



ADULTS & HEALTH SELECT COMMITTEE

16 DECEMBER 2021

ASC COMPLAINTS APRIL - SEPTEMBER 2021

Purpose of report: To provide a detailed summary of complaint activity in Adult Social Care for the period April – September 2021.

Introduction

1. This report details all Adult Social Care complaints activity within the reporting period April - September 2021. The report is provided to Select Committee on a six-monthly basis.
2. Surrey's Adult Social Care complaints are managed in accordance with the Statutory Social Care Complaints Procedure, which is governed by the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009. Any complaint which does not fall within these regulations, will usually be considered in accordance with the Council's corporate complaints procedure.
3. When a complaint has completed the Adult statutory complaints procedure, a person can take their complaint to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) for their advice and assistance.
4. There is a statutory requirement on all local authorities to publish a report on Adult Social Care complaints. This is completed on an annual basis and published on the Council's website.

Executive Summary

5. In our 'listening to your views' leaflet we define a complaint as follows:
 - Making a complaint - We will always aim to deliver the best possible service, but sometimes things go wrong, or we may fail to meet your expectations. Making a complaint does not mean that you will receive less help from us in future or that your complaint will cause difficulties for you. We can learn a lot from complaints, so we welcome your feedback.
 - Who can complain - Anyone who has received, or is in receipt of services, or is seeking support from us. You can complain yourself or with help from someone else such as a friend, a relative or someone who can speak on your behalf, such as an advocate.
6. Adult Social Care received 28% more complaints (136) during this reporting period than the same six-month period in 2020/21 (98). It should be noted in that period last year, Councils were facing a range of unprecedented challenges in response to the Covid pandemic. As a result, complaints and queries to the Council were lower.
7. During April – September 2021, Adult Social Care received 136 complaints and investigated and responded to 96 complaints. 95% of all completed complaints were responded to within the agreed timescale. 21% were upheld, 43% were partially upheld and 36% of the completed complaints were not upheld.

8. The most common issues raised as complaints related to staff attitude/conduct, poor communication and financial issues linked to funding and care charges.
9. The emerging themes for learning from complaints for this reporting period were:
 - Improving communication with service users and their families
 - Ensuring timely service delivery
 - Effective record keeping
 - Practice issues related to policy/guidance
10. During April – September 2021, six complaints were investigated and completed by the Ombudsman. Three were upheld by the Ombudsman during this period.
11. Going forward, the focus remains on ensuring complaints are addressed effectively with good quality responses and using the learning from complaints for continued service improvement.

Complaints

12. All feedback including complaints from service users is valuable data and informs the Council on how well services are received and what can be done better. Table 1 provides a yearly comparison of the number of complaints received within Adult Social Care, including the current Q1 & Q2 data for 2021/22.

Table 1 Number of complaints received by year

ASC Complaints	Number received
2021/22 (Q1/Q2)	136
2020/21	218
2019/20	255
2018/19	251
2017/18	221

13. For the April – September 2021 reporting period, Surrey Adult Social Care received 136 new complaints and responded to 96 complaints. Table 2 details the number of complaints received and responded to within each service area of Adult Social Care. 13 complaints were received for home-based commissioned care and two related to residential/nursing commissioned care. These are included in ‘countywide’ figures.

Table 2 Complaints by service team Apr – Sept 2021

Area	Received	Responded	Responses Within Deadline	Responses Within Deadline (%)
East Surrey	15	9	8	89%
Guildford & Waverley	10	7	7	100%
Mid Surrey	16	13	11	85%
NWS & SH	24	20	20	100%
PLD, Autism & Transition	39	28	27	96%
Mental Health	7	6	6	100%
Countywide	20	10	10	100%
Service Delivery	5	3	2	67%
Total	136	96	91	95%

*Countywide complaints include Commissioning, Continuing Health Care, Emergency Duty, Financial Assessment & Income Collection, MASH and the support teams.

Table 3 Mode of contact when making a complaint

How received	Q1	Q2
Email	31	31
Letter	5	2
Telephone	13	13
Web	23	18
Total	72	64

Table 4 Complaints received by month

Year Received (2021/22)							
Month	April	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Total
East Surrey	1	2	5	2	3	2	15
Guildford & Waverley	2	1	2	3	2	0	10
Mid Surrey	3	2	3	2	4	2	16
NWS & SH	2	7	3	4	2	6	24
PLD, Autism & Transition	5	4	9	6	7	8	39
Mental Health	2	0	1	2	1	1	7
Countywide	4	5	5	0	5	1	20
Service Delivery	0	2	2	0	0	1	5
Total	19	23	30	19	24	21	136
Q1 = 72				Q2 = 64			

14. During the reporting period detailed in Table 4, the total number of complaints were fairly consistent each month, although there appears to have been an increase in complaints received during June in East Surrey (5) and the PLD Autism/Transition service (9). A summary of these complaints is included in Appendix 1 but there is no trend or particular reason to explain this increase.

15. Table 5 illustrates the three highest complaint themes raised as complaints.
- Staff attitude or conduct complaints mainly related to dissatisfaction with a worker's involvement and decision making in the case.
 - Communication complaints related to the quality of information and advice provided to families and service users and timeliness of responses to queries and concerns.
 - Financial and funding complaints involved the financial assessment process, disputes with care charges and information related to care funding/charges.

A summary of complaints received in Guildford & Waverley and the PLD, Autism & Transition Service during Q1 and Q2 is included in Appendix 2 and 3 to illustrate the detail which sits behind these themes.

Table 5 Top theme of complaints received Apr – Sept 2021

Theme of Complaint	Q1	Q2
Staff	29	25
Communication	20	20
Financial	20	13

Table 6 Complaints by issue raised Apr-Sept 2021*

Nature of Complaint	East Surrey	Guildford & Waverley	Mid Surrey	NWS & SH	PLD, Autism & Transition	Mental Health	Countywide	Service Delivery	Total
Staff	7	3	7	8	18	4	2	5	54
Communication	6	4	1	6	12	2	7	2	40
Financial	5	3	3	1	4	-	17	-	33
Assessment process	5	1	4	7	8	-	4	-	29
Service provision	2	2	2	9	9	-	-	2	26
Safeguarding	4	2	3	4	5	2	-	-	20
Decision making	1	-	3	7	8	1	-	-	20
Policy/Procedures	1	1	-	2	1	-	-	1	6
Information Governance/Legal	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	3
Total	33	16	23	45	65	9	30	10	231

* Complaints may be about more than one issue, so the numbers recorded in the above table will be higher than the complaints received.

