



AGENDA ITEM: 5

CABINET: 15 January 2013

Report of: Borough Solicitor

Relevant Managing Director: Managing Director (People and Places)

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor I Grant

**Contact for further information: Mrs C A Jackson (Extn. 5016)
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**SUBJECT: ITEM REFERRED FROM THE CORPORATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMPLAINTS MONITORING**

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To advise on the decision of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 13 December 2012, in relation to consideration of complaints received by the Council from April 2011 to March 2012.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the recommendation of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to Complaints Monitoring as detailed at paragraph 3.2 below, be considered.

2.2 That Call In is not appropriate as it relates to an item already considered by the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3.0 DETAILS

3.1 The Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report of the Transformation Manager on Complaints Monitoring during the period from April 2011 to March 2012, previously considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 13 November 2012.

- 3.2 In relation to Item 8 – Complaints Monitoring, Minute 48 sets down the decision of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

“48. COMPLAINTS MONITORING

Consideration was given to the report of the Transformation Manager which presented data on complaints received by the Council from April 2011 to March 2012 as contained on pages 205 to 218 of the Book of Reports.

A discussion ensued in relation to the Council’s definition of a complaint; the monitoring, identification and presentation of the complaints data.

The Customer Services Manager attended the meeting and responded to questions giving an explanation of the processes involved in relation to receipt, monitoring, capture and presentation of the complaints data.

It was agreed that the provision of information in relation to verbal complaints, particularly those received by telephone, the nature of the interactions and dissatisfaction would be useful when considering complaints monitoring reports.

RESOLVED: A. That in relation to the monitoring of complaints received by the Council that the matter be referred to Cabinet with a request that future reports on complaints monitoring include an overview of the level of verbal complaints received on telephone routes into the Council to see the nature of interactions and frustrations.

B. That the report be noted.”

4.0 COMMENTS OF THE TRANSFORMATION MANAGER

- 4.1 The complaints report provides data on the number of formal complaints received across the authority each year, both within Customer Services and within each individual section, therefore providing a corporate overview. Within the Contact Centre alone, there are approximately 190,000 customer interactions each year and as can be seen from the complaints monitoring report, only a very small percentage of customers choose to escalate their enquiry.
- 4.2 Clearly, the Contact Centre does not deal with all services and many calls are received directly within ‘the back offices’. Therefore recording the nature/detail of any calls within Customer Services alone would not provide a full and accurate picture of the corporate position. In addition, due to the vast amount of interactions with customers across the entire Authority (i.e. both within the Contact Centre and within other offices), it would not be feasible to log and detail the number of verbal complaints of dissatisfaction. Experience shows that the vast majority of customers simply want their enquiry dealt with speedily and informally there and then, although clearly there is the option to escalate their dissatisfaction should they so wish.
- 4.3 Recording this level of detail is therefore not considered to be practical and would have a negative impact on service delivery. It is also likely that in order to introduce this policy effectively would require investment in new/bespoke IT software.

Background Documents

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

Equality Impact Assessment

The decision 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

None.