010 – 31ST MARCH 2011

SUMMARY

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the Annual Complaints Report of the Child and Adult Services Department on complaints and representations for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011.
- 1.2 The Annual Report is attached as **APPENDIX A** to this report.
- 1.3 The Annual Report provides information on the complaints and representation frameworks appropriate in the department. It draws together information in relation to complaints that have been received and dealt with during the reporting period.
- 1.4. The report includes details of complaints relating to Adults Social Care and Children's Services. These come within either a statutory framework or the Authority's Corporate Complaints Framework and are also reported to the Children's Services Portfolio Holder and the Adult and Public Health Portfolio Holder.

2.0 SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- 2.1 The report is a legal requirement in adult social care and children's services. The Annual Report is required to be presented to the Portfolio Holder and made available to staff, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), OFSTED and general public.

2.2 The report offers an opportunity to demonstrate learning that has occurred from complaints and also consideration of trends emerging through the year's activity within the Complaints Framework.

2.3 The content of the Report includes the following areas:

- Types of complaints and representations received 2010/11
- Profile data on service users who were the focus of the complaints
- Outcomes of complaints
- Compliance with timescales
- Learning lessons and service improvement

2.4 The Report provides an analysis of recorded complaints, compliments and representations and draws comparisons with the previous year. Performance is highlighted in a range of areas so that practice issues may be considered.

3.0 RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

3.1 Service is within the Portfolio Member's responsibility.

4.0 TYPE OF DECISION

4.1 Non key.

5.0 DECISION MAKING ROUTE

5.1 Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio.

6.0 DECISION(S) REQUIRED

6.1 That the Report be received.

Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT
1ST APRIL 2010 – 31ST MARCH 2011

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the annual Complaints Report of the Child and Adult Services Department on complaints, compliments and representations for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Annual Complaints Report provides data and information about activity in relation to the operation of the Complaints Procedures for Community Services, Adult Social Care Services and Children's.
- 2.2 The Annual Report outlines performance in a range of areas and also highlights areas for development to ensure continued improvement in the management and handling of complaints and representations regarding Community Services, Adult Care and Children's Services.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications of the report.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That the Report be received.

5. CONTACT OFFICER

Leigh Keeble
Development Officer, Child and Adult Services
Email: leigh.keeble@hartlepool.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

Hartlepool Borough Council

Child and Adult Services

Complaints, compliments and representations annual report

1 April 2010 - 31 March 2011

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1. Introduction

Welcome to Hartlepool Borough Council's Child and Adult Services Department's Complaints, Compliments and Representations Annual Report. The report covers the period 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011 and is for adult social care, children's services including social care and community services.

The report will be presented to the appropriate Portfolio Holders for Adult and Public Health, Children's Services and Culture, Leisure and Tourism. It will also be provided to the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Ofsted, and made available to members of the public and Child and Adult Services staff on the Internet at www.hartlepool.gov.uk.

The report outlines:

- Details of the complaints and compliments received over the reporting period;
- Lessons learned and resulting improvements following enquiry into complaints;
- Performance in relation to our handling of complaints.

2. Background

Complaints and compliments are valued as an important source of feedback on the quality of services. Each complaint is investigated and, where appropriate, redress made. Equally important is the work to learn lessons to prevent a repeat of failure in service quality and continually improve services.

2.1. What is a complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about a service that is being delivered, or the failure to deliver a service. The Local Government Ombudsman defines a complaint as *"an expression of dissatisfaction about a council service (whether that service is provided directly by the council or on its behalf by a contractor or partner) that requires a response."*

A complaint can be made in person, in writing, by telephone or email or through the council's website. It can be made at any office. Every effort is made to assist people in making their complaint and any member of staff can take a complaint.

2.2. Who can complain?

A complaint can be made by:

- A person who uses services
- A carer on their own behalf
- Someone who has been refused a service for which they think they are eligible
- The representative of someone who uses services or a carer acting on their behalf. This could be with the service users or carers consent or in the case of someone who does not have the capacity to give consent, where they are seen to be acting in the best interests of that person.
- Anyone who is or is likely to be affected by the actions, decisions or omissions of the service that is subject to a complaint.

3. Child and Adult Services complaints frameworks

Hartlepool Borough Council's Adult and Children's Social Care, Children's Services and Community Services complaints framework is derived from the statutory procedure for complaints relating to Adult's and Children's social care and the corporate complaints procedure for those relating to Children's Services and Community Services. The overall responsibility for the three areas rests with the Department's Complaints Manager/Assistant Director (Community Services). The remit of the Complaints Manager is:

- Managing, developing and administering the complaints procedures.
- Providing assistance and advice to those who wish to complain.
- Overseeing the investigation of complaints that cannot be managed at source.
- Supporting and training staff.
- Monitoring and reporting on complaints activity.

The framework covers situations where there is dissatisfaction about actions, decisions or apparent failings of services within the department.

3.1. Adult Social Care complaints framework

A single, integrated complaints process was introduced on 1st April 2009. The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 places a duty on NHS bodies and adult social care organisations to coordinate handling of complaints and to advise and support complainants through the procedure.

The three stage process previously adopted for adult social care complaints has ended and a single level process is now in use.

The new complaints procedure aims to be as accessible as possible. The policy is flexible to ensure that the needs of the complainant are paramount and allows the department and the complainant to agree on the best way to reach a satisfactory outcome. Full details of the complaints policy and procedure are available on the council's website. Briefly, on receipt of a complaint the level of impact is determined and complaints screened according to their content as being red (high impact), amber (moderate impact) or green (low impact). The process for handling the complaint is dependant on the impact.

3.1.1. Timescales for the resolution of complaints

Staff will always try to resolve problems or concerns before they escalate into complaints and this ensures that, wherever possible, complaints are kept to a minimum.

Since the introduction of the new regulations the only mandatory timescale is that the complainant receives an acknowledgement within 3 working days. The new legislation allows for a more flexible approach to the amount of time in which complaints should be dealt with. In our policy, we aim for even the most complex of complaints to be completed within 65 working days of the complaint plan being agreed. If timescales cannot be met, a new timescale must be discussed with the complainant. Locally timescales have been introduced for amber and green complaints of 40 and 20 working days respectively.

There is a time limit of 12 months from when the matter being complained about occurred to when a complaint may be made. After this time, a complaint will not normally be considered. However, the 12 month time limit does not apply where the local authority is satisfied that the complainant had good reasons for not making the complaint within that time and where it is still possible to investigate the complaint effectively and fairly.

3.2. Children's Social Care complaints framework

The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 came into force from 1 September 2006. This procedure is for all representations received from children and young people, their parents, foster carers or other qualifying adults about social care services provided or commissioned by children's social care.

