



CABINET – 6 JULY 2018

**CORPORATE COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS ANNUAL REPORT 2017 –
2018**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

PART A

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present to the Cabinet the Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report, covering the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 which is attached as the appendix to this report.
2. The report highlights a number of improvements in how the organisation both handles and learns from complaints and provides assurance that where mistakes have been made the Council has taken the appropriate steps to put things right.

Recommendation

3. That the Cabinet notes the Corporate Complaints Annual Report, covering the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

Reason for Recommendation

4. To note the improvements in performance and further work undertaken in regard to the Council's management of corporate complaints.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

5. The Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report, covering the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 was presented to the Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on 6 June 2018.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

6. A new Corporate Complaints Procedure was adopted by the Authority in April 2010 which requires an Annual Report to be produced, analysing and reviewing complaints received during the preceding 12 months.

Resource Implications

7. There are no additional resource implications arising from this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

8. None.

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PART B

Background

9. The Customer Relations Team manages and co-ordinates complaints relating to 3 separate complaints systems –
 - (i) Adult Social Care statutory process;
 - (ii) Children’s Social Care statutory process;
 - (iii) Corporate Complaints process – these are complaints relating to other services provided by the Council where there is no other form of redress.
10. The Corporate Complaints process is the subject of this report. The other two statutory processes are subject to separate reporting arrangements and annual reports on both areas will be presented to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Headline statistics

11. Complaints received and outcomes (2017-18 comparative data in brackets)
12. During 2017-18 the following complaints were received;
 - 268 Corporate complaints (260) – a 3% increase
 - 47 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) enquiries (44) – a 7% increase
13. 101 Corporate complaints were upheld - which is 38% of the total received (36%)
14. 40 Ombudsman decisions were made during 2017/18 as follows;
 - 10 Closed after initial enquiries;
 - 7 No fault found after full investigation;
 - 14 Outside of LGO remit;
 - 5 Premature;
 - 4 Maladministration with injustice;

Response times

15. During 2017-18, complaint response times were broadly similar to the previous year but remain above internal targets (2016-17 figures in brackets):
 - 65% of all complaints received a response within 10 working days (69%);
 - 90% received a response within 20 working days (90%);
 - 99% received a response within the maximum 65 days recommended by LGO (99%).

Issues complained about and numbers upheld

16. The top three issues complained about were as follows;

- Delays in providing services - 55 (21% of cases)
- Quality of Work - 44 (16% of cases)
- Professional decision making - 41 (15% of cases)

17. The top three issues most likely to be upheld were as follows;

- Accuracy of Information - upheld in 61% of cases
- Quality of work - upheld in 53% of cases
- Delay in providing services - upheld in 51% of cases

18. Of the complaints adjudicated on by the Ombudsman, financial remedies totalled just £50. The figure for 2016-17 was £1,025

New Developments

19. “Effective complaints handling” training continues to be delivered to managers within the organisation. Feedback from delegates has been positive and in many cases the quality of responses has demonstrably improved.
20. Work continues on enhancing the Council’s complaints toolkit to help managers access guidance and templates when responding to complaints
21. Procurement of a single consolidated system for management of complaints, freedom of information (FOI) requests and subject access (SAR) requests is planned. This should offer administrative benefits and enhanced reporting capabilities.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

22. None

Appendix

Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report 2017 – 18