

Item

ANNUAL COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK REPORT 2017-18



To:

Civic Affairs Committee

Report by:

Customer Services

Wards affected:

None directly affected

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an analysis of the complaints and compliments received by the Council during 2017-18 under the Corporate Complaints, Compliments and Comments procedure.
- 1.2 The purpose of the report is to identify topics and trends in relation to complaints; identify areas of organisational learning that have taken place over the past year as a result of the complaints received and make further recommendations based on trend data to improve services.
- 1.3 The report also highlights those areas of good practice within the Council and seeks to identify themes and trends in relation to comments made by members of the public so that the Council can also take action where appropriate to improve services.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Civic Affairs to:

- Consider the draft Annual Complaints Report for 2017-18, shown at Appendix A, and approve for publication on the Council's website.
- Consider amending our response target to ten working days to better align with South Cambridgeshire.

3. Background

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3.1 The City Council has been recording information about complaints for the last thirteen years and trend data is included in the report from 2015. In 2017-18 we received 698 complaints compared with 567 in the previous year.

3.2 The report in Appendix A includes:

- A summary of complaints received, their trends and action taken
- Details of compliments and comments
- Complaints investigated by the Independent Complaints Investigator
- Complaints escalated to the Local Government Ombudsman
- Complaints relating to conduct of councillors

3.3 As well as complaints we also receive many positive comments about the Council's services and staff. A section on compliments is included in the report because knowing where things are working well and are appreciated is as important as knowing where things are not working well.

3.4 Subject to approval by Civic Affairs on the 10th October, officers will finalise and publish the report on the Council's website with hard copies being made available on request.

3.5 With a number of services now shared with neighbouring authorities, we are proposing to extend our target response timeline to ten working days instead of seven. This will bring the Council in line with South

Cambridgeshire District Council, and allow colleagues working within a shared service to work to one timeframe. Our services have also evolved over the years and complaints have become more complex and time consuming to respond to. Therefore we believe this change will assist managers in ensuring a comprehensive response is made within target

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

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The time and resources spent on responding to complaints is a not insignificant cost to the Council. Our aim should be to get things right first time as often as we can.

(b) Staffing Implications

None

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

Analysis and action taken as a result of complaints has an important role to play in ensuring that our services are accessible to all those who wish or need to use them and, that as far as possible, we are able to respond flexibly to the differing needs of our citizens and visitors. An updated EQIA assessment was completed in September 2018.

(d) Environmental Implications

None

(e) Procurement Implications

None

(f) Community Safety Implications

None

5. Consultation and communication considerations

None

6. Background papers

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

(a) Departmental Quarterly Monitoring Reports 2016-17

7. Appendices

(a) 3 Year Service Analysis

8. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Tony Stead, Business and Development Manager, tel: 01223 - 457501, email: Tony.Stead@cambridge.gov.uk.