The Regulations are now fully embedded into the children's social care complaints system and information derived from complaints is included in the annual monitoring of children's social care and reported to Ofsted.

All children, young people or their families who make a representation are offered the services of an Independent Advocate to enable their views to be effectively promoted.

There are three stages to the procedure.

» Stage 1

Local Resolution: The aim of stage 1 is to sort out the matter as quickly as possible. The complaint will be allocated to a manager who will contact the complainant to discuss the complaint. Stage 1 of the complaints procedure should be completed within 10 working days but if there are a number of issues to look into, this can take up to 20 working days. The complainant will receive a response to the complaint in writing.

» Stage 2

Investigation: This part of the procedure is used when the complainant remains unhappy after their complaint has been responded to at Stage 1 or the complaint is sufficiently serious enough to warrant a more formal investigation. Investigations are conducted by an officer independent of the operational service being complained about. An Independent Person is also appointed at Stage 2. This person is external to the council and works alongside the investigating officer and their role is to ensure that the process is open, transparent and fair.

Reports completed by the investigating officer and independent person are submitted to an Adjudicating Officer (usually at Assistant Director level).

The investigation and adjudication process should be concluded within 65 working days.

» Stage 3

Review Panel: If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 2, they may request that the issues are taken to a Review Panel (Stage 3). The Panel consists of an Independent Chair and two independent panel members. The Panel considers the complaint and can make recommendations to the Director of Child and Adult Services.

The Director is required to make a formal response to any findings of the Review Panel within 15 working days of receiving the Panel's report.

3.3. Corporate complaints

Where complaints are received in to the department that do not come under the jurisdiction of the statutory social care complaints procedures, the Corporate Complaints policy provides the framework for resolution. This includes complaints in relation to community services but also includes any complaints relating to services provided by the department not covered in statutory processes such as: special educational needs; the pupil referral unit; and, the integrated youth service. Complaints in relation to schools are dealt with by individual schools and their governing bodies.

3.3.1. Formal complaint

Where a person remains dissatisfied with the service they have received or a decision made, they have the right to take their complaint to a formal stage. The complaint will be investigated by a Senior Officer. A written response to the complaint should be delivered within 15 working days.

3.3.2. Portfolio Holder

If a person remains dissatisfied with the response to their formal complaint, they have the right for the matter to be referred to the relevant Portfolio Holder who will review the documentation and the response to the complaint.

3.3.3. Appeal

If a person continues to remain dissatisfied with the response to their formal complaint, they have the right to request an appeal. If the Portfolio Holder agrees to the appeal, the complaint will be heard by the General Purposes (Appeal Committee) which is made up of five councillors.

3.4. Referral to the Local Government Ombudsman

If, at the end of the complaints process, the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome or way in which their complaint has been handled under any of the procedures, they may ask the Local Government Ombudsman to review their complaint. Complainants may also approach the Ombudsman directly without accessing the complaints process. In those cases it is usual for the Ombudsman to refer them back to the council for their complaint to be examined through the relevant complaints process before they intervene.

4. Principles and outcomes

Good handling of complaints and representations involves:

- Keeping the complainant at the centre of the complaints process;
- Being open and accountable;
- Responding to complainants in a way that is fair;
- Being committed to try to get things right when they go wrong;
- Seeking to continually improve services.

Statutory complaints are underpinned by the following:

- A procedure that aims to be fair, clear, robust and accessible;
- Support being available to those wishing to make a complaint;
- Timely resolution following enquiry into complaints/representations;
- Lessons learnt following complaints and services improved;
- Monitoring being used as a means of improving performance.

5. Public information

Information about the complaints and representations framework is accessible via the council's public access points and also the council's website. Carers and service users of children's and adult's social care are provided with leaflets explaining the procedure when they take up a new service and when care plans are agreed and reviewed.

Information in other formats such as large print or Braille or translation in languages other than English are made available upon request. There is also available an easy read format of the statutory Adult Social Care complaints procedure.

6. Summary of representations

6.1. Adult Social Care

6.1.1. Compliments

Compliments are generally recognised to be an indicator of good outcomes for service user and carers. They also serve to provide wider lessons regarding the quality of services.

During 2010/11, 38 compliments have been received relating to Adult Social Care. Appendix 1 provides some examples of compliments received during the period.

6.1.2. Summary and analysis of complaints

A total of 17 complaints were received. Two complaints were withdrawn making a total of 15 complaints investigated. The number of complaints received has decreased by 10 from 2009/10.

Of the 15 complaints investigated, 13 of these have been concluded and 2 remain ongoing as at 31 March 2011. In line with statutory regulations, 2 complaints were handled as joint complaints with the NHS. Details of the complaints concluded are outlined in Appendix 2.

6.1.3. Client groups

Adult Social Care			
Client group	2010/2011	2009/2010	2008/2009
Older Persons	14	17	8
Learning Disabilities	1	1	3
Physical Disabilities and Sensory Loss	2	8	1
Adult Mental Health (Integrated Service)	0	0	0
HIV/Aids	0	0	0
Substance misuse	0	0	0
Carers	0	1	0
Total number of complaints received	17	27	12

The service users who were the focus of the complaints were 5 (29%) males and 12 (71%) females.

All of the service users were White British and were aged as follows:

Age range (years)	Number of service users
18 - 25	0
26 - 35	1

36 - 45	0
46 - 55	2
56 - 65	0
66 - 75	3
76 - 85	6
86 +	5

Complaints which are considered either complex or have a number of elements are usually investigated by someone independent of the council. In 2010/11, Independent Investigating Officers were appointed to 2 of the 15 complaints investigated. The costs associated with the independent investigations are not yet known as these relate to the 2 complaints that remain ongoing as at 31 March 2011. The remaining 13 complaints were investigated and responded to internally.

Of the 13 complaints that have been concluded and resolved:

- 2 complaints were upheld
- 7 complaints were partly upheld
- 4 complaints were not upheld

6.1.4. Advocacy services

None of the 17 complainants chose to have an advocate to assist them with their complaints.

6.1.5. Timescales

There is no statutory timescale for investigating and responding to a complaint relating to adult social care. However, the internal adult social care complaints procedure identifies an indicative timescale of between 10 and 20 working days for investigating and responding to those complaints considered to be low impact. Of those complaints identified as having a moderate impact, the investigation and response should be aimed at being concluded within 40 working days and for those complaints considered high impact, the investigation and response should be aimed at being concluded within 65 working days.

» **Low impact**

Of the 15 complaints investigated in 2010/11, 6 of these were considered low impact. Three of the 6 (50%) low impact complaints were completed within the indicative timescale. However, in the case of the remaining 3, an extension to the timescale was negotiated with the complainant.

