

Report to: Cabinet 11th JUNE 2013

Report of: Cabinet Member for Customer Service and Communications

Subject: ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT 2012/13 AND POLICY UPDATE

1. Decision Required

- 1.1 Cabinet are asked to note the Council's performance regarding complaints received and investigated under the Corporate Complaints procedure and by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) for the year 2012/13 as set out in the attached report which was considered at Performance Management & Budget Scrutiny Committee on 4 June 2013.
- 1.1 To approve the proposed changes to the Council's Feedback and Complaints Policy as outlined on the attached report, taking account of suggestions from and response to an Internal Audit of the Council's complaints system.

2. Background

- 2.1 A complaint is: 'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, action or lack of action by the Council, or our workforce, affecting an individual, group or organisation'.
- 2.2 Worcester City Council's Feedback and Complaints Policy was agreed by Cabinet in December 2010. The policy sets out how we deal with feedback and complaints: the general principles and the detailed procedure.
- 2.3 The Council operates a three stage complaints process which allows for complainants to appeal and request further investigation if they are not happy or feel that important information has not been taken into account.

Stage I – the initial investigation and response by the service.
Stage II – review independently of the Service
Stage III – referral to the Local Government Ombudsman
- 2.4 The Council has recently developed a new complaints and feedback system with the South Worcestershire ICT Service. The system will receive, store and report all complaints, compliments and comments received by the Council on one corporate system. The system is currently being rolled out to services.
- 2.5 An internal audit was carried out of the complaints system and a report provided in February 2013. The majority of audit findings/suggestions identified were improvements for consideration rather than controlled weaknesses. A number of these are addressed by changes to the Policy as outlined in the attached report.

3. Policy, Legal, Financial, Equalities and Risk Management Implications

- 3.1 See PMBS report attached.

4. Comments of Performance, Improvement and Efficiency Service Manager

4.1 See PMBS report attached.

5. THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS, COUNCILLOR LYNN DENHAM, RECOMMENDS:

- 1. That the Cabinet approve the suggested amendments to the Complaints and Feedback Policy, taking account of suggestions made by Internal Audit.**
- 2. That the Cabinet note the Council's performance for 2012/13 with regards to complaints received.**

Ward(s): All
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Background Papers: Feedback and Complaints Policy