

TITLE OF REPORT: Corporate Complaints and Compliments Procedure - Annual Report 2022/23

REPORT OF: Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

Purpose of the Report

1. The report asks the Cabinet to consider and endorse an analysis of the compliments and Chief Executive Review complaints recorded by the Council and complaints against the Council considered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman in 2022/23.

Background

2. This report focuses on compliments and the Chief Executive Review complaints dealt with by the Council under its Corporate Complaints and Compliments procedure for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.
3. Appendix 2 to the report details the number of compliments and complaints that required a Chief Executive Review received from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.
4. Appendix 3 provides information about the complaints against the Council considered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman in 2022/23.

Proposal

5. It is proposed that the Corporate Complaints and Compliments Procedure – Annual Report 2022/23 be agreed.

Recommendations

6. It is recommended that the Cabinet agrees the Corporate Complaints and Compliments Procedure Annual Report for 2022/23 as detailed.

For the following reason:

To have an effective and timely complaints procedure.

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APPENDIX 1

Policy Context

1. The corporate complaints and compliments procedure supports Thrive and the Corporate Plan in that it helps the Council to assess its service provision and improve where necessary.

Background

2. The Council aims to respond positively to complaints. The corporate complaints and compliments procedure is publicised across the Borough through a complaints and compliments form which is available at Council facilities and on its website.
3. The Council operates the corporate complaints and compliments procedure to make it easier for members of the public to submit compliments and raise issues of concern, ensure that complaints are responded to quickly and in a consistent manner and to enable the Council to learn from the issues raised and amend procedures and practices as necessary.
4. The report focuses on complaints that the Council deals with under its corporate complaints procedure. Excluded from the procedure are:
 - most Social Services and Children's Services matters - for which there are separate statutory procedures
 - matters for which there is a statutory system of appeal/redress eg planning
 - most complaints about schools
5. The current procedure enables people to express their views and register their complaint or compliment in person at a Council office, by telephone, letter, e-mail, complaints and compliments form or online. It can also be done through a Councillor, someone acting on their behalf, with the assistance of other organisations or via social media.
6. A designated officer oversees and monitors the operation of the corporate complaints procedure and system on behalf of the Chief Executive. This includes the collation and analysis of the statistics for the Council and the conduct of the Chief Executive Reviews. The officer is also the Council's link officer with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman.
7. Residents are encouraged to submit complaints via a form on the Council's website, while still retaining the ability to submit complaints in the other ways outlined for those that do not have internet access. The website has been updated to direct people to service requests wherever appropriate eg. to report fly tipping or a missed bin collection so that only genuine complaints are submitted to the designated officer through the corporate complaints system. The complainants after registering on the system can view the progress of their complaint and submit further information and they will receive e mail notifications on information and updates and the Council's formal response to their complaint.

Consultation

8. There has been no external consultation undertaken in the preparation of this report.

Alternative Options

9. There are no alternative options.

Implications of Recommended Option

10. **Resources:**

- a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms that there are no new financial implications arising from this report.
 - b) **Human Resources Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance confirms that there are no human resources implications arising from the report.
 - c) **Property Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance confirms that there are no property implications arising from this report.
11. **Risk Management Implication** – Potential failure to act on complaints received is minimised through regular monitoring.
 12. **Equality and Diversity Implications** – The corporate complaints and compliments procedure contributes to the implementation of the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.
 13. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.
 14. **Health Implications** – There are no health implications arising from this report.
 15. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** – There are no climate emergency and sustainability implications arising from this report.
 16. **Human Rights Implications** – There may be human rights implications in a number of complaints made to the Council. Therefore, having a corporate complaints procedure will assist the Council in carrying out its duties under the Human Rights Act 1988.
 17. **Ward Implications** – None.
 18. **Background Information** – Corporate complaints and compliments policy and procedure.