» **Moderate impact**

Of the 15 complaints investigated in 2010/11, 8 of these were considered moderate impact. Five of the 8 (63%) moderate impact complaints were completed within the indicative timescale of 40 working days. With regard to the remaining 3 moderate impact complaints, 2 of these are ongoing as at 31 March 2011 and the remaining one complaint took longer to complete as the complainant added further points of complaint during the investigation process. The extension to the timescale was agreed with the complainant.

» **High impact**

Of the 15 complaints investigated in 2010/11, 1 of these was considered high impact which was completed within the indicative timescale.

6.1.6. Complaints ongoing as at 31 March 2010

Ten of the 26 complaints investigated in 2009/10 remained ongoing as at 31 March 2010. Of these, 6 were resolved. The remaining 4 complaints, 3 of which were received at different times of the financial year from the same complainant, were subsequently considered by the Local Government Ombudsman.

6.1.7. Complaints considered by the Local Government Ombudsman in 2010/11

Two complainants, whose complaints were considered by the council in 2009/10, approached the Local Government Ombudsman in 2010/11 with their complaints. In the case of the complainant with 3 separate complaints, the Local Government Ombudsman discontinued her investigation and set out to the complainant the reasons for this. The Local Government Ombudsman recorded this complaint in her statistics for the year ending 31 March 2011 as "Ombudsman discretion". In relation to the one remaining complaint, the Local Government Ombudsman advised the complainant that she did not intend to investigate the matter and set out the reasons why. The Local Government

Ombudsman recorded this complaint in her statistics for the year ending 31 March 2011 as “Insufficient evidence of maladministration”.

6.2. Children’s Social Care

6.2.1. Compliments

During 2010/11, 10 compliments have been received relating to Children’s Social Care. Appendix 2 provides some examples of compliments received during 2010/11

6.2.2. Complaints received in 2010/11

A total of 35 complaints were received. Three complaints were withdrawn making a total of 32 complaints investigated. The number of complaints received has increased by 7 from 2009/10. Details of the complaints concluded are outlined in appendix 4.

- Of the 32 complaints investigated, 31 of these have been concluded and 1 remains ongoing as at 31 March 2011.
- 29 of the 32 complaints investigated were responded to at Stage 1 in the first instance. Of these, 25 complaints (86%) were resolved and concluded at Stage 1.
- Of the 4 complaints (14%) that were first considered at Stage 1 and progressed to Stage 2, 2 of these were resolved at Stage 2 and 2 complainants, after an initial meeting with the Investigating Officer and Independent Person, chose to withdraw their complaints at this point.
- Of the remaining 3 complaints that progressed straight to Stage 2 given the number of elements and complexity of the issues raised, 2 of these were resolved at Stage 2 and the one remaining complaint remains ongoing at Stage 2 as at 31 March 2011.
- There was one Stage 3 Complaints Review Panel held in 2010/11. This was from a complaint received in 2009/10.
- Complaints were received from 13 males (41%), 11 females (34%) and 8 complaints (25%) were made jointly by couples (male and female). All complainants were White British.

Of the 31 complaints that have been concluded and resolved:

- 7 complaints were upheld
- 14 complaints were partly upheld

- 9 complaints were not upheld
- 1 complaint could not be proven either way

6.2.3. Nature of complaints

Of the 32 complaints received, these can be broken down into the following categories:

- 14 related to communication issues
- 5 related to the quality of the service provided
- 4 related to breach of confidentiality
- 2 related to the attitude/conduct of a Social Worker
- 2 related to communication and financial issues
- 1 related to financial issues
- 1 related to failure to follow agreed procedures
- 1 related to failure to act on information
- 1 related to the quality of care provided by a Foster Carer
- 1 related breach of confidentiality, communication and financial issues

6.2.4. Time taken to respond to complaints

Children's Social Care		
Response times	Number of complaints	
Working days	Stage 1	Stage 2
0 - 10	5	2
11 - 15	1	
16 - 20	7	
21 - 30	10	1
31 - 40	3	1
41 - 65	2	
+65	1	
Total	29	4

6.2.5. Advocacy services

Four of the 32 complainants were assisted by another person during the complaints process. An advocate supported 3 complainants with their complaints, one of these being a complaint from a young person. One complainant chose to be represented by a solicitor.

6.2.6. Complaints considered by the Local Government Ombudsman in 2010/11

One complainant, whose complaint was received in 2009/10, approached the Local Government Ombudsman in 2010/11 following the outcome of the Stage 3 Complaints Review Panel held in May 2010. The Local Government Ombudsman discontinued her investigation and set out to the complainant the reasons for this. The Local Government Ombudsman recorded this complaint in her statistics for the year ending 31 March 2011 as “Ombudsman discretion”.

6.3. Corporate procedure

6.3.1. Compliments

During 2010/11, 24 compliments have been received relating to Community Services. Appendix 5 provides some examples of compliments received during 2010/11.

6.3.2. Complaints received in 2010/11

A total of 17 complaints were received during 2010/11 (further details are contained in appendix 6). This included one anonymous complaint which was looked into as far as practicably possible.

Of the 17 complaints received:

- 11 related to services delivered within Community Services Division
- 3 related to services delivered within Performance and Achievement Division
- 3 related to services relating to Children’s Services that fall outside of the statutory complaints procedure for children’s social care.
- Of the 16 complaints investigated, 14 complaints have been resolved and concluded leaving 2 complaints ongoing as at 31 March 2011.

Of the 14 complaints that have been concluded and resolved:

- 5 complaints were upheld
- 1 complaint was partly upheld
- 4 complaints were not upheld
- 4 complaints could not be proven either way

Complaints were received from 4 males (25%) and 12 females (75%).

6.3.3. Time taken to respond to complaints

The Corporate Complaints procedure is required to operate within a timescale of 15 working days. Of the 14 complaints concluded, 11 (73%) were responded to within the 15 working day timescale outlined in the Corporate Complaints Procedure. The remaining 3 complaints have taken 23, 28 and 34 working days to fully investigate and respond to the issues raised. The extra time taken in these complaints was as a result of their complexity and the extension to the timescale was discussed with the complainant.

6.3.4. Complaints considered by the Local Government Ombudsman in 2010/11

One complainant, whose complaint was received in 2009/10, approached the Local Government Ombudsman in 2010/11 following the outcome of the review by the Portfolio Holder responsible for the service area concerned. The outcome is not yet known as the Local Government Ombudsman has not fully completed their investigation into this complaint.

7. Lessons learned

Lessons learned are an important aspect of the complaints framework. Appendix 2, 4 and 6 respectively outline the context of some improvements that have been put in place as a direct result of complaints and representations received in adult social care, children's services including social care and community services.

8. Conclusions and way forward

8.1. Going forward

We continue to ensure that a person-centred approach is adopted for the handling and investigation of each complaint. We will continue to focus on ensuring that we monitor that: complainants receive appropriate and timely feedback on complaints; appropriate apologies are offered; and any service improvement recommendations are delivered.

