



**ANNUAL COMPLAINTS &  
COMPLIMENTS REPORT  
APRIL 2020 – MARCH 2021**

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES**

## **1.0 PURPOSE AND INTRODUCTION**

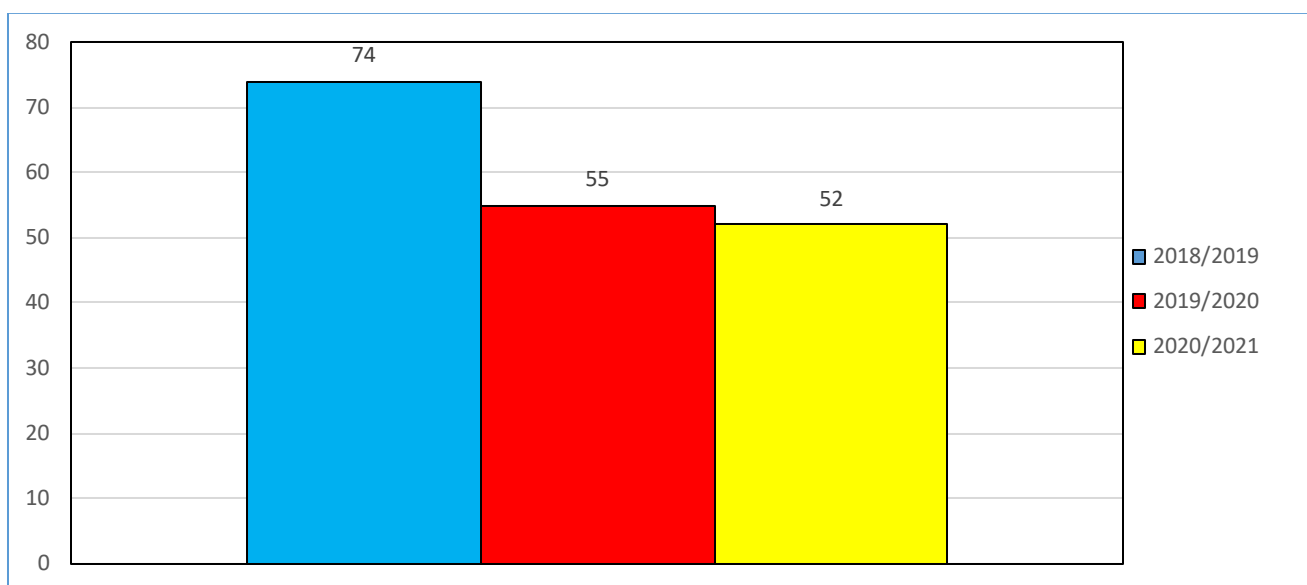
- 1.1 It is a statutory requirement to produce an Annual Complaints Report relating to Adult Social Care Complaints, received by the Corporate Core Department, Bury Council.
- 1.2 This report is to provide members of Health Scrutiny Committee with details of information relating to Adult Social Care Services.
- 1.3 The report relates to the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, and provides comparisons between previous years, as well as detailing the nature, scope and scale of some of the complaints received.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The council is required to operate a separate Statutory Complaints and Representations procedure, in accordance with the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 which was laid before Parliament on 27th February 2009 and came into effect on 1st April 2009. From 1st April 2009 there has been a single approach to dealing with complaints to ensure consistency in complaints handling across health and social care organisations. This procedure is based on the Department of Health's guidance, 'Listening, Responding and Improving' which supports the statutory requirements for the handling and consideration of complaints. Its intention is to allow more flexibility when responding to complaints and to encourage a culture that uses people's experiences of care to improve the services provided by Bury Adult Care Services.
- 2.2 The complaints mentioned in this report typically relate to issues where customers, their families or carers feel that the service they have received have not met their expectations. In these cases, the Council will always have endeavoured to resolve any concerns or dissatisfaction before a formal complaint has been received. Complaints, therefore, usually arise when the customer does not agree with the Council's interpretation of events or, in some cases, where policy delivers an outcome which they do not agree with.
- 2.3 Within the regulations which govern the complaints process, the Council adopts a flexible approach which prioritises local resolution. However, where complainants remain dissatisfied, they have the option to take their case to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman.
- 2.4 Members of Parliament cannot make a complaint on behalf of a constituent using the statutory process. However, MP's can raise a 'Concern' on behalf of a constituent with the Council and these are then managed accordingly.
- 2.5 The Complaint Procedure is not intended for dealing with allegation of serious misconduct by staff. These are covered by and dealt with through the Council's separate disciplinary procedures.

