

COMPLAINTS FORUM
Monday, 21st February, 2011

Present:- Councillor Wyatt (in the Chair); Sarah Griffiths, Emma Hill, Mark Leese, Rachel O'Neil and Stuart Purcell.

Apologies for absence were received from Zoe Burke, Garrad and Pearson.

8. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 24TH NOVEMBER, 2010

Agreed:- that the minutes of the meeting held on 24th November, 2010, be agreed as a true record.

9. HALF YEARLY PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Rachel O'Neil circulated a report outlining the results of the 'Tell Us Your Views' process for the period 1st April to 30th September, 2010.

The headlines were:-

- 500 complaints had been received across the Council
- 29% had been upheld or partially upheld
- 79% of the complaints were dealt with at Stage 1
- 75% of the complaints were processed within Service standard

Discussion ensued on the report with the following issues highlighted:-

- o Apparently CYPS had had a lot of Stage 2 complaints in Quarter 4.
- o More information had been obtained from CYPS about Lessons Learnt. There had been an issue around impartiality but that had been overcome
- o The Service Standard had dipped primarily because of CYPS due to the greater controls in place, and still coming through, and the recruitment of new staff. Quarter 3 had seen an increase in their Service levels

Agreed:- [1] That the report be noted.

[2] That the report be amended to include Q3 statistics and be submitted to the 23rd March, 2010, Cabinet.

10. LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN CASE REFERRALS

Mark Leese reported that the Council were not receiving a large amount of referrals but the Ombudsman had reported that the Authority was performing outside of the 28 days. This was due to the time taken to deal with 1 enquiry.

The LGO was not passing things through as formal investigations but there had been an increase in the number of enquiries. Due to the recent restructure, the process for dealing with the enquiries had not changed but the officers dealing with them would be different. This would need to be looked at once the restructure was complete.

There had been no rulings against the Council by the Ombudsman.

Agreed:- That there had been no Ombudsman rulings against the Council be included in the report to Cabinet (see Minute No. 9).

11. TELL US YOUR VIEWS LEAFLET

Mark Leese circulated a draft of the reviewed leaflet for comment.

Discussion ensued on whether the practice of handing leaflets out should be continued or the display of a poster informing customers to ask for a leaflet. All staff within Customer Service Centres had access to the leaflet as a pdf document and would be able to print a copy for a customer.

In many cases customers took a copy when they did not really need/want it and some would prefer to submit it on line. The revised leaflet had been reduced to a 4 page form outlining how a customer could contact the Council, what the Standards were and where they could go for information, completed by an A5 form to fill in their details. This would reduce costs and also make it more relevant to what the customer was doing at that point in time. Costs could be reduced further if the leaflet did not include a tear-off slip and instead informed the customer to place in an envelope and send to the freepost address.

It was felt that there should be reference to contacting your local Councillor/visit your Councillor Surgery and including where that information could be found.

Agreed:- (1) That the principle of displaying posters with complaints forms available at reception points or printed on demand be agreed.

(2) That, following the inclusion of the comment above, Mark Leese circulate a draft copy of the poster as soon as practicable.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- That a further meeting be held on 18th April, 2011, at 1.30 p.m. in the Town Hall.