

AUDIT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 7
27 NOVEMBER 2023	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Cecilie Booth, Director of Corporate Resources		
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Finance - Councillor John Howard		
Contact Officer(s):	Belinda Evans Complaint Manager		Tel. 01733 296331

ANNUAL REPORT OF COMPLAINTS 2022/23

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: <i>Audit Committee</i>	Deadline date: <i>N/A</i>
<p>It is recommended that Audit Committee:</p> <p>1. Review the report (detailed in Appendix A & B) and provide any comments or recommend areas for future scrutiny.</p>	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report has been an annual item, which was moved under the remit of Audit Committee since 2022. The Chief Executive requested that going forward this report should include the data from the two statutory complaint reports (Childrens Social Care and Adults Social Care)also.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The effective management of complaints is important to ensure action is taken when customers express dissatisfaction about the delivery of any of our services. Complaints are also an important factor to aid in the identification of service improvements. Failing to take customer concerns seriously would impact the reputation of the Council and Scrutiny of the complaints process and performance on complaint handling across the Authority helps to identify areas for further scrutiny.
- 2.2 This report is for Audit Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 2.2.2.14 To review any issue referred to it by the Chief Executive or a Director, or any Council body.

[Democratic Services to complete this section following liaison with Author. Do NOT include any other text under this heading].

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	No
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4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The corporate complaints process is used to facilitate complaints made by members of the public about council services where an alternative form of appeal or dispute resolution process is not available. Since 2015 this has been a two-stage process involving local resolution by the appropriate service at the first stage and a review by the Chief Internal Auditor at the second stage.

The management and monitoring of the complaints process is carried out by the Central Complaints office which is part of the Customer services department. This team are responsible for receiving complaints from the public, registering complaints, and arranging for response by the appropriate service area. They also handle all contact with the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman who provides an annual letter detailing the council's performance on complaints with the Ombudsman which is attached.

The report contained at Appendix A provides detailed performance information for the 12 months period from April 2022 to March 2023.

Key areas highlighted are:

- Complaint volumes across the council remain the same as the previous level
- Complaint volumes for Peterborough Ltd have increased significantly

5. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 5.1 Consider how the recommendation links to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

- The Economy & Inclusive Growth
- Environment (including a summary of the outcome of a completed Carbon Impact Assessment, to be submitted in full to the Transport and Environment Team)
- Homes and Workplaces
- Jobs and Money
- Our Places & Communities
- Places and Safety (including any rural implications)
- Lives and Work
- Health and Wellbeing

Many complaints are about problems with the physical environment and processing requests promptly helps support the council's ambition to provide a safe and healthy environment.

- Prevention, Independence & Resilience
- Educations and Skills for All
- Adults
- Children

Receiving complaints from the vulnerable sections of our community helps us to intervene early and signpost customers to forms of support.

- Sustainable Future City Council
- How we Work
- How we Serve
- How we Enable

Complaints give us rich data & insight into how services are experienced by the people we serve and improvements that can be made.

Further information on the Council's Priorities can be found here - [Link to Corporate Strategy and Priorities Webpage](#)

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 Not Applicable

6.2 Not Applicable

6.3 Has this recommendation been considered by the below? If not, please provide reasoning.

- Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) will review this before Audit committee

None of the other forums below were consulted as this item is not applicable to their remit

- Cabinet Policy Forum (CPF) - N/A

Please also consider whether the recommendation should also be considered by the following:

- Financial Sustainability Working Group (FSWG)
- Group Leaders' Meeting
- All Party Policy (APP)

Guidance on the items each group should see can be found here - [Meetings Pathway Guidance Link](#)

7. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

7.1 Areas for further scrutiny may be identified.

8. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

8.1 Further scrutiny of complaints data can help to identify areas for service improvement, increase customer satisfaction with council services and may help to reduce service failures and inefficiencies.

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None Considered

10. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

10.1 There are no financial implications

Legal Implications

10.2 There are no legal implications in respect of what is proposed in the recommendation which is an update on the annual report.

Equalities Implications

10.3 There are no equality implications

Other Implications

10.4 No other implications

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

11.1 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Letter 2023 – Peterborough City Council

<https://www.lgo.org.uk/documents/councilperformance/2023/peterborough%20city%20council.pdf>

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Review of Local Government Complaints 2022/23

<https://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/reports/annual-review-reports/local-government-complaint-reviews>

13. APPENDICES

- 13.1 Appendix A - Complaints Monitoring Report 2022-23
- Appendix B – Peterborough Ltd Complaints and Compliments 2022-23
- Appendix C – Childrens Social Care Statutory complaints report 2022-23 (this has already been to Childrens and Education Scrutiny on 06/11/2023)