## **DATA ANALYSIS OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED**

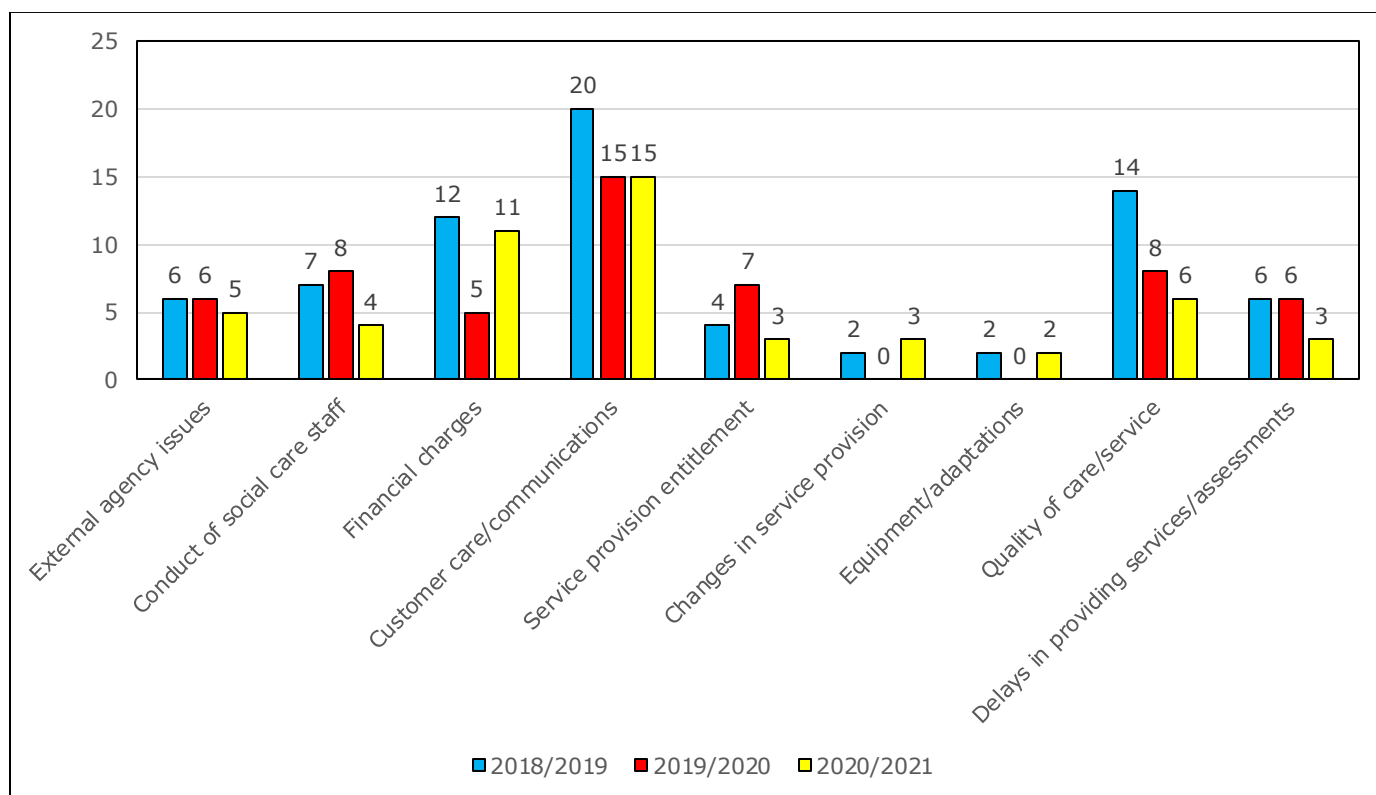
### **3.0 ADULT SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS**