8.2. Action plan

- A systematic process for implementing trends and lessons learned will be introduced and embedded within the scope of the complaints procedure.
- Plans are in place to continue to deliver training to the children's and adult's social care workforce to raise awareness of the statutory complaints procedure and complaint handling.
- We will continue to promote the complaints procedure for children's social care services to a range of networks to ensure that children and young people feel confident and able to approach the department with any particular concerns.
- As part of this promotion, we will work with children and young people to ensure that the public information informing them of the complaints procedure is tailored to meet their needs and available at the places most relevant to them. In particular, we will ensure that children and young people with disabilities are part of this consultation exercise so that information is accessible to all potential users.
- We will also explore the use/benefits of alternative methods of communication and increased use of technology to engage with children and young people.
- In addition, the role of the Corporate Parenting Board and partner agencies in promoting the complaints procedure will be reinforced.
- We will continue to promote the availability of advocacy provision to complainants.
- Whilst the Local Government Ombudsman has dealt with complaints about the care arranged and funded by the local authority for over 35 years, their role expanded as of October 2010. The Local Government Ombudsman can now consider complaints from people who have arranged and paid for their own adult social care on a private basis or have used monies for this from a personalised budget. The care provider must investigate and respond to the complaint in the

first instance but people should be informed of their right to approach the Local Government Ombudsman should they remain dissatisfied. The expansion in the role of the Local Government Ombudsman will continue to be promoted.

Appendix 1: Examples of compliments received across Adult Social Care services

"I would like to thank everyone for the kindness they gave me. I definitely do not have any complaints, only praise for everyone. Thank you very much."

- From a service user about support from the Discharge Assessment Team.

"Thank you very much for the helpful equipment we received from social services. You carried out your work in such a caring and tactful way, and very efficient. We both thank you for such prompt service from your and your team."

- From a service user about an Occupational Therapy Assistant.

"I write to draw attention to the exceptional care that my daughter B has received from T, a member of the Learning Disability Team based at Warren Road and L of the Finance Department of The Child and Adult Services based at the Civic Centre. Although in the past B has had able assistance from the Team, for the first time I felt that T really understood her problems and was concerned about the outcome of the help given to B to support her in caring for her son. ... One frequently hears of the Care Services being criticised for one reason or the other therefore I think it is important to highlight those who are doing a good job and are deserving of our thanks and praise."

- From the mother of a service user about a social worker in the Learning Disability Team and a User Property and Finance Officer.

"We wish to record our gratitude to you for J and the professional, understanding yet delicate way she negotiated my husband's respite care in Gardner House. She exuded a confidence and simplicity into what was for us a daunting experience, everything went well from beginning to end. She is a compliment to the "Social Care Dept" Thank-You!"

- From the wife of a service user about a social worker in a Locality Team.

"I'd just like to express my sincere thanks to you and your team for the standard of both care and assistance that you have shown my mother during her stay at West View Lodge and in facilitating her move from Hartlepool to Aberdeen. I can't express what a difference to her life/wellbeing your assistance has made, and hopefully being close to her family (and future grandson) will make a marked improvement in her outlook and state of well-being. Particular praise should go to L as although she has stated on several occasions that she is "just doing her job", I feel that the level of

commitment to an individuals needs have been met with compassion, understanding and goes above and beyond the 'call of duty'."

- From the daughter of a service user about a social care officer in a Locality Team.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your help over the last few months.

"We all appreciate your kindness (especially with my mam) and your professional attitude. It has been a long struggle to get my mam rehoused and we almost lost hope in achieving our aims. Thank you for your thorough assessments and swift responses to my mam's needs."

- From the daughter of a service user about an Occupational Therapist in the Occupational Therapy team.

"I really appreciate all you have done for Dad you have been amazing with him and all the family. You have made this difficult process very easy for us all and your professionalism is exceptional. Thank you."

- From the son of a service user about a social worker from a locality team.

"I would like to compliment L my social worker for the support and help I received from her after I had a hip replacement operation, my aftercare has recently just finished and if it hadn't been for the support L arranged for me I would not have been able to manage. Please could you send her my thanks and kindest regards."

- From a service user about a social care officer from the Discharge Assessment Team.

"I would like to express my and my family's gratitude for the help and assistance provided by M from your department. M has provided over a number of years professional support to both my mother and all the family. It has been a pleasure to work with M and we are sorry to see her move on a different role. However, I am sure she will continue to provide essential support to those in need."

- From the son of a service user about a social worker in a locality team.

Appendix 2: Details of complaints and lessons learned in Adult Social Care services

Details of complaint	Outcomes	Lessons learned and where appropriate, actions taken
The complainant, the friend of a service user, is unhappy with the level of service when making a referral on her friend's behalf and alleged lack of action taken by the Department.	Complaint: Partly Upheld Response: 24 Working days MODERATE IMPACT OLDER PERSONS	A system to be implemented for all members of the Duty Team to provide the same response if they are unable to accept a referral from a third party including a mechanism to ensure that people are not being left at risk in the community.
The complainant, the daughter of a service user, is unhappy with information provided by a Social Care Officer when facilitating her mother's hospital discharge resulting in a financial contribution for her mother's care in a residential care home.	Complaint: Partly upheld Response: 19 Working days MODERATE IMPACT OLDER PERSONS	- Reinforce with Social Care Staff that the correct information is being provided at the time the placement is arranged and for Service Users and their families to be fully aware of the difference between residential rehabilitation and transitional care. - Referrals to the User Property and Finance Team need to be made on the same day as the placement to avoid any delay in the person being aware of the charges they are going to be expected to make. Clear information on the

		different services and what charges are applicable also needs to be provided.
The complainant, the son of a service user, is unhappy that his father has to pay a contribution towards the support he is receiving each day for a support stocking to be fitted and requested the Department to bear the cost of this support and refund contributions already made.	Complaint: Not upheld Response: 14 Working days MODERATE IMPACT OLDER PERSONS	None identified.
The complainant, a service user, was unhappy that the Department would not fund bus fares and meals for his daughter who supported him following a hospital discharge.	Complaint: Not upheld Response: 8 Working days LOW IMPACT PHYSICAL DISABILITIES	None identified.