Response Times

16. There is no statutory timescale for responding to a complaint within the Adult statutory complaint procedure, although a complaint should be fully completed within six months. This enables a more customer centred and flexible approach to addressing complaints, including those that are complex or require multi-agency involvement and working closely with external agencies such as health. The focus is on establishing a consistent approach to getting it right and putting things right.
17. In our 'listening to your views' leaflet we explain our best practice approach as follows:
 - When you contact us with your complaint, we will first consider if it can be resolved quickly (usually within 24 hours). For complaints that cannot be resolved quickly, we will acknowledge your complaint in writing, within three working days from the date it is received. We may contact you to discuss your concerns further and agree a plan of investigation.
 - You should receive a written response to your complaint within 20 working days from when we receive your complaint. The manager handling your complaint will carry out an investigation and respond to you directly or through your advocate/representative if you prefer. We will ensure the manager has the necessary skills and knowledge to resolve the issues.
 - For complex complaints, we may need more time to investigate and respond to you. We will keep you informed of the progress of your complaint until it is completed. If you are not satisfied with the complaint response, you can contact the manager leading on the complaint to discuss your concerns further. Alternatively, you can contact the Customer Relations Team for advice and assistance.
18. Adult Social Care complaints are managed in accordance with the Statutory Social Care Complaints Procedure, which is governed by the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009. Under these regulations, Adult Social Care operates a single stage complaint procedure - there is no formal escalation stage as in Children's Services. This means that in our response to a complaint, we will explain that if the complainant is dissatisfied with any aspects of the response, they can contact the investigating manager or the Customer Relations Team who will look again at their areas of dissatisfaction. This allows for more flexibility to respond to a complaint and timescales can be extended if required. Residents can also ask the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (the Ombudsman) to review their complaint once it has been closed if they remain dissatisfied.
19. Adult Social Care has a performance target of 90% for responding to complaints on time. Whilst the Council has adopted a timescale of 20 working days as an initial response timeframe, this can be extended depending on the circumstances of the issues being investigated, which are often complex by nature.
20. The response times are detailed in Table 2 and shows that 96 complaints received a response during this reporting period and of these, 91 (95%) complaints were responded within the deadline date.

Complaint Outcomes

21. Table 7 provides the outcomes from the 96 complaints investigated and responded to in April – September 2021. It shows that 64% of the complaints were either upheld in full or partially upheld (20 upheld and 41 partially upheld complaints). 36% of the responded complaints were not upheld.

Table 7 Outcomes of Complaints Investigated and Responded to Apr-Sept 2021

Outcome of complaint	East Surrey	Guildford & Waverley	Mid Surrey	NWS & SH	PLD, Autism & Transition	Mental Health	Countywide	Service Delivery	Total	Total (%)
Not upheld	3		7	9	8	5	2	1	35	36%
Partial upheld	4	3	4	8	13	1	6	2	41	43%
Upheld	2	4	2	3	7		2		20	21%
Total	9	7	13	20	28	6	10	3	96	100%

22. 25 complaints were resolved outside the complaint process¹ which suggests some complainants welcomed their complaints being addressed informally and promptly outside the investigation process.

Ombudsman Complaints

23. Where a complainant remains dissatisfied following completion of their complaint under the Adult complaint process, they can refer their complaint to the Ombudsman, and it may result in an investigation. Table 8 shows the number of Ombudsman investigations completed for the first two quarterly periods of 2021/22.

1. The Statutory Social Care Complaints Procedure, para 8 (1) 'complaints are not required to be dealt with in accordance with the Regulations where ... (c) a complaint which— (i) is made orally; and (ii) is resolved to the complainant's satisfaction not later than the next working day after the day on which the complaint was made'.

Table 8 Ombudsman Investigations completed (Apr – Sept 2021)

LGSCO investigations	Q1	Q2	Total	Total (%)
Completed – Not Upheld	1	1	2	33%
Completed – Upheld	2	1	3	50%
Closed after initial enquiries	-	1	1	17%
Closed - No Further Action	-	-	-	0%
Total	3	3	6	100%

24. Three completed complaint investigations were upheld by the Ombudsman in Q1 and Q2. These are summarised as follows:
- Case 1 - There was fault in the Council's assessment of the service user's social care needs and a failure to meet their eligible needs. The Council's fault meant he did not receive care and support to meet his needs and it also caused him avoidable distress. The agency care stopped in October 2020. The Council was aware of this at the time and it also knew the service user was not able to manage a direct payment. The Council should have commissioned an agency to meet those needs when the previous agency gave notice in October 2020. The Council has agreed to apologise for the fault and injustice and make a payment of £1,500 to reflect the avoidable distress and loss of service provision from October 2020 to date.
 - Case 2 - Complaint about the way the Council dealt with the service users' direct payments and care assessments, causing distrust and distress. The Ombudsman has found fault in the Council's communication and handling of this case. The Council has already taken some remedial action to resolve the complaint issues and will make a financial payment for the injustice caused. The Ombudsman found no evidence of deliberate misuse or misconduct by the social worker but acknowledges that the communication could have been better, and this created a level of distrust for the service users. To the Council's credit it has acknowledged the breakdown of the relationship and reallocated the case to a manager. The Council will pay £400 to acknowledge the time and trouble the service users have spent dealing with this matter and the distress caused to them.
 - Case 3 - Mrs X complained the Council refused to backdate a direct payment for her son Mr Y, which she wanted to use to pay her other son Mr Z for caring for Mr Y. Mrs X said the decision caused a financial loss to Mr Z. There was fault by the Council as it did not act in line with the Ethical Framework for Adult Social Care during the first lockdown because it made no attempts to contact Mrs X and her family. The Council agreed to apologise for the fault and injustice and make the retrospective payment of £4,335. The family need to provide time sheets and the hours claimed should be in line with Mr Y's eligible needs.
25. Nationally, the Ombudsman is finding fault more often by local authorities and care providers for complaints and the percentage of all adult social care complaints upheld nationally was 72% in 2020/21, an increase on the previous year. The Ombudsman upheld 89% (12 out of 14 complaints) of Surrey Adult Social Care complaints in that period.

