



ARTICLE NO: 2C

**CORPORATE & ENVIRONMENTAL
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

**MEMBERS UPDATE 2015/16
ISSUE: 2**

Article of: Transformation Manager

Relevant Managing Director: Managing Director (Transformation)

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SUBJECT: MONITORING OF FORMAL COMPLAINTS (2014/15)

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF ARTICLE

- 1.1 To present data on the number of formal complaints received by the Council from April 2014 to March 2015.
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2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Types, numbers and trends in complaints provide a valuable insight into the quality of services and can make a valuable contribution to improving them. In this respect they should also be considered alongside other information such as performance indicators and securing value for money. The Customer Services team is responsible for managing the overall co-ordination of the corporate complaints process.
- 2.2 The Council defines a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service, actions or lack of action taken by the Council, or a person or body acting on behalf of the Council, affecting an individual or group of customers. Therefore, the complaints procedure is not simply logging initial service requests e.g. for pest control, missed refuse collections, housing repairs etc. The Council's complaints procedure is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 If a complainant wishes to pursue an issue further after the Council's own internal procedures have been exhausted, this can be raised with either the Local Government Ombudsman or the Housing Ombudsman, depending on the nature of the complaint.

3.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 The principal purpose of monitoring and responding to complaints is always to improve service delivery. On the occasions where the Council acknowledged that the service was not up to the required standard, the focus is on putting the matter right AND preventing any re-occurrence.
- 3.2 This update provides Members with details of the number of formal complaints during 2014/15. Data on the number of formal complaints received by each section during this period is set out in Appendix 2 to this report. The numbers recorded are all written expressions of dissatisfaction and are not necessarily substantiated.
- 3.3 The figures for 2014/15 show a reduction of 22 in the number of complaints received, when compared with 2013/14, i.e. from 133 in 2013/14 to 111 in 2014/15. Following investigation, it was established that 76 of the 111 received were without merit i.e. the Council had complied with its own policies and procedures. In comparison, the total number of complaints for the previous year (2013/14) that were without merit totalled 75. Further details regarding the nature of the specific complaints are provided at Appendix 2.
- 3.4 The figures demonstrate that where there have been genuine complaints/issues these have been dealt with accordingly and wherever possible, improvements have been made to prevent re-occurrence. The Landlord Services Team works closely with tenants to raise standards and drive improvements. In addition to the role played by the Housing and Regeneration Management Team in scrutinising the sections complaints performance, the Tenant Scrutiny Group has responsibility to review Landlord Services complaints performance on a quarterly basis. The group scrutinise performance data, consider any trends and review lessons learned from complaints to ensure that we are benefiting as much as possible from the wealth of information received in the form of complaints and enabling us to make any necessary improvements. By taking complaints seriously, the Council is ensuring that all genuine grievances are recognised and action taken to address the issue, especially by listening to valuable customer feedback.

4.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 4.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this article and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder. The article has no significant links with the Sustainable Community Strategy.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no significant financial or resource implications arising from this article.

6.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 This item is for information only and makes no recommendations. It therefore does not require a formal risk assessment and no changes have been made to risk registers as a result of this article.
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Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Article.

Equality Impact Assessment

This article is for information only and does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and/ or stakeholders. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Appendices

1. Complaints Procedure
2. Formal Complaints Received April 2014 to March 2015.