- 3.1 The total number of complaints received in 2020/2021 has slightly reduced from the previous year - 55 in 2019/20. Therefore, although the way services are being delivered has changed significantly and service pressures have increased for the department, the figure for 2020/2021 indicates that customers have complained less about the services they have received.
- 3.2 The number of complaints received should also be considered in context with the number of people actually having direct contact with Adult Social Care Services (excluding their relatives, friends or carers who might make complaints on their behalf). The number of people to have direct contact with Adult Social Care Services during 2020/2021 was 7,180. It is positive that the proportion of people wanting to make a complaint about the services they have received from the department is relatively low at 52.
- 3.3 As would be expected when dealing with complaints from predominantly vulnerable groups, the majority of complaints received are made by a family member, advocate or solicitor of a service user, rather than the service user themselves.

	Total Number of Complaints	Total Number of Complaints raised on behalf of a service user	%
2018/2019	74	53	72%
2019/2020	55	40	73%
2020/2021	52	33	63%

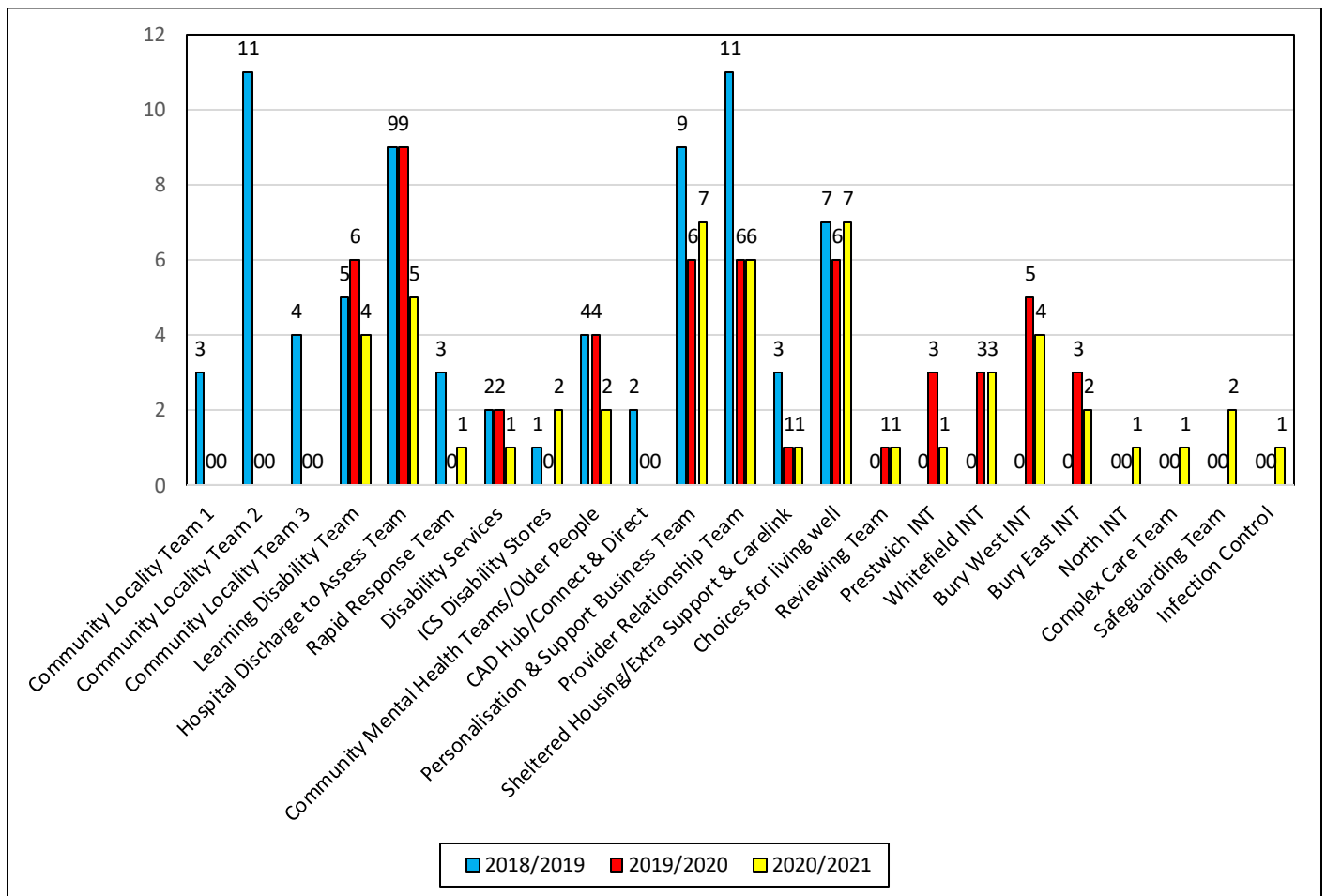