26. The Ombudsman will recommend a remedy where there has been fault resulting in an injustice to the service user. A financial remedy is recommended only when the complaint has resulted in a quantifiable financial loss as a reimbursement and/or to acknowledge identified distress, time and trouble. The Ombudsman's focus is to put things right when a fault is identified and improve services. This aligns with the direction being taken by Adult Social Care, to ensure complaint learning is implemented in a timely manner.
27. Table 9 presents the yearly summary of Ombudsman complaints with a financial remedy. The figures illustrate that remedies are mainly reimbursement of care payments and backdated direct payments. Table 10 provides a breakdown of the financial remedies arising from Ombudsman investigations during this reporting period (April – September 2021) and includes reimbursement payments.

Table 9 Ombudsman financial remedies by year

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 (Q1/Q2)
Financial remedies as recommended by the LGSCO*	£7,775**	£1,200	£6,695***	£28,069****	£6,235

*These figures include remedies for reimbursement of care charges by the provider

** £2,475 was a direct payments refund

***£3,769 of this figure was a refund of incorrect charges for residential care and paid directly by the provider

****This includes reimbursing £11,000 that had been paid to a care provider as an unofficial third-party top up and a backdated Direct Payment of £9,603 for a separate complaint

Table 10 Financial Remedies from Ombudsman investigations Apr - Sept 2021

G&W Area Waverley Locality Team: Q1 (Upheld: Maladministration & Injustice)	
Fault found in the Council's communication and handling of this case.	
Remedial action already taken, but pay £400 for time, trouble and distress.	£400
Total	£400
PLD Autism Team: Q1 (Upheld: Maladministration & Injustice)	
Fault in communicating with service user, and a failure to commission care services to meet eligible needs	
Pay £1500 to reflect his avoidable distress and loss of service provision.	£1,500
Total	£1,500
Transition: Q2 (Upheld: Maladministration & Injustice)	
Fault found during the first lockdown because no attempts to contact the service user and her family.	
The Council agreed to make a retrospective direct payment to remedy the injustice	£4,335
Total	£4,335

Total for (2021/22) £6,235

Learning from Complaints

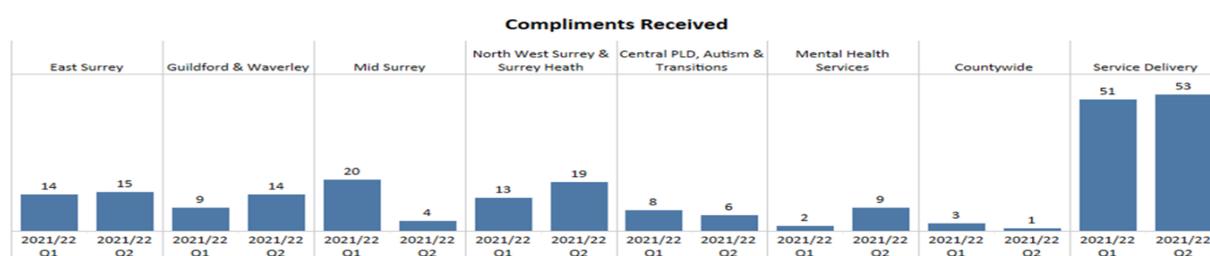
28. Adult Social Care continues to focus on putting things right in response to complaints and ensuring services are improved. The service teams recognise that complaints provide a key source of information for improving service performance. The Customer Relations Team work closely with the service teams to ensure that learning from complaints is successfully implemented. This will continue to be a key objective going forward.
29. The Adult Leadership Team regularly receive a detailed summary of complaints where learning has been identified and implemented, as an informative measure of what has improved as a result of complaints.
30. The Customer Relations Team provides virtual monthly drop-in sessions on lessons learnt from complaints, which are open to all Adult Social Care staff to attend. Sessions over the last few months have considered a complex complaint investigated by the Ombudsman, learning regarding the broader themes of poor communication and delays in service delivery and how this impacts service users.
31. The Customer Relations Manager meets with the Leads from the Quality Assurance Team and Commissioning services to review issues in relation to provider complaints on a quarterly basis.
32. The following are the main learning themes from upheld complaints during April – September 2021:
 - Improving communication with service users and their families, including information and advice regarding options for care provision and funding.
 - Ensuring timely assessments, reviews and service delivery.
 - Effective record keeping.
 - Review of internal procedures and guidance.
33. Examples of complaints upheld, and the actions taken to put things right are provided below:
 - Complaint regarding the **poor quality of communication**, in not addressing the request of an individual not to be contacted for any reason regarding the service user, due to their difficult relationship. Staff were reminded of the necessity of accurately updating the records with information provided and ensuring all services involved used accurate information. Further training was provided to staff on working with disclosures of a sensitive nature, to be managed in a timely and sensitive manner and information shared with managers for any appropriate actions to be taken.
 - Complaint regarding the **delay** in the person receiving home-based care provision when they moved to a new address. The person was seriously ill and felt they required support with personal care and shopping and was without care for 4 months, although a new provider had completed an assessment. The team was reminded that they should promptly follow up with a provider for the outcome of their assessment, to avoid undue delay in the care provision being implemented.

- Complaint regarding the **delay in receiving backdated payments** which resulted in the person having to borrow money for her support which caused distress. The team were reminded to ensure the relevant information about Direct Payments is given to service users in their preferred format, at the support planning stage and recorded on their file and to discuss temporary funding options with the managers, in cases where people moving into Surrey, were previously funded under another local authority.
- Complaint regarding **hospital discharge planning** and lack of involvement of the continence service upon discharge. The findings identified that there should have been discussion of managing incontinence and actions agreed early in the pre-planning post discharge from temporary placement back to home. Team were reminded of the importance of making early referrals to the continence team, who are best placed to provide advice and information and complete an assessment as appropriate in such cases.

