



CABINET – 20TH JANUARY 2016

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF A) THE CORPORATE COMPLAINTS POLICY AND B) THE POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH UNACCEPTABLE PERSISTENT AND UNREASONABLE ACTIONS BY COMPLAINANTS

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

-
- 1.1 The attached report was considered by Audit Committee on 9th December 2015.
 - 1.2 The purpose of the report was to seek the views of the Audit Committee on the changes proposed to the Corporate Complaints Policy as set out in Appendix 1 of the report and the current Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable, Persistent and Unreasonable Actions by Complainants as set out in Appendix 2, prior to its presentation to Cabinet.
 - 1.3 By way of background information, on the 12th December 2012 the Audit Committee considered the implementation of the Council's new Corporate Complaints Policy which was subsequently endorsed by Cabinet and implemented on 1st April 2013. The policy was developed with a view to ensuring that complaints were dealt with in a consistent manner across Wales with the significant change being the number of stages in the process being reduced from three to two. This provision remains prescriptive and cannot under any circumstances be varied. The Audit Committee receives six monthly update reports on the complaints received under the Corporate Complaints Policy and has recently received an Annual report reviewing the complaints policy for the period 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015. Members were advised that the policy is working well and there are no proposals to significantly amend the Policy other than to include those referred to in Appendix 1 of the report.
 - 1.4 The introduction of the Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable Persistent and Unreasonable Action by Complainants was considered by Audit Committee on 6th November 2013 and adopted by Cabinet in November 2013. The Policy is subject to a two yearly review, this was due in November 2015. Members were informed that it remains the case that the majority of complainants pursue their complaints with the Authority in an appropriate manner. However a small number of complainants pursue their cases in a way that can impede investigation of their complaint or have significant resource implications in dealing with the case for example the sheer number or nature of their enquiries may lead to them to be considered as persistent. Members were advised that although there have been no formal referrals under this Policy since its introduction in November 2013, officers have had regard to its provisions when considering the actions of any complainant whose behaviour was becoming unacceptable or persistent in nature. As such it remains a useful tool to Officers when dealing with complainants under the Corporate Complaints Policy.
 - 1.5 Having considered the report, the Audit Committee recommended to Cabinet that:
 - (i) the changes proposed to the Corporate Complaints Policy as set out in Appendix 1 be endorsed.
 - (ii) the current Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable, Persistent and Unreasonable Actions by Complainants as set out in Appendix 2 be endorsed.

1.6 Members are asked to consider the recommendations.

Author: Amy Dredge, Committee Services Officer

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Review of a) The Corporate Complaints Policy and b) The Policy and Procedure for dealing with Unacceptable, Persistent and Unreasonable Actions by Complainants