The complainant, the brother-in-law of a service user, is unhappy with the hospital discharge arrangements for his family member. This complaint spanned both North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and Hartlepool Borough Council. The complaint was co-ordinated by North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust.	Complaint: Partly upheld Response: 20 Working days MODERATE IMPACT OLDER PERSONS	None identified by Hartlepool Borough Council.
The complainant, the sister of a deceased service user whose home care was delivered by an independent sector agency, alleges that: • 3 sets of keys were left with the agency to enable care staff to access her sister's home. On 24.10.10, a carer called at her sister's home but had not been informed that she needed a key for access. • the family were not notified by the agency that the carer had been unable to gain access to her sister's home, which led to the complainant's niece finding her sister's body. • it was inappropriate that a supervisor chose to	Complaint: Upheld Response: 26 Working days Note: At the point of acknowledging receipt of the complaint, it was suggested to the complainant that the Local Authority would not contact her directly to discuss her complaint for a period of 2 weeks as it was considered inappropriate to intrude at a difficult and upsetting time when the family had other matters to organise. The complainant was advised to contact the Local Authority if she wished to discuss her complaint prior to that. However, the complainant was informed that this would not preclude the Local Authority commencing looking into the issues she had raised.	• Home Care Agency to review their procedures for recording the holding of keys. • Home Care Agency to remind staff of the importance of ensuring keys are made available to staff. • During the course of the complaint investigation, the Home Care Agency recognised the need to appoint more supervisory staff. Additional supervisory staff were recruited. • Home Care Agency to follow their disciplinary processes in relation to the staff member concerned.

call at the complainant's sister's property on the day she died to apologise for his failings. The way he conducted himself was not appropriate and caused further distress to the family. only 2 of the 3 sets of keys given to the Home Care Agency were returned by the Supervisor.	HIGH IMPACT OLDER PERSONS	Local Authority to monitor implementation of agreed action by the Home Care Agency.
The complainant, a service user, is unhappy with the length of time taken for someone to attend to the TV Loop System which was in need of repair and a reason as to why this was not dealt with as an emergency. The complainant also requested a reason as to why she was now being classed by the Department as 'hard of hearing' when, the complainant alleges, she has been registered 'deaf' since she was a child.	Complaint: Partly upheld Response: 16 Working days LOW IMPACT PHYSICAL DISABILITIES	Procedures need to be implemented to ensure there are no gaps in the process when specialist workers are unavailable for any reason.
The complainant, the sister of a service user, is unhappy that the planned transport provision failed to arrive to collect her sister to take her to the Day Centre. The complainant alleges that no one contacted a family member to advise of the cancellation of the transport service and her sister who, has no concept of time, spent the day waiting at the window for the bus to arrive.	Complaint: Upheld Response: 4 Working days MODERATE IMPACT LEARNING DISABILITIES	Although the delivery of the transport provision is a commissioned service and procedures are in place by the provider around cancellation of the service, given the failure on this occasion, the Child and Adult Services Department have implemented their own operational procedures to include a 'double-check' measure to

		minimise the risk of a similar re-occurrence.
The complainant, the daughter of a service user, alleges that: - there has been damage to internal fittings (toilet-roll holder and curtain rail) that carers have been unable to account for. The complainant is unhappy that no-one has offered an explanation as to how these fittings were damaged and no-one has offered to repair them. - medication from the Nomad system had been incorrectly administered by the carers resulting in the complainant administering an additional dose of medication to her mother resulting in an overdose of medication. This necessitated the complainant's mother being admitted to hospital for observation. - the complainant's mother was seated by a carer near to a bathroom cabinet in a confined	Complaint: Partly upheld Response: 60 Working days Social Care Officer to check with the complainant and her mother as to whether the bathroom cabinet can be relocated. Note: Following a meeting between the complainant and Manager appointed to investigate her complaint, the complainant amended the elements of her complaint delaying the investigation process. MODERATE IMPACT OLDER PERSONS	- Although the specific element of complaint around damage to internal fittings could not be substantiated, it was agreed that the Registered Manager would reinforce with staff in a Team Meeting and via supervision processes that any damage should be reported as soon as practicably possible. - Registered Manager to reinforce with staff in a Team Meeting and via supervision processes the importance of checking and recording medication accurately.

space. As a result of this, the complainant's mother hit her head on the cabinet when she got up causing bruising to her forehead. a potential tripping hazard, a loose carpet, was not identified by the carers.		
The complainant, the daughter of a service user, alleges that, following her mother's annual review meeting, the Social Care Officer has compromised her relationship with staff members in the care home her mother resides.	Complaint: Partly upheld Response: 35 Working days LOW IMPACT OLDER PERSONS	None identified.
The complainant, the daughter of a gentleman who was self-funding in a care home, is unhappy with the way information was relayed from one organisation to another and wishes to receive an explanation of what happened and what is recorded on computer systems. This complaint spanned both NHS Hartlepool and Hartlepool Borough Council. The complaint was co-ordinated by Hartlepool Borough Council.	Complaint: Not upheld Response: 53 Working days Note: Adverse weather conditions caused a delay around interviews with staff from NHS Hartlepool. LOW IMPACT OLDER PERSONS	Any referral to the Duty Social Work Team from another agency must now be in a written format so there can be no doubt or confusion about the information shared with the Duty Social Work Team.
The complainant, the daughter of a service user, expressed that she was upset with the way carers had recorded information about her and wished to know	Complaint: Partly upheld Response: 42 Working days	Home Care Agency to implement further training for staff around recording to ensure there is no misinterpretation of what is being recorded.

what action carers had taken as a result. The complainant was also dissatisfied with the volume of telephone calls from carers notifying her of problems rather than addressing the issues themselves.	Note: The outcome of the reassessment was awaited before concluding the complaint. LOW IMPACT OLDER PERSONS	
The complainant, the son of a service user, expressed that he was unhappy that the cashable value of his mother's pre-paid funeral plan formed part of the capital disregard in the financial assessment process and was not considered a separate disregard.	Complaint: Not upheld Response: 17 Working days Note: At the request of the complainant, the response was sent in 2 parts. The first response was based on Charging for Residential Accommodation Guide (CRAG) applicable in March 2011 and the second response was based on CRAG issued on 11 April 2011. LOW IMPACT OLDER PERSONS	None identified.

Appendix 3: Examples of compliments received across Children's Social Care services

"I feel I need to write to you regarding my granddaughter H. She got in with a very bad crowd, drugs, drink. Her mam and I tried everything to help her ...she refused to speak to her so contact was rare. The along came P her social worker. We are a family think he went beyond his duty to help. If they were all like him the kids on the street would be better people... We thought we had lost H. With their help we are getting her back"

- From the grandmother of a service user about a social worker in Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services.

"I have had a difficult time and I found my social worker to be very helpful to me. Not sure where I would be without her help to me, my kids and my mum. Keep up the good work."

- From a service user about a social worker in Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services.

"Thank you for everything you have done for us."

- From two children to a social worker in Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services.

"Just a little thank you for all your help and support over the last six months."

- From a family to a social worker in Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services.

"Just to say a big thank you for all the support you have given C and us. It takes a special person to do the job you do and you do it well. Thank you."

- From a family to a social worker in Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services.