## 4.0 NATURE OF COMPLAINTS



- 4.1 In general there has been an overall decrease on the number of nature of complaints, the most common type of complaint 'quality of care/service' has decreased (from 8 to 6) whilst 'customer care / communications', has remained the same as the previous year.
- 4.2 There has, however, been an increase in complaints relating to 'equipment/adaptations' (from 0 to 2), 'changes in service provision' (from 0 to 3) and 'financial charges' (from 5 to 11). The increase in complaints relating to financial charges can be explained by the hospital discharge policy introduced by the government where a number of weeks of free care was provided but following this became chargeable and customers being unclear.
- 4.3 During the period 2020/2021 although the number of complaints has been slightly reduced it has shown a decrease in complaints being upheld/partially upheld from the previous year 2019/2020. In all cases when complaints are received, learning is drawn from the comments received and the subsequent investigation.

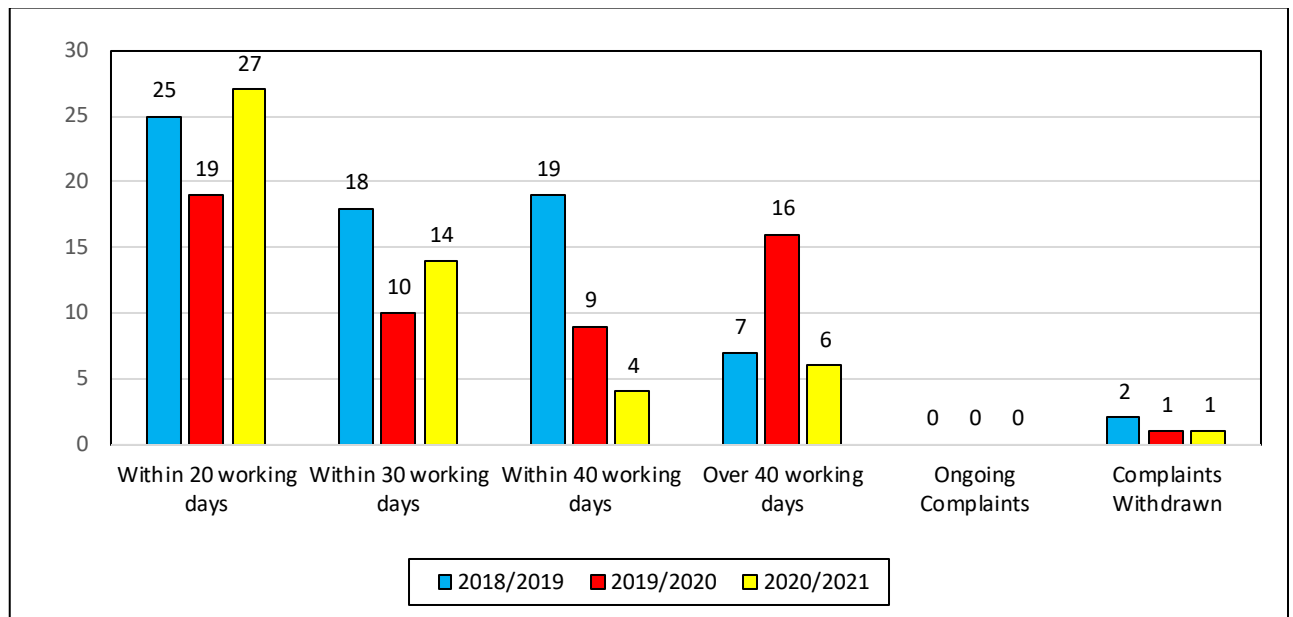
	Total Number of Complaints Received	Complaints Upheld/Partially Upheld	Complaints Not Upheld	Complaints Withdrawn
<b>2018/2019</b>	74	39 (53%)	34 (46%)	2
<b>2019/2020</b>	55	42 (76%)	12 (22%)	1
<b>2020/2021</b>	52	24 (46%)	27 (52%)	1