Compliments

34. Compliments provide a very useful insight into what is working well in services and as a measure of customer satisfaction. Chart 1 details the number of compliments recorded as received by each service area.
35. Adult Social Care generally receive good feedback and staff are encouraged to report and share their compliments within their teams. Compliments are published in Adult Social Care E-Brief each month to celebrate good feedback from residents. An extract from the November E-Brief is included in Appendix 4. The next step will be to incorporate compliments into the newly developed ASC quality dashboard and to classify them by theme so teams can understand the areas where they are doing well and share best practice.

Chart 1 Compliments Apr -Sept 2021



36. A total of 241 compliments were recorded for this reporting period.

What they said...

- We just wanted to let you and your team know what a positive experience the whole process was for us all. We are truly grateful for the timely help and support we have received at such a precarious time for the family. The understanding and consideration shown to us by the team as a whole is very much appreciated. A big "THANK YOU" for all the hard work you do, with limited resources in such difficult times. **Transition Team**

- Both myself, wife and brother would like to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the kindness, empathy and professionalism that you have shown us at this extremely taxing time with our mother's situation. You have put all of our minds at rest with helping us to resolve the finances owed to the nursing home. You have shown us nothing but kindness, informed us of every situation which unfolded and took the time to understand us. **Epsom & Ewell Locality Team**
- I am just e-mailing you regarding X who has been at Highdown looking after Mr P and Mr W. He has been absolutely brilliant. He's cut Mr W's hair, shaved his beard and gave him the full spa treatment and scrubbed his cell clean. He has also been really patient with Mr P who is on end-of-life care and can be rude at times, but X can't do enough to help the patients and staff here. I just wanted to let you know that man deserves a medal. **Prison Social Care Team**
- I just wanted to thank you for all your support with mum and dad over the past few weeks. It's a huge relief to know we have an approachable and professional person helping us through this difficult time and dad's deterioration with Alzheimer's. **Waverley Locality Team**

Issues of concern

37. Select Committee has expressed an interest in understanding more about 'issues of concern' raised by residents which don't get treated as a complaint. For example, patterns of unfavourable comments about a member of staff or process, recurring errors, where people are unhappy but don't use the language of 'complaint' etc.
38. Our aim is to be a responsive Council that is open to feedback and looks to resolve any concerns as close to the point of service as possible, because that delivers the best outcomes for residents and for staff too. We also recognise that people may not always want to use the complaints procedure to make us aware of issues or concerns they might have. Any 'issues of concern' will always be addressed by officers at the time they are raised by a resident and recorded in a case note as appropriate.
39. Adult Social Care doesn't, however, currently have a means of formally monitoring and reporting on these 'issues of concern'. We have thousands of contacts with residents every day through a range of channels including face-to-face, telephone, e-mail, online and social media. Given the scale of the service it is not possible to capture all the comments made. However, we do have ways to identify emerging or recurring themes eg through team meetings, surveys and research and enquiry data captured by the ASC Advice & Information Service in the contact centre. Staff are also trained to identify when an issue should be routed through the complaints procedure so the information can be captured and lessons learnt, as well as to reassure residents that the service they receive will not be negatively impacted if they raise a concern or complaint.
40. Other tools to capture resident feedback which are currently available, or in development, include:
 - **Service Tick** which enables callers to the ASC Information and Advice Service (Contact Centre) to leave verbatim feedback on the service they have received. Appendix 5 sets out the feedback left by residents during August – October 2021.

- **Resident Insight Dashboard** SCC has started working on producing a resident insight dashboard to bring together core datasets about our residents and customers. The aim is to create a shared evidence base around who our customers are and what they think/want.
- **Digital Front Door** the Council's Digital Design Team is working with Adult Social Care to explore ways to better manage demand in our locality teams. As part of this work, we will investigate whether there are opportunities to gather and report on any 'issues of concern' raised by residents, without introducing a new resource intensive process.
- **Quality of Practice Dashboard** is being developed in Adult Social Care to promote a culture of continuous improvement, learning and sharing. It will bring together qualitative and quantitative measures including complaints and compliments, case file audits, reflective practice, practice observations etc.

Conclusions

41. The Customer Relations Team continues to work closely with the service teams to ensure effective complaints handling and the learning from complaints is successfully implemented across all teams, with the introduction of new monthly 'Drop-In' sessions and with the regular reporting to the Leadership team.

Recommendations:

42. The report to be noted by all members of the Select Committee.

Next steps:

43. Going forward, Adult Social Care will continue to ensure complainants receive high quality and timely responses and to implement learning from complaints to help shape future service improvement.
44. We will continue to review provider complaints with the Commissioning and Quality Assurance Teams, to ensure effective monitoring of provider complaint issues and learning.
45. Training for managers and learning from complaint sessions for staff will continue to run virtually through the year to ensure best practice on handling complaints.
46. Harminder Dhillon has left the Council and a newly recruited Customer Relations Manager joins Adult Social Care in early December 2021.

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Sources:

- LGSCO Annual Review of Adult Social Care Complaints 2020-2021
- [Adult Social Care Complaints and Compliments Annual Report \(2020-2021\)](#)

Complaints Received in June 2021 in East Surrey and the PLD, Autism & Transition Service

Area	Root Cause	Date	Outcome	Actions	Complaint received
1. PLD, Autism & Transition	Communication, Decision making, Safeguarding and Staff	June	Partial upheld	Advice/Information Given and Apology	Family wants the individual to live back at home but best interest decision to stay in the care home. Concern there have been abuse incidents against the care home that haven't been satisfactorily concluded after investigation. The care worker supporting the individual at a family funeral didn't leave their side to allow privacy. Difficulty in contacting the individual's social worker.
2. PLD, Autism & Transition	Decision making and Financial	June	Not upheld	Advice/Information Given	Placement broke down with no safeguarding for a number of incidents. Lack of support in finding a care provider for non-commissioned hours. Council staff failed to work appropriately with the complainant as carer and deputy. The individual was expected to fit in with the care provider's offer rather than having a consistent and trained team to respond to their needs. The individual was asked to return to the setting by the end of June or risk losing the placement, but no appropriate alternatives in Surrey were available.
3. PLD, Autism & Transition	Service provision and Staff	June	Partial upheld	Apology	Care and support workers prepare the same meals without offering a balanced diet. The complainant felt care agency staff know they are on their own and vulnerable and could take advantage and be disrespectful.
4. PLD, Autism & Transition	Communication and Staff	June	Partial upheld	Apology	Transferred to the LD team a year ago but never received a response to queries and messages left for the team manager. Not acting on a referral from Surrey Police relating to a crisis. No support from the LD team and no support worker as staff informed complainant these were not provided by SCC.
5. PLD, Autism & Transition	Service provision and Staff	June	Partial upheld	Advice/Information Given and Apology	Complainant is waiting for a service to support them in a new property. An agency visited and assessed complainant but was not able to provide package of care. Another provider is being considered. Complainant felt ignored.
6. East Surrey	Staff	June	Upheld	Apology and Staff training	A member of staff gained access through barriers and hedges to the complainant's private area to start an investigative process.