“I really appreciate the support and advice that I received from L and how without this I wouldn’t be doing as well with my son as I am at the moment.”

- From the mother about a social worker in Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services.

Appendix 4: Details of complaints and lessons learned in Children's Services

Details of complaint	Outcomes	Lessons learned and where appropriate, actions taken
The complainant, (CJ), the mother of a child, is unhappy with information she has been provided with from Hartlepool Job Centre. The complainant alleges that the Job Centre led her to believe Child and Adult Services had disclosed information about her living arrangements without her prior consent.	Complaint: Not Upheld Response: 20 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	None identified.
The complainant, (MB), the parent of a child is unhappy that the bottles provided by a foster carer to feed his daughter were unclean and did not reach basic hygiene standards.	Complaint: Upheld Response: 17 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	Supervising Social Workers are to ensure that appropriate standards of hygiene are maintained by foster carers for all ages of children placed with them and particular attention is paid to equipment used for babies in placements.
The complainant, (NF), who is a grandfather, is unhappy with the lack of communication between himself and social workers in relation to his grandson.	Complaint: Not Upheld Response: 5 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	None identified.

The complainant, (NF) who is a grandfather, is unhappy with the lack of communication between social workers and himself. The complainant is also unhappy with visitation arrangements in relation to his grandson which had been arranged through the social worker.	Complaint: Not Upheld Response: 9 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	None identified.
The complainant, (KJ), the guardian of 3 children, alleges that the Social Worker allocated to the children is unprofessional.	Complaint: Not Upheld Response: 10 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	None identified.
The complainants, (MB & ZB), the parents of a child in foster care, allege that they were not: • advised why contact in the home had been stopped and transferred to a Family Resource Centre; • consulted properly regarding the Local Authority's plan for their daughter; • informed of a decision to approve the plan for adoption; • happy with the way in which they were provided with information about post adoption services.	Complaint: Partly Upheld Response: 32 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	• Parents should be informed appropriately and timely in relation to the Department's plan for their child. • Both verbal and written feedback provided to families after a permanency planning meeting is held in order that families fully understand and are clear about the Department's planning and decision making in relation to their child. This will include an invite to meet the Social Worker and Team Manager, after a decision has been made by the Adoption Panel, as well as written confirmation of the outcome of the Adoption Panel and written information about the After

		Adoption Service.
The complainant, (KJ), the guardian of 3 children, is unhappy that he has not received any financial help from the Department for the 3 children who are residing with him.	Complaint: Not Upheld Response: 15 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	None identified.
The complainant, (DW), the father of a child, alleges that: - the social worker discussed with his daughter where she would like to live in front of her mother. - the social worker wrote to a Solicitor with inaccurate information - he had previously requested a copy of the Department's policy regarding information sharing but only received a limited response - the limited response received was an attempt not to meet the request for a copy of the Department's information sharing	Complaint: Partly Upheld Response: 54 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	None identified.

policy.		
The complainant, (BW), the parent of a service user, is unhappy with the Social Worker's attitude and lack of visible ID badge.	Complaint: Partly Upheld Response: 54 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	Reinforce with staff the council's policy in respect of ID badges.
The complainants, (DR & SR) the grandparents of a service user, allege that the Department: - failed to follow child protection procedures in relation to their grandson - submitted an inaccurate letter to a Solicitor	Complaint: Upheld Response: 6 Working days Resolved at Stage 2	- Email sent to all Children's social work staff by the Assistant Director reminding all staff that the LSCB procedures must be followed and in particular the need to share information with the Police. - Standards to be reviewed in relation to telephone calls to ensure that there are clear expectations of the recording of messages and a timescale for responding to them.
The complainant, (GE), the father of a service user, alleges that: - contact with his daughter was cancelled without any prior notification. - the initial assessment process has not been completed some 7 months later - correspondence has been sent to complainant's old address	Complaint: Partly upheld Response: 20 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	- Reinforce with Social Workers in team meetings of the need to update contact details on computer systems as soon as staff are made aware of any changes. - Reinforce with Social Workers in team meetings of the need to contact families in advance to advise if there is to be a change of Social Worker visiting than the person they are expecting. This is good customer service and should be done as a matter of

• a letter inviting the complainant to a meeting was received 2 months late • he was not provided with any formal notice of a core group meeting • the Social Worker did not attend contact sessions to assess the complainant despite this being an agreed action • the Social Worker failed to arrive for pre-arranged appointments		courtesy.
The Complainant, (JM), the Special Guardian of a child, alleges medical information about her was shared as part of Court Proceedings without her prior knowledge or agreement.	Complaint: Upheld Response: 30 working days Resolved at Stage 2	• Children's Services should ensure that any confidential documents are clearly marked for the purpose that they were obtained and not used for any other purpose without the consent of the individual.
The complainant, (IM), the father of a child, alleges that: • the Social Worker treated him like a 'second class citizen' • he did not receive the first set of child in need review minutes and was unhappy that an allegation made had not been passed to the	Complaint: Partly Upheld Response: 20 working days Resolved at Stage 1, withdrawn at Stage 2	• Reinforce with staff through supervision the importance of accurate recording of concerns and that minutes of meetings are quality assured by social workers prior to them being sent out. • Reinforce with staff through supervision the importance of communication with families in relation to offering feedback about how concerns

police nor had he been informed of the outcome of any investigation by the Local Authority into the allegation. • he reported concerns around the possibility of his ex- partner using drugs and was concerned that he had not received any feedback about this nor had it been recorded on any child in need review minutes.		have been addressed.
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The complainant, (DD), the grandmother of a child, alleges that: - the father of her grandchildren had been requested to leave the family home because of possible risks he presented to the children but the complainant alleges the father of the children has moved in with another person and her 2 children and he had not been requested to leave. - she receives inconsistent information from the Social Worker who fails to carry out agreed actions. - the Social Worker involved had been unprofessional at times. - she was unhappy with the decision reached by the Resource Panel in relation to access and supervised contact between the children and their father. The complainant did not feel this was appropriate given that the father of the children was not co-operating with drug testing.	Complaint: Partly Upheld Response: 19 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	- How information is communicated and shared with families about the services offered and ensuring families understand clearly what the roles and responsibilities of social work staff are is to be reinforced through staff supervision. - The importance of sharing completed assessments and obtaining feedback is one that is being actively promoted by Social Work Managers to social workers to ensure that it becomes standard practice. This will be reinforced through staff supervision. - Social workers will be reminded of their responsibilities in relation to confidentiality and good practice through ongoing training and identifying professional development needs through the supervision process.
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The complainants, (DR & SR), the grandparents of a service user, allege that a Social Worker breached confidentiality by disclosing to a third party that they had made a complaint.	Complaint: Upheld Response: 20 Working days Resolved at Stage 1, withdrawn at Stage 2	Guidance to be issued to Social Workers generally about the need to keep information about complaints confidential and not to disclose to other parties, under any circumstances, that a complaint has been made.
The complainant, (VB), the mother of a service user, alleges that a member of staff talked about his sexual relationship in front of her son and other young people whilst out on a trip.	Complaint: Unsubstantiated Response: 32 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	None identified.
The complainant, (SH), a member of the public, alleges that the Department failed to act on a child protection referral she made in relation to her neighbour's children.	Complaint: Not Upheld Response: 22 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	Practice to be strengthened within the Social Work Duty Team to include the provision of routine feedback to the referrer.
The complainant, (DM), the Manager of a shop, alleges that, following concerns she reported to the Police about a customer, the Social Worker informed the customer of the referral source which she expected would have remained anonymous.	Complaint: Not Upheld Response: 27 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	None identified.