## 5.0 COMPLAINTS PER TEAM



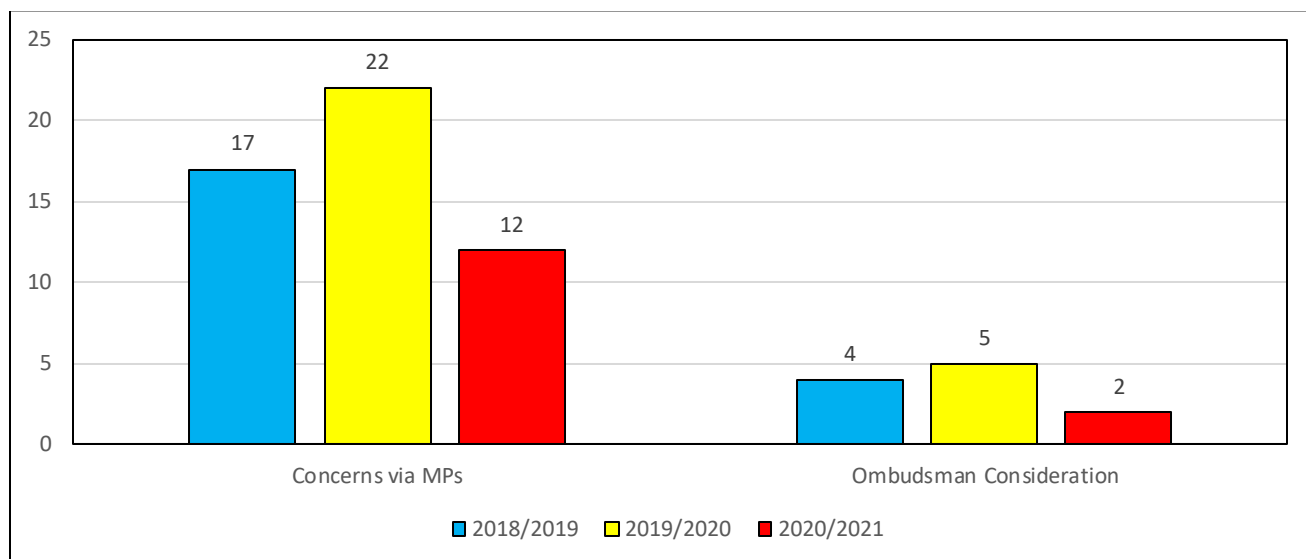
- 5.1 In comparison the overall number of complaints has continued to decrease. The report highlights no significant increase in complaints from a particular service or team which is in despite of the pressure services were under due to the global pandemic.
- 5.4 All complaints are considered in terms of the learning that they can provide on how to improve the services and help us to make sure our staff are trained to give the correct advice and support.

## 6.0 TIMESCALES



- 6.1 Whilst there are no statutory timescales with which the department must comply in responding to complaints, we do aim to resolve complaints within twenty working days on receipt of complaint. For more complex complaints which involve different service areas, 3<sup>rd</sup> party organisations, NHS for example, timescales will exceed the twenty working days.
- 6.2 It is for the council and complainant to agree how the complaint will be handled, the likely duration of the investigation and when the complainant can expect to receive a response.
- 6.3 In 2020/21, 27 (52%) of complaints were responded to within the 20 working day timescales, 24 (46%) of complaints were responded to outside of the 20 working day timescales. Complaints responded to over 40 working days has significantly decreased from the previous year which is excellent performance considering this was during the pandemic.
- 6.4 It is pleasing to see an increase in the number of complaints being responded to within 20 working days. The Local Government Social Care Ombudsman's office carried out a one-day training session with relevant staff on effective complaint handling. The session was well received and had a positive impact, staff felt more confident when investigating and responding to complaints. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman now run an online skills course which looks at how to investigate complaints, decision-making and remedy recommendations. Enquires are being made for the online course being rolled out to new members of staff and for those that wish a refresher session in 2022/2023.