					Complainant felt there was no grounds and based on sinister ambitions of their neighbours.
7. East Surrey	Assessment process and Financial	June	Partial upheld	Advice/Information Given, Financial redress and Service provided	Not informed sooner about the possibility of funding through S117. Felt entitled to a refund of money paid to a care home in 2015. Information gained from a visit from FAIC team is being improperly shared across the service.
8. PLD, Autism & Transition	Assessment process, Policy/Procedures and Staff	June	Upheld	Apology, Financial redress and Staff training	Complainant felt information was missed in assessment. Form difficult to navigate when self-assessing and not covering complainant's circumstances. Complainant understood that direct payments would be backdated once plan had been finalised. The hourly rate would not cover the level of care the complainant needed. Staff member's mannerisms towards people with autism. Lack of welfare concern and not taking into consideration the seriousness when self-reporting being at risk. No support in place to try to stay in work. Not adhering to autism strategy, Care Act and Equality Act.
9. PLD, Autism & Transition	Staff	June	Not upheld	Advice/Information Given	Advised to contact a provider who had already ruled themselves out. Suggested care providers are not within a safe commuting distance of service user's college. Visited a suggested setting and staff member did not attend, resulting in the place going to someone else.
10. PLD, Autism & Transition	Communication and Staff	June			Complainant raised issues around lack of support in caring for their family member. Several attempts to communication via email with no replies - one reported how the service user physically attacked the complainant, another requested the service user's records. Complainant is requesting overnight and weekend care and a separate property for service user to live in.
11. East Surrey	Information Governance/Legal and Staff	June	Withdrawn	None required	Complainant felt ASC not being honest and felt targeted. Felt social care team caused the complainant's wife to fall and, in turn, shortened her life. Unhappy with actions of the Council, including a visit to the property from the police. Data protection rights were

					broken when telephoning complainant's late wife's GP to enquire about mental health.
12. PLD, Autism & Transition	Safeguarding and Service provision	June	Partial upheld	Apology	Behaviour of support staff towards the complainant.
13. East Surrey	Assessment process, Communication, Financial and Staff	June	Resolved outside the process	None required	Care visits continued after cancelling care package. False claim that complainant's mother had savings of more than £24,500 and advised that care would need to be self-funded. No response from the social care team, despite several calls, and not receiving correct information once in contact.
14. East Surrey	Safeguarding	June	Not upheld	Advice/Information Given	Complainant's mother was subject to an investigation regarding her husband's finances based on unsubstantiated allegation (by Office of the Public Guardian) at difficult time of placing him in a care home. Adult Social Care were aware of this allegation for almost 7 months, but family only made aware on husband's admission to hospital.

Complaints received in Guildford & Waverley (April – September 2021)

Root Cause	Date	Outcome	Actions	Complaint received
1. Policy/ Procedures	April	Partial upheld	Advice/ Information Given and Apology	Complainant, who is a carer for her disabled husband, broke her wrist. GP referred her to NHS Rapid Response Team for emergency assistance who were unable to respond as it was the carer who was injured. Adult Social Care had no capacity to assist. Consequently, carer had no support putting them at risk for 5 days.
2. Communication and Service provision	April	Resolved outside process	None required	Complainant's son has social care support but needs additional help to chop up his food, he falls frequently, needs help with mobility, accessing appointments etc.
3. Communication	May	Partial upheld	Advice/ Information Given and Apology	Staff member's attitude in their response to communication about the condition of complainant's late wife's house and missing property.
4. Communication, Financial and Staff	June	Upheld	Apology, Review communications and Staff training	Waiting over 4 months for a response to a request for additional funding for a Direct Payment. Staff not keeping the complainant up-to-date and passing him to different members of staff who ask the same questions.
5. Safeguarding	June	Resolved outside process	None required	Carers for complainant's mother 'come in but do absolutely nothing to help'. Mother's kitchen ceiling has fallen down and family have no idea what to do.
6. Financial	July	Upheld	Staff training	Invoices that late mother's estate received for the last days of her end-of-life care. The estate cannot pay for services not received and invoices are invalid.
7. Safeguarding	July	On-going	On-going	Complaint about failure to safeguard complainant's mother from domestic abuse.
8. Communication and Staff	July	Upheld	Apology, Review communications and Staff training	Former wife of service user was contacted by Adult Social Care about her ex-husband. Complainant had previously informed the Council that the marriage was abusive and that they did not want to be contacted in relation to the service user.
9. Financial and Service provision	Aug	Upheld	Apology, Review communications	Care agency have informed the complainant that unless the council agrees to increase their fees, and settles the outstanding balance, they will cease to provide services. Complainant argues this will place the service user at

			and Service provided	risk, that the issue has been ignored over an extended period, and the council has taken advantage of the care agency's reluctance to let the service user down whilst trying to resolve the ongoing finance issue
10. Assessment process and Staff	Aug	Resolved outside the process	None required	Adult Social care agents not performing in accordance with the Care Act whilst caring for complainant's family member. MASH not informed of neglect or abuse when care agent was asked to make referral. Care provider not providing 'double handed' care for each visit. Adult Social Care and finance visited house but refused to remove their masks. Failed to inform complainant of relevant benefit entitlements and a possible council tax reduction. Finance sending bills using fictitious accounting. Complainant doesn't accept services that are chargeable. Adult Social Care said complainant couldn't have companionship or 'take a break' services but 6 months after first request it has been offered.