The complainant, (WI), the grandmother of a service user, alleges that a Social Worker's report, submitted to an Initial Child Protection Conference, contained factual inaccuracies.	Complaint: Partly Upheld Response: 20 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	• Social Workers check out information that they receive and do not make assumptions about what this information may mean but seek to clarify what they believe.
The complainant, (KJ), the guardian of 3 children, is unhappy that: • he has not been provided with a list of Social Worker's duties that he had previously requested. • he, and his wife, were contacted unnecessarily by a member of staff about a contact meeting when in fact, the meeting had already been cancelled.	Complaint: Partly Upheld Response: 3 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	• Reinforce with staff the importance of messages being passed on about cancellations in an appropriate and timely manner.
The complainants, (DF & JF), the father and step-mother of a service user, allege that: • it has not been made clear to them who they need to contact and about what in matters concerning DF's children.	Complaint: Partly Upheld Response: 27 Working days at Stage 1 • Complainants wished to progress their complaint to Stage 2. This did not progress to a	None identified.

an Addendum Report does not include that JF telephoned the Social Worker to report concerns and the outcome of their conversation.	full investigation as the complainants expressed that Stage 2 was unlikely to reveal any further explanation. Resolved at Stage 2	
The complainant, (DV), the grandmother of service users, alleges that: - the handover process from Hartlepool to Sunderland was significantly delayed to the detriment of the complainant and her grandchildren. - the level of financial support from Hartlepool was inadequate and irregular. - her telephone number was provided to a third party without her permission. - appropriate planning around returning the children to their mother would not be carried out should the mother indicate a wish to resume the care of her children.	Complaint: Partly Upheld Response: 89 Working days Note: Complainant requested an Advocate to assist and support her with the complaint. Once an Advocate was in place, the complainant and Advocate required the opportunity to discuss the matter between them first before the Manager appointed to look into the complaint could meet with them to discuss matters. Annual leave arrangements and the complexity of the issues raised impacted upon the length of time taken to fully investigate and respond to the complaint. Complainant sent email thanking the Manager appointed to her complaint for his time and efforts in resolving matters.	A different system for confirming the notification of a change of address has been made as well as the method of recording it on the child's file.

	Resolved at Stage 1	
The complainants, (DJ & PC), the grandmother and her partner, were unhappy that the contact arrangements put in place for them to see their grandchildren did not happen as planned.	Complaint: Upheld Response: 20 working days Resolved at Stage 1	Ensuring information is written down and copies of the arrangements given to all parties concerned.
The complainant, (HP), a young person, was unhappy that he wasn't going to be returning to his mother's home and a suitable placement could not be found close to Hartlepool.	Complaint: Partly upheld Response: 10 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	None identified.
The complainant, (AH), a parent, was unhappy with a sentence in a letter to him written by a Social Worker which he alleges was factually incorrect. The complainant was of the view that the Social Worker should have checked out the facts with the Police, Schools and Magistrates Court prior to sending the letter to ensure the facts were correct.	Complaint: Partly upheld Response: 30 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	Learning point for the Social Worker concerned around being more explicit in correspondence in relation to the information she had received and the efforts she made to clarify the information owing to a discrepancy within the referral received.

The complainant, (SM), the father of a young person, alleges that the Department has supported his wife's decision not to allow him access to his daughter which has left him feeling upset and frustrated.	Complaint: Not Upheld Response: 24 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	None identified.
The complainant, (SM), the mother of service users, alleged there was a lack of communication and information sharing between the social care professionals involved with both the complainant and her children.	Complaint: Upheld Response: 31 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	• Social Workers to ensure that they give due consideration to any significant events or celebration that may fall on the date they arrange to visit a young person. • Reinforced with Social Workers the importance of good communication with families in providing information that they have a right to receive in a timely and appropriate manner.
The complainants, (JC & SC), the grandparents of a child, were unhappy with matters relating to their grandchild particularly in relation to communication around benefit payments, finance provided for transport their grandchild for contact with her parents and issues in relation to seeking a Special Guardianship Order factually incorrect.	Complaint: Not upheld Response: 37 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	None identified.

The complainants were represented by a Solicitor.		
The complainants, (AW & LG), the parents of a young person, are dissatisfied with the aspects relating to their daughter's safety whilst in the care of the Local Authority as well as the way LG felt she was treated by a Social Worker.	Complaint: Partly Upheld Response: 47 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	Reinforce at a Team Meeting that parents are advised as soon as possible if their child has been reported as 'missing' to the Police from their placement. (In this complaint the Social Worker mistakenly thought that the parents had been informed that their child was missing from her placement but subsequently found safe during the weekend by the Police.)
The complainants, (MW & DW), the grandparents of service users, expressed their dissatisfaction around: - Inadequate financial support for children's clothing; - Inappropriate child care placements during the school holidays; - The actions of Child and Adult Services have led to the complainants incurring a debt of £380 in relation to overpayment of benefits; - Delay in carrying out an assessment in relation to the parents;	Complaint: Partly upheld Response: 32 Working days Resolved at Stage 1	Sharing reports within timescales to be raised at the Local Safeguarding Users Group.

• Reports not been made available in a timely manner; • Factually incorrect statements being used in reports about the complainants.		
• The complainants, (SJ & AJ), the parents of a young person, expressed their dissatisfaction in relation to their son's care around: - Delay - Poor communication with the family from the Department - Lack of choice in service provision - Poor communication within the local authority A total of 22 separate elements of complaint were raised by the complainant.	Complaint: 7 elements upheld 8 elements not upheld 6 elements partly upheld 1 element no finding Response: 31 Working days Resolved at Stage 2	• Consideration should be given as to whether commissioning staff should record their work within the Department's case recording system (ICS) when they become significantly involved in complex cases and contacts with the family or other professionals working with the case. Similarly, consideration should also be given as to whether records of the case co-ordination process are also recorded on ICS.

