

Report to Cabinet

Subject: Updates to the Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy

Date: 2 August 2018

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Wards Affected

Borough wide.

Purpose

To seek approval on the changes to the Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Background

- 1.1 The current policy framework consists of three documents and has been in place since 2010. Following the publication, by Government, of a code of practice relating to English language requirements for public sector workers, a full review of the policy and associated documents took place, rather than simply adding the requirement.
- 1.2 The policy has been amalgamated to two documents and drafts of these were sent to; Service Managers, the Customer Insight Officer, members of the Customer Focus Group and departmental complaints representatives for consultation. Amendments/additions were made in accordance with the responses received.
- 1.3 The Code of Practice on the English language requirements for public sector workers requires all public authorities to operate a complaints procedure so that if a member of the public feels that a public-facing public authority worker has insufficient proficiency in spoken English for the performance of their role they can make a formal complaint to the public authority which is then investigated and a response provided. The updated

Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy now includes a paragraph to make it clear that such a complaint will be dealt with in accordance with that policy.

- 1.4 In addition, minor amendments have been made to insert correct job titles, update the references to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and to strengthen the definitions of complaints and compliments.
- 1.5 The Unreasonably Persistent Complainants Policy and guidance document have been amalgamated into one comprehensive policy document.
- 1.6 In addition to the policy documents, a customer friendly leaflet and poster have been designed to communicate the key elements of the Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy clearly to customers.

Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed that Cabinet approve the updated Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy (Appendix 1) and updated Unreasonably Persistent Complainants Policy (Appendix 2).

Alternative Options

- 3.1 The Council could decide not to have a policy relating to these matters. However an effective and accessible Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy demonstrates the Council's commitment to managing customer feedback effectively, enables the Council to put things right formally when they have gone wrong, allows us to make service improvement and protects staff through the unreasonably persistent complaints part of the policy.

Financial Implications

- 4.1 None.

Appendices

- 5.1 Appendix 1: Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy
Appendix 2: Unreasonably Persistent Complainants Policy

Background Papers

- 6.1 None.

Recommendations

THAT the:

- a) Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy at Appendix 1 be approved;
and
- b) Unreasonably Persistent Complainants Policy at Appendix 2 be approved.

Reasons for Recommendations

To enable the Council to continue effectively managing customer feedback.

To ensure that the Council complies with the requirements of the Code of Practice on the English language requirements for public sector workers.