Complaints received in the PLD, Autism & Transition Service (April – September 2021)

Root Cause	Date	Outcome	Actions	Complaint Received
1. Assessment process	April	Partial upheld	Advice/Information Given and Apology	Lack of communication regarding transport costs causing delays and, in turn, client losing place at provision.
2. Service provision	April			Care provider have over charged the council for periods when no care was asked for and falling short of delivering the hours they are contracted provide.
3. Communication, Financial, Safeguarding and Staff	April	Upheld	Apology and Staff training	Unhappy with how client is being cared for and lack of response from team. Client was billed for services that were not able to attend due to the pandemic, despite staff members reassuring this would be dealt with. Additional support workers were due to be arranged for client which did not happen.
4. Staff	April	Partial upheld	Advice/Information Given and Apology	Client didn't feel listened to. Staff member did not join a meeting to discuss a new provider and did not explained why there was a need to change providers.
5. Assessment process, Communication and Staff	April	Upheld	Apology and Service provided	Review not completed correctly - last review was 2 years ago. The complainant's son is often left unsupervised in their residential care home and doesn't appear to get enough one-to-one attention. Staff members too busy to take complainant's call.
6. Decision making	May	Partial upheld	Apology and Staff training	Service users current school recommended a full residential placement as the best option, rather than the supported living option being pursued. Lack of communication and action from the Council regarding the service user's placement.
7. Service provision	May	Partial upheld	Advice/Information Given and Apology	Lack of communication from staff members. Complainant contests allegation that they are 'refusing to engage' with the service provision.
8. Decision making	May	Not upheld	Advice/Information Given	Complainant believes there have been delays in providing for the service user's social and educational development in their care home. Complainant suggests the council is not acting in the service user's best interest and communication is misleading.

9. Assessment process and Communication	May	Upheld	Advice/Information, Apology and Service provided	Assessment document which the complainant and service user were not aware of until produced at a tribunal hearing.
10. Communication, Decision making, Safeguarding and Staff	June	Partial upheld	Advice/Information Given and Apology	Included in Appendix 1
11. Decision making and Financial	June	Not upheld	Advice/Information Given	Included in Appendix 1
12. Service provision and Staff	June	Partial upheld	Apology	Included in Appendix 1
13. Communication and Staff	June	Partial upheld	Apology	Included in Appendix 1
14. Service provision and Staff	June	Partial upheld	Advice/Information Given and Apology	Included in Appendix 1
15. Assessment process, Policy/Procedures and Staff	June	Upheld	Apology, Financial redress and Staff training	Included in Appendix 1
16. Staff	June	Not upheld	Advice/Information Given	Included in Appendix 1
17. Communication and Staff	June			Included in Appendix 1
18. Safeguarding and Service provision	June	Partial upheld	Apology	Included in Appendix 1
19. Decision making and Staff	July	Not upheld	None required	Complainant resubmitted complaint about lack of communication from staff members. Complainant contests allegation that they are 'refusing to engage' with the service provision.

20. Communication and Safeguarding	July	Upheld	Apology and Staff training	Bank account balance significantly reduced with no clear explanation. On system, out of date review showed client financially independent with reduced supported hours. A 'do not contact the family' flag was incorrectly displayed on the system.
21. Safeguarding	July			Client moved to an assisted living property after their care home closed. Prior to moving in health and safety recommendations were noted but not carried out. Client had a fall when alone and attended A&E for injuries where safeguarding concerns were raised by hospital regarding the needing assistance.
22. Communication	July	Partial upheld	Apology	LGO inform complainant that SCC had contacted them even though the complainant has a right to contact the LGO. Claim of sexually motivated behaviour towards social care team which was reported to a third party. Complainant unhappy with content of risk assessment and reduced support.
23. Decision making	July	Withdrawn	None required	Complainant felt that a social worker was looking for a new placement as a cheaper option rather than focussing on client's needs. Client didn't feel they were listened to and SCC deemed them not to have capacity.
24. Assessment process	July	Resolved outside the process	None required	Disabilities Facilities Grant agreed after repeated attempts to obtain but no progress has been made in last 6-months. Service user transitioned to the LD & Autism team but there was no review, allocation to a case worker or addressing of accommodation issues.
25. Assessment process	Aug	Not upheld	None required	Complainant felt being treated unfairly and their views were not considered when assessed. Complainant also felt there was a data breach with contacting from a family member.
26. Staff	Aug	Not upheld	Apology	Complainant responded to a complaint regarding allegation of calls of a sexual nature towards staff.
27. Assessment process, Communication and Financial	Aug	Upheld	Advice/Information Given and Apology	Changes to support plan without discussing with client's family. Suddenly stopping mileage allowance and service provider sending a travel invoice. Restrictions around motability rules and difficulties with carers being able to use the vehicle.
28. Decision making	Aug	Not upheld	Service provided	Complainant felt that client was discriminated against by not receiving enough support to maintain their independence. Complainant also felt client was being neglected by SCC educational officials.

29. Staff	Aug	Partial upheld	Apology and Service provided	Complainant asked to contact a list of providers only to be referred back to social care. No response when requesting increase hours for client and complainant felt there was a lack of support.
30. Communication	Aug	Upheld	Advice/Information, Apology and Service provided	Lack of communication between Transition and LD&A teams regarding end date for client's transport contract.
31. Communication	Aug	Not upheld	Advice/Information Given	Complainant felt lack of response from a staff member and looking into an education plan for the client.
32. Service provision	Sept	Not upheld	Advice/Information Given	Social worker spoke of sectioning client which was felt to be inappropriate. Same member of staff looking at supported living for which the complainant felt more support would be needed.
33. Service provision and Staff	Sept			Complainant felt not receiving enough support. Lack of response from social care team and service provider. Care worker did not arrive at scheduled time.
34. Staff	Sept	Resolved outside process	None required	Complainant felt there was no person-centred care and that support was not organised. Did not feel listened to.
35. Communication and Staff	Sept			Lack of response from social care staff and complainant didn't feel they were listened to.
36. Financial and Service provision	Sept			No respite provision arranged, despite being part of the agreement. Respite payments from Transition team stopped suddenly.
37. Staff	Sept			Complainant's family member was attacked by a dog, owned by a vulnerable adult who was with a social worker at the time. Complainant felt they should not have been outside as the dog's muzzle was broken.
38. Assessment process, Decision making and Staff	Sept			Building on previous complaint ...complainant felt pressure from staff member to section their family member was inappropriate and the assessment was unfair. Complainant felt MCA and Code of Practice was not being followed correctly.
39. Service provision	Sept			Less support than expected received from staff at service provision. Complainant felt blackmailed by previous care worker to leave if dog was released from kitchen area.

