



AUDIT COMMITTEE – 12TH DECEMBER 2012

**SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH
COUNCIL COMPLAINTS POLICY**

REPORT BY: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform and seek comments from the Audit Committee on the implementation of the new Caerphilly County Borough Council Complaints Policy, before presentation of the policy to Cabinet.

2. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 2.1 To support the provision of higher quality and more effective services to the public.

3. THE REPORT

- 3.1 The vision of Welsh Government for improving public services across Wales is well documented. Welsh Government considered that 'complaints systems and re-dress' were an important contribution to the improvement of public services across Wales.
- 3.2 Welsh Government convened the 'Complaint Wales Group' comprising of relevant Officers from public sector organisations across Wales, chaired by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, to develop a model complaints policy for adoption by public sector organisations across Wales.
- 3.3 The model policy developed by the Group is prescriptive in nature with a view to ensuring that complaints are dealt with in a consistent manner across Wales.
- 3.4 Consequently the Council's current complaints policy has been reviewed in order to ensure that the Council's policy reflects the model policy. The new policy is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.5 The most significant change is the reduction of the number of stages in the process from three to two. This is prescriptive and cannot under any circumstances be varied.
- 3.6 To coincide with the implementation of the new policy on 1st April, 2013, a Listening and Learning Group will be convened.
- 3.7 This Group will consist of complaints officers from across the Council, a representative from the Council's Performance Management Unit and it will be chaired by the Council's Monitoring Officer.
- 3.8 Detailed statistics and reports will be produced and reported to the Listening and Learning Group on a quarterly basis. This information will be reviewed in order to monitor performance and analyse whether patterns exist either within a department or across the Council.

3.9 A six monthly report will be produced drawing out lessons learnt over this period and demonstrating how they have contributed to improved service delivery. This will be presented to the Audit Committee and the Council's Leadership Team.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with the Report.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None arising from the Report.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None arising from the report.

7. CONSULTATIONS

7.1 The views of consultees have, where appropriate been taken into account in the drafting of the new policy attached at Appendix 1, although the ability to make any changes were restricted for the reasons previously outlined.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that Members note the report and provide appropriate comments on the new policy. The report will be placed before Cabinet on the 22nd January, 2013.

9. STATUTORY POWERS

9.1 Local Government Acts 1972-2003.
Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2005

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Caerphilly County Borough Council Corporate Complaints Policy