Appendix 5: Examples of compliments received across Community Services

"I am writing on behalf of the residents and staff who visited the museum on ...from G House, they had a fabulous day and thoroughly enjoyed every aspect of the visit and hospitality of everyone. The staff all went out of their way to be helpful and courteous from the driver who picked them up to all the staff in the museum and on the quay."

- From the Service Manager, G House

"I would just like to thank you on behalf of my son and his friends for tonight's festival. They lost every match but still had a great time".

- From the parent of a user of Sports Development services

"The year 5 and 6 children at LP loved the experiences you provided as part of our Fitness Week. Mountain Biking and archery offered new opportunities and skills which we could not have provided without your expertise and equipment. Nothing was too much trouble for the instructors who were professional and very well organised".

- From a teacher about the Outdoor Activities team.

"On behalf of people with learning disabilities and staff who attend the Boccia sessions at Headlands Sports Centre, can I say how well organised it is and how well the Sports Development Team interact with the players. The group would like to say a special thanks to P who has an excellent rapport with the team and came over to Middlesbrough to present the trophy and certificates."

- From a member of Middlesbrough Council Sport and Leisure section about the Sports Development team.

"As someone with limited mobility I originally joined the gym as a doctor's referral approx 3 years ago. I have always found the instructors helpful and understanding of

my capabilities which have continued to improve. All the staff are friendly and welcoming and I would be recommend anyone to 'give it a go'!"

- From a gym user at Headland Sports centre.

"The girl on duty in the ladies wet changing was extremely helpful in assisting me whilst I had a small child"

- From a user of the swimming pool at Mill House Leisure Centre.

Appendix 6: Details of complaints and lessons learned in Community Services

Details of complaint	Outcomes	Lessons learned and where appropriate, actions taken
The complainant, (ES), a user of a leisure facility, is unhappy with the conduct of a group of young people whilst using the changing rooms.	Complaint: Not Upheld Response: 5 Working days	None identified.
The complainant, (SA), the parent of a child attending swimming lessons at a leisure facility, is unhappy with the poolside rules regarding being a spectator.	Complaint: Not Upheld Response: 10 Working days	None identified.
The complainant, (AC), a mother of two children attending a swimming session at a leisure facility, is unhappy with the conduct of members of the public whilst using the changing village facilities and that there was no staff present. Note: This was one of 2 complaints about the same incident.	Complaint: Not Upheld Response: 8 Working days	None identified.
The complainant, (LL) a member of the public attending	Complaint: Not Upheld	None identified.

a swimming session at a leisure facility, is unhappy with the conduct of members of the public whilst using the changing village facilities and that there was no staff present. Note: This was one of 2 complaints about the same incident.	Response: 8 Working days	
The complainant, (CB), a resident whose house backs on to the Station Lane Office, is unhappy that dogs were barking and causing a general nuisance.	Complaint: Upheld Response: 2 Working days	None identified.
The complainant, (TW), is unhappy with the level of customer service she was given from a member of staff at a leisure facility. Note: This was one of 2 complaints about the same incident.	Complaint: Unsubstantiated Response: 34 Working days	None identified.
The complainant, (IS), is unhappy with the level of customer service she was given from a member of staff at a leisure facility.	Complaint: Unsubstantiated Response: 13 Working days	None identified.

Note: This was one of 2 complaints about the same incident.		
The complainant, who wished to remain anonymous, who is a user of a leisure facility is unhappy with the abusive language and comments made by other members of the leisure facility towards a member of staff.	Reinforced the council's rules and regulations in place with the users who were allegedly using abusive language and making comments about a member of staff. Unable to provide any response to the complainant as she wished to remain anonymous.	None identified.
The complainant, (WJ), a landlord, is unhappy with several aspects of his dealings with the Family Intervention Project, Anti Social Behaviour Unit and Social Care Duty Team in relation to a tenant. 13 elements of complaint were identified.	Complaint: Partly Upheld Response: 15 Working days Explanation provided to each element of complaint together with some action points/lessons learned.	- Family Intervention Project Manager needs to consider a more formal arrangement with Landlords that includes regular 2 way communication (with family consent) when families are deemed to be in need of a more structured approach. Family Intervention Project should formally notify interested parties when they intend to disengage from families. - Parent Commissioner will take responsibility for co-ordinating multi agency assessment of the current needs of the family and other stakeholders to ensure that a clear and achievable plan is put in place. - Parent Commissioner to ensure that information on

		Family Intervention Projects available to the public are updated and accurate. • All Family Intervention Projects cases should only be closed after full consultation with all interested parties and that any concerns should be left on file or handed to other agencies when applicable. • The Parent Commissioner will ensure that the issue of open cases and child protection concerns are acted upon by staff in the Family Intervention Project Team unless the first-hand information from the caller is vital to the protection process.
The complainant, (B-L B), a parent who was attending a Play and Development session at a Children's Centre, alleges that, as she walked past the office, her addresses were being discussed by 3 staff members who made comments, along the lines of, "all those addresses are totally shocking."	Complaint: Unsubstantiated Response: 28 Working days • Explanation provided. Resolved Note: The Manager appointed to investigate the complaint made 3 appointments to visit the complainant	None identified.

	to discuss her complaint in person. Despite agreeing the arrangements, the complainant either said it was inconvenient or did not answer her door when the Manager called. The Manager progressed her investigation based upon her understanding of the point of complaint.	
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The complainant, (TM), is unhappy with the surface of the Mill House Sports Hall and alleges that: • the surface is far too slippery; • easy risk of falling and sustaining injury; • impossible to change direction when playing sport even with relatively new footwear.	Complaint: Upheld Response: 8 Working days • Explanation provided around recent maintenance work carried out with the lighting system which appears to have affected the playing surface.	None identified.
The complainant, (MM), a user of the Mill House leisure facility, is unhappy with the Changing Village concept and expressed a preference for separate shower and changing areas.	Complaint: Unsubstantiated Response: 6 Working days	None identified.
The complainant, (DS), alleges that he was not invited to participate in Big Dog Day on the assumption that he was no longer in business and, as a consequence, has been treated unfairly by Summerhill staff.	Complaint: Upheld Response: 12 Working days • Meeting held with complainant, Head of Service and Manager appointed to investigate the complaint to discuss what happened and any	None identified.

	outstanding issues the complainant may have.	
The complainant, (PS), alleged that the shallow end of the main swimming pool was closed off despite being advised that this would be open when she and 2 friends took their young children swimming.	Complaint: Upheld Response: 23 Working days	• Complainant provided with some free swim vouchers. • Coaches/Instructors have been advised that they must not section off the entire shallow end of the main pool.
The complainant, (WP), was unhappy with the length of time taken for a response to a query she had raised.	Complaint: Upheld Response: 10 Working days	None identified.