Adult Social Care – Compliments Published in E-Brief on 30 November 2021



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Staff compliments

Alex Pendlebury, Occupational Therapist from the Tandridge Locality Team received this compliment from the family of a service user: "I would like to let you know that Alex the OT a member of your team has been a great help and support assisting me with the care of my husband who has dementia. Throughout my husband's journey she has offered advice and practical support providing necessary walking aids sliding sheets etc and most recently a hoist. This has ensured that I am able to care for husband with less worry and more effectively. Alex has always been professional friendly and offers good advice and support. I cannot praise Alex enough and am very thankful for all she has done an invaluable member of your team".

Nikki Price, Reablement Team Leader from the Epsom Reablement Team received this compliment from a service user, via a call to the ASC Customer Relations team: "... but at the same time, she wanted to take the opportunity to say how much she appreciated all the team for seeing her "back to her normal state". She said she was very grateful and appreciated all the help very much indeed, adding that she used to work for the NHS and appreciates the hard work the staff do in these uncertain and challenging times".

Mirinda Inocco, from the Admin team at Reigate & Banstead received a compliment from a service user: "We have had a Voice Message from an R&B client praising one of our Admin Team, Mirinda Inocco. Message left says that he is ringing to praise the South African lady from the Admin Team whose name he does not know, but she has been wonderful with him yet again. He said he was distressed yesterday and she put him at ease. She is a 'wonderful telephone lady'. He said it is all well to complain about things but it is incumbent on all of us to praise when they are good, and the South African lady on the telephone was yet again wonderful".

Peter Goldsworthy – Social Care Assistant from the Waverley Locality Team received this compliment from both the owner and the Regional Manager of a local nursing home: "Just wanted to give some feedback regarding Peter Goldsworthy who I have had the pleasure of working with recently, following some referrals to St Catherine's Manor and Kingston Rehab Centre. He comes across as a very caring person. He communicates very well, does what he says he is going to do and responds quickly to queries. The information that he provides is concise but detailed and clear. He has a great attitude and seems to know the people he is referring well".

Kathy Butt, from the Move to Independence Team (Specialist Services) within Mental Health received this compliment from a client: "I don't know how to thank you all enough when at the lowest time of my life Kathy did the interview and recommended I take a lifeline which was an opportunity to change my life. My debt has now been paid off, my credit score improved, I have a place I call home. I wouldn't be here today, if it wasn't for people like you with such big hearts to help me be in the happy place I am now. I love you all".

Gill Craig, Occupational Therapist from the Reigate & Banstead Locality Team received this compliment from a service user: "I just wanted to say Thank You for all the help you gave me following the problems I was having getting in and out of my bath in order to shower. Due to your visit and follow up help I now have a fully functioning wet room with very little disruption during the time it was changed. I cannot tell you what a difference it is already making to my wellbeing".

Annet Nassuna, Senior Social Worker from the County Transition team received this compliment from the teacher at Endeavours, when she attended an EHCP meeting to Advocate for a client and his family: "I just wanted to say how positive I felt after yesterday 's meeting. I feel that M and his family have a great team behind them. We were saying that you seem brilliant and so in tune with M – just wanted to highlight fantastic practice when I see it! So often we comment on negatives but I just wanted to say that you came across so well, passionately championing his corner".

Sarah Aylott and Will McCarthy from the Specialist Services (Mental Health) received this compliment from a Client Services Manager from Home Group Housing based in Guildford: "... I have recently had the pleasure of working with Sarah and Will who have been instrumental in helping us support a physically and mentally unwell gentleman to secure the accommodation that he really needs to enrich his life moving forwards. Their kindness, compassion, efficiency and professionalism has been second to none".

Salma Zubair, a Social Worker from the Reigate & Banstead locality team received a compliment from the Community Matron, Care Collaborative Network based in Redhill: "I would just like to pass on my appreciation for Salma, she was so lovely and professional with R yesterday, the safeguarding was dealt with swiftly and actions placed accordingly, in a world where complaints happen as a norm it's nice to get good feedback and Salma was 10/10 Thank you".

Stephanie Weate, Senior Social Care Assistant from the Waverley Locality Team and Doreen and her team (Reablement/Home Based Care) who received this compliment from the client and her husband: "I am full of appreciation and gratitude for all you have done for my wife and myself. This has made such a difference for us both and for the rest of the family and we together thank you for all the work you put in on our behalf. I would also like to say how wonderful is Doreen and her ladies. It is a pleasure for them to come into the house, they are so kind and gentle with my wife. I could not have hoped for more lovely people. I could go on in my applause for you all. I thank you so much for everything you have done".

Liz Nabadda, Senior Social Care Assistant from the Tandridge Locality Team has received this compliment from Dementia First for her work with a client: "...I also say that Liz has been an outstanding worker in her work for H to settle him into a care home when he had no one else and was very frightened about leaving his home. I wanted to let you know this was a particularly difficult case for Liz but she has dealt with it professionally and with compassion".

