

PAPER C

RESOURCE SELECT COMMITTEE – 11 OCTOBER 2004

CORPORATE COMPLAINTS QUARTERLY REPORTING

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR RESOURCES

REASON FOR SELECT COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

When the Select Committee considered the Quarterly Performance Management Report at its meeting on the 7 June 2004, Members of the Committee requested clearer and more detailed information about the corporate complaints procedure.

ACTION REQUIRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE

- (i) Confirm that the draft reporting form contains the required information
- (ii) Verify that the layout proposed is clear and suited to their purpose
- (iii) Confirm that this report is to be amalgamated with QPMR rather than a standalone reporting process

BACKGROUND

Recently the Corporate Policy Team have been working to improve the corporate complaints process, and to raise the profile of complaints management within the Council.

Complaints management is not purely a customer service or PR issue – the Ombudsman scheme is a further recourse for customers who are dissatisfied at the end of the three stage corporate complaints procedure, and we can face charges of maladministration if we fail to manage complaints properly.

The Ombudsman's annual letter states that the Council has been poor at responding on time to Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) complaints and that we are required to improve this. However complaints are not always particularly high on the agendas of our busy services and it can be difficult for corporate policy to help secure the detailed information needed within the required timescales. In short, we need the combined efforts of members and officers to improve our response to customer complaints and LGO complaints.

RELEVANT PLANS, POLICIES, STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Corporate Complaints Procedure and Staff Policy on handling customer complaints
Comprehensive Performance Assessment

CONSULTATION PROCESS

Following the Select Committee's meeting in June 2004, a discussion had taken place with the Resources Select Committee Chairman regarding the draft corporate complaint form. This version incorporates the Chairman's suggestions as far as possible.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

The Council's failure to handle complaints properly can result in a maladministration finding by the Local Government Ombudsman and/or payment of compensation where a complaint is justified.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Draft Complaints Form

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARATION OF THE REPORT.

Corporate Complaints procedure and Staff Policy on handling customer complaints

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CLLR R R BARRY
Portfolio Holder for Resources

Draft Complaints Form

Directorate/ Service	Total complaints received		#	Acknow- ledged < 5 days	Replied to < 15 days	LGO			User Satisfaction (new)
	Qtr	Year				Qtr	Total	Upheld	
Corporate Services									
Social Services									
Environment Services									
Education/ Childrens									
Fire & Rescue									
Totals									