## 7.0 MP CONCERNS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN CONSIDERATIONS / ENQUIRIES



- 7.1 As has been previously mentioned, concerns raised on behalf of constituents by Members of Parliament are recorded separately. In 2020/2021, there has been a decrease from 22 in 2019/2020 to 12 in 2020/2021.
- 7.2 The number of complaints referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) has reduced, at only 2 cases being considered. It is important to note that most complaints are resolved satisfactorily and are not referred to the LGSCO. Of the two cases received the LGSCO found no fault and considered one case to be a premature complaint.
- 7.4 Overall, and despite increased pressures on services, it is positive that the proportion of people who have made a complaint to the Council's Adult Social Care Department about the services they have received from the department has remained static over the last 12 months.

## 8.0 COMPLIMENTS

- 8.1 In addition to complaints received, the department also records the number of compliments.

<b>Total number of Compliments received 2019/2020</b>	<b>Total number of Compliments received 2020/2021</b>
212	333

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>2019/2020</b>	<b>2020/2021</b>
Hospital Social Work/Discharge to Assess Team	6	8
Choices for Living Well – Intermediate Care Reablement/Killelea/IMC @ Home	165	182
Sheltered Housing / Carelink / Support at Home	0	3
ICES Disability Stores	2	9
Learning Disability Team	2	4
Community Mental Health Teams	1	0
Older People's Community Mental Health Team	0	1
CAD Hub/Connect & Direct	7	1
Personalisation and Support Business Team	5	19
Rapid Response Team	7	56
Disability Services	8	5
Older Peoples Staying Well Team	14	37
Prestwich INT	0	1
Whitefield INT	5	1
Bury East INT	0	0
Bury North INT	2	3
Bury West INT	0	1
Adult Social Care Complaints Section	0	1
Urban Renewal Team	0	1

- 8.2 In 2019/20, 212 compliments were received with an increase of 333 in 2020/2021. On the whole the number of compliments received have generally increased from the previous year (2019/20). Team Managers are reminded and encouraged to record and share all compliments received.
- 8.3 It is pleasing to see the increase in compliments received, especially when those services are front line, for example there has been an increase in compliments for the Hospital social work team, Rapid Response Team, Integrated Neighbourhood Team and Choices for Living Well Service. Staff have been working tirelessly during the most challenging of times and it is pleasing to see that their hard work is being acknowledged and recognised.
- 8.4 When compliments are received that compliment an individual member of staff a personal thank you letter is sent by the Director - Adult Social Services and Community Commissioning. A copy is also placed on the individual's personnel record.