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Service Tick verbatim record of feedback left by callers to the ASC Information and Advice Service (Contact Centre) during August – October 2021 (redacted to anonymise)

Date	Comment
August 21	Helped with council tax on attractions of our home it shouldn't matter of you have a deductions upstairs all downstairs it should be equal and if you've got a reduction upstairs we should still be entitled to a 25 percent discount thank you
August 21	I think you doing absolutely everything perfectly well I don't think there's need for improvement
August 21	I don't think the ladies that I spoke to could have been more helpful if they tried they were really sweet and very very clear and I felt that we were well looked after thank you
August 21	Nothing to improve
August 21	Information more readily readily available online and I needed to guess which department to ring today wasn't massively Kayleigh on your website thank you
August 21	Because it was a really good experience today with your with you guys the two ladies I spoke to were very very helpful and and as of today as cant really say anything bad or give any recommendations just thanks to 2 lovely ladies and really listened to me and gave me some good solid information
August 21	I do not think you could improve the service I have had today its been absolutely wonderful she the lady [REDACTED] was are absolutely wonderful and gave me expects pensions everything could not fault her and I would give her ten out of ten actually that some yes very helpful and I am very pleased thank you
August 21	I thought it was actually very good call the lady was very helpful the only thing she couldn't explain was sort time find to give me a help me manage my expectations and I understand that's down to the way that refer also on managed by the locality tings but thank you very much in any event
August 21	Everything was satisfactory thank you
August 21	Nothing really
August 21	I'm not sure that I could find anything once I initially found the number on the net ok I it would be difficult to identify you from the initial things on the on google oh okay hash key
	You could do nothing better everything with overall service experience on talking with person that I just talked to
August 21	The lady instead of holding to fifteen minutes to get to speak to someone perhaps they could have taken my number and called me back that's all apart from that thank you
August 21	The nothing it's okay it's fine things with blurred
August 21	I was satisfied with everything
August 21	I tried to do for the last question I meant 5 I've been very very satisfied with who I dealt with today and very impressive surrey council
August 21	No absolutely no problems at all I got through very quickly and [REDACTED] the lady that I spoke to was very knowledgeable so so helpful in that something that is a very difficult situation but elderly care for my mother in law so yes it was brilliant and and thank her very much because it was super

August 21	It was very difficult doing an online search to access the appropriate service I needed
August 21	Everybody I've spoken to has been extremely kind at when you're going through a bad time is very important that people are kind 2 years and it's previous that if people are hearing impaired as I am its good from when the person who answers makes allowances for that
	Hi good morning I think that your service is a hundred percent higher no faults at all and the person I spoke to was very informative and I think is very positive your service thank you
September 21	Sorry the waiting for the telephone is quite long that is all thank you
September 21	I the finding the phone number for the right person is not that easy I went on the internet and I did it but I think a lot of old people and it wouldn't be very easy and maybe put off and decide not to send a more clear sign hosting so that people know the right number to phone very helpful
September 21	It just really to make sure that these promises do happen so obviously we're recorded it and I'm very pleased the way that worked but now it is a case just to see what happens next okay thank you very much indeed bye
September 21	Nothing could be done better for you know has been absolutely fabulous and extremely helpful and ten out ten couldn't ask for better service
September 21	I don't know I got the service was pretty good I couldn't think of any improvements
September 21	The very good telephone service and I don't know what you could do to make it better to be honest but thanks very much
September 21	The only thing I had a problem with us today is accessing your number when I googled it it took me awhile to find out exactly what number I needed to contact it's probably was probably just me but I think we need it needs to be yes to social care this is the number not through several numbers to get there thank you very much bye bye
September 21	I cannot think of anything the service was brilliant
September 21	Honestly nothing that was made purple lots of information very very helpful thank you to that lady she was very knowledgeable and it's great to speak to somebody like that could have happened very often so thank you very much indeed
September 21	Nothing really everything was was quite straightforward thank you
September 21	I did telephone the same number on Monday and I was told your representatives so what have you call them were busy and that somebody would phone me back nobody has phoned me back and the lady I spoke to today his name was [REDACTED] was extremely helpful and pleasant and apologize the fact that nobody had phone back she looked up and found that the I had made the call on Monday and I should have had somebody phone me back so my only comment is that if you say somebody's gonna phone back please ensure that they do but now that I have made contact I am very happy indeed thank you
September 21	I was very happy with the service I do not think there was needing anything to improve thank you
September 21	September 21
September 21	I spoke to gentleman called [REDACTED] was really helpful and explained everything to me it's the first time I've had to call your so to services and I'm very impressed with the service I received
September 21	I don't think there's anything at this particular time I could add to what's going on thank you

September 21	I think they're very helpful for me because I'm seventy seven nine last yes today and I'm on my own now which is but that was very good of him to come in the hash what's the word that I expect I expect hash explained everything and they were very very helpful thank you
September 21	I must say at the moment that I can't think of anything else you could do to eased my queries and I'm very delighted with the service as a whole advise been whenever I've had to well I haven't had to deal with issues that is is back to them whole system thank you so much bye for now
	Very happy with everything I didn't I don't know of anything that you could do to improve thank you very much
September 21	Just be available when someone you need to talk to someone
September 21	Well I don't really know what you want me to say the young lady was very helpful looking forward to having the directory to go through and I've taken on board all her helpful things she said to me and I thank her enough thank you for your time
September 21	There's nothing I am aware of that you couldn't do any better at the moment thank you
October 21	I haven't got any further suggestions the service seem to work very well today and I was I'm very satisfied
October 21	I have been trying for several months to sort out a query over the cost of care for missed ageing rolls account reference S the show over [REDACTED] I have spoken to one two three four five six seven eight different people and each keeps telling me they Will resolve the issue and today I have received another form notice of intended action forget recovery [REDACTED] is being charged hundred and ninety eight pounds per week 43 and a half hours care this can not possibly be correct I have spoken to the people who provide the care who was not meet commit on it's but have given it rarely rate which should come to about 60 pounds I would very much appreciate somebody looking into this matter because it's causing me an awful lot of distress thank you very much
October 21	There's nothing else that could have been done the lady I spoke to was absolutely amazing thank you
October 21	No comment at this point
October 21	No I thought it was excellent he explained that and explained everything to me step by step no he was excellent I don't think you could have improved
October 21	I cannot think of anything thank you
October 21	All good is was excellent and very happy with the service
October 21	No everything was fine thank you
October 21	I she was very kind and happy to help and was very patient thank you
October 21	I I don't there's nothing I could actually say that would make my experience today any better I had the most delightful person [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and she helped me out today she she was compassionate she was caring and I'd like there is nothing I could say to improve she was calm collective and she's made me feel like a new person and I know she can help my father out thank you very much