8.5 Here are some examples of positive feedbacks we received from people receiving a service: -

- "It was a very pleasant experience, made even more pleasurable by a gentleman who was a 'normal human being'. He was caring, efficient, and he enjoyed his company for the period of time that he was there. He spent time to listen to him and his wife and treated them with courtesy and politeness. He also commented on how professional he was in following safe social distancing and the wearing of PPE throughout the whole visit". **Integrated Community Equipment (ICS).**
- "Thank you once again for all your help and support after my husband passed away. I have met so many new friends from attending weekly regular chair-based exercise classes in Whitefield and Unsworth area and attending the quiz night at the Bay Horse on Wednesday evenings, I have so much more independence now and have so many new friends". **Older People's Staying Well Team.**
- "I'm really happy with my social worker and the support I get from her, she's an amazing woman. Any issues that I have she always deals with them for me even if I do her head in at times. She is always at the end of a phone if I ever need her, I have no issues, she shouldn't be my social worker she should be a manager of the social workers". **Learning Disability Team.**
- Wished to pass on thanks to the Rapid Response Team that supported her grandfather over the weekend before his admission into hospital a big thank you, you were all great and very supportive. **Rapid Response Team.**
- "I am writing to say how helpful a member of your staff has been with regards to my 100-year-old mother going into care at Burrswood Home. He has been most helpful and supportive during which I can only describe as a stressful time for me. I would therefore be grateful if you would kindly pass on my sincere thanks to him nothing was a trouble, and it was appreciated". **Discharge to Assess Team.**
- "Good afternoon, my Mum has just had the services of reablement for the last couple of weeks, following a fall and the need to regain her confidence. I just wanted to pass on my thanks to the team for the wonderful service. It would not be fair for me to name anyone in particular as they were all brilliant. The good news is Mum has equipment to help her become independent and this could have not been achieved without the support of the team. They are amazing people and would like to pass my thanks on". **Choices for Living Well – Reablement.**
- "Support at home visited me to check my carelink equipment and noticed that I was unwell. They telephoned for an ambulance because of my breathing difficulties, my body was drowning in fluid and if it hadn't been for him, I wouldn't be here today". **Support at Home.**
- "Just to say thank you to the team for so quickly responding to home care needs for my mum who has come to live with me following her cancer diagnosis and with Advanced Alzheimer's. They were fantastic on the home assessment, sensitive with Mum, helpful in her advice to me, and efficient. The home adaptations were done quickly the next week and have really helped Mum in terms of safety going up and down the stairs, and when showering". **Disability Services.**

## 9.0 LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

9.1 While complaints highlight where customers are dissatisfied with the services they have received, they are also beneficial in helping to develop lessons learned to improve services and ensure any mistakes are not repeated.

9.2 Examples of action taken in response to investigation findings to improve services:

Complaint	Lessons Learnt
<p>Various issues regarding the quality of care provided at an Intermediate Care Services facility: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medication errors</li> <li>• Monitoring of Food Temperatures</li> <li>• How the MUST score is calculated.</li> </ul>	<p>Following the initial investigation, a number of changes have been made.</p> <p>Nurses and pharmacists are now employed.</p> <p>The policy on food temperature checking has been changed and all staff have been retrained in the medication policy and recording MUST scores.</p> <p>A handover system between doctors, nurses and senior carers has been put in place which sees doctors accompanied on all visits and actions recorded to avoid another lapse in communication about an onward referral.</p> <p>They now employ a senior clinical lead nurse to improve care and support across all our Intermediate Care Services.</p>
<p>Difficulties / communication issues regarding arranging an emergency bed repair.</p>	<p>In order to rectify this and prevent it happening again the following actions have been taken: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An email will now be sent to all staff who refer into Equipment Services to reiterate the process for out of hours' repairs.</li> <li>• All Social Workers and the Duty Social work team will be emailed with details of the process for out of hours' repairs. The Duty social workers will also be sent a copy of the weekly staffing rota with contact numbers.</li> <li>• Bury Council's – Out of Hours Service at Bradley Fold will be sent a copy of the weekly staffing rota with contact numbers.</li> <li>• All Staff in the Rapid Response &amp; Intermediate Care team will be emailed with details of the process for out of hours' repairs including Killelea House.</li> <li>• The options on the telephone line into equipment service will be amended which will give an option for an out of hours repair.</li> <li>• An Equipment Services page will be added to the Councils website with detailed contact information.</li> </ul>

## **10.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 10.1 Despite a global pandemic, staff remotely working, reduction in staff resources and an increase on services, the number / proportion of complaints received in each of the last two years has remained stable showing a slight reduction in 2020/2021.
- 10.2 Similarly, the number of concerns raised directly to Members of Parliament has remained stable showing a reduction in 2020/2021.
- 10.3 Positively, to date the number of complaints escalated to the LGSCO has reduced with both cases not finding fault with the Council.
- 10.4 The Council will continue to seek to learn from complaints, concerns and compliments raised with them.
- 10.5 Complaints and compliments provide valuable information to the department on how well it is performing, where resources need to be used, and where improvements need to be made. Details of all complaints, concerns and compliments are provided to senior officers on a monthly basis, enabling them to identify any trends or issues within the services they are responsible for.