

25 May 2017 at 7.00 pm

Conference Room, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks
Despatched: 17.05.17



Policy & Performance Advisory Committee

Membership:

Cllrs. C. Barnes, Clark, Fleming, Halford, Kelly, Krogdahl, Maskell, McGregor, Mrs. Morris, Parkin, Miss. Stack and Thornton

Agenda

There are no fire drills planned. If the fire alarm is activated, which is a continuous siren with a flashing red light, please leave the building immediately, following the fire exit signs.

| | Pages | Contact |
|--|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Apologies for Absence | | |
| 1. Appointment of Chairman | | |
| 2. Appointment of Vice Chairman | | |
| 3. Minutes To agree the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 March 2017, as a correct record. | (Pages 1 - 4) | |
| 4. Declarations of Interest Any interests not already registered. | | |
| 5. Actions from previous meeting (if any) | | |
| 6. Update from Portfolio Holder | | Cllr. Fleming |
| 7. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee (if any) | | |
| 8. Annual Complaints Report 2016/17 | (Pages 5 - 12) | Amy Wilton Tel: 01732 227280 |
| 9. Customer Experience Project | (Pages 13 - 14) | Amy Wilton Tel: 01732 227280 |
| 10. Work Plan | (Pages 15 - 16) | |

EXEMPT INFORMATION

At the time of preparing this agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public.

If you wish to obtain further factual information on any of the agenda items listed above, please contact the named officer prior to the day of the meeting.

Should you need this agenda or any of the reports in a different format, or have any other queries concerning this agenda or the meeting please contact Democratic Services on 01732 227000 or democratic.services@sevenoaks.gov.uk.

POLICY & PERFORMANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2017 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chair)

Cllr. Miss. Stack (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Abraham, C. Barnes, Clark, Kelly, Krogdahl, Maskell, McGregor,
Mrs. Morris, Parkin and Thornton.

A minutes silence was held for the victims of the terror attack at Westminster on 22 March 2017.

21. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2016, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

22. Declarations of Interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

23. Actions from the previous meeting

There were none.

24. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder, and Chairman, informed Members that an article had been published in the local media which advised that Swanley had been named as the best place to live for a London commuter due to travel time, the price of a season ticket, life satisfaction and house prices.

Some of the Council's corporate projects were coming to an end and this included Bradbourne car park which would be opening in early April 2017 with work on the hotel starting shortly after. Plans were moving forward for Bevan Place, The Working Men's club and White Oak leisure centre.

25. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

26. Property Investment Strategy Update

The Chief Officer Communities and Business presented a report which updated Members on the progress of the Property Investment Strategy and looked at its

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future direction. The report sought updates to the Strategy and a further £25 million to be set aside for future investments.

Initial acquisitions had helped the Council to become financially self-sufficient and it was requested for additional funding to be allocated to the property investment strategy to enable the Council to achieve the ambition of 'self-sufficiency plus'. External investment advisors had analysed the current property investment portfolio and provided advice as to the future direction of the strategy. They recognised that good investment purchases had been made and that they were performing well.

Members discussed the report and asked questions. Members were advised that the decrease in the income yield reduction to 5% was due to market value trends and only be applied to new purchases. If money was borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board the yield would be 3% net of borrowing costs. Members were advised that before a property was purchased, the property team looked through all the details first before the Chief Finance Officer and then the relevant Portfolio Holders were consulted. The Council would only move forward with a purchase if its Red Book Valuation was acceptable and at or above the offer price. The Council would not make purchases above the Red Book Valuation.

Some concern was expressed at purchases being made outside the District. Members were informed that this would be at a minimum and where possible be kept within Kent. In response to questions raised about risk, Members were informed that advice had been received that a larger number of investments offered a better spread of risk. Members noted that the report was also being considered by the Finance Advisory Committee on 28 March 2017.

Resolved: That the report be noted with Members' support.

27. Developing the Corporate Plan

Members considered a report which requested suggestions from the Policy & Performance Advisory Committee, under the 4 themes of health and housing, highways, community safety and economic development, for developing the Council's future priorities within its new Corporate Plan as it develops self-sufficiency plus. A number of items were suggested and discussed:

Health and Housing

- Early intervention with getting people out of hospital and back to their homes in the community.

Highways

- Potholes and quality of roads
- Gulley cleaning on a more local and regular basis

Community Safety

- Rubbish on the highway and grass verges
- Illegal/irresponsible parking

- Speeding
- Graffiti
- Dog Fouling
- Warden Scheme

Economic Development

- Transport, including local bus services
- Strategic planning for skills and training

Resolved: That the suggestions be noted.

28. Work Plan

The work plan was noted.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.30 PM

CHAIRMAN

ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT 2016/17

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee - 25 May 2017

Report of Chief Officer Corporate Services

Status: For Information

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: This report updates Members regarding customer complaints and feedback monitoring for the year 2016/17, as compared to 2015/16.

This report supports the Key Aim of improving the key services we deliver to the public

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Peter Fleming

Contact Officer(s) Amy Wilton, Ext. 7280 and Julie Heather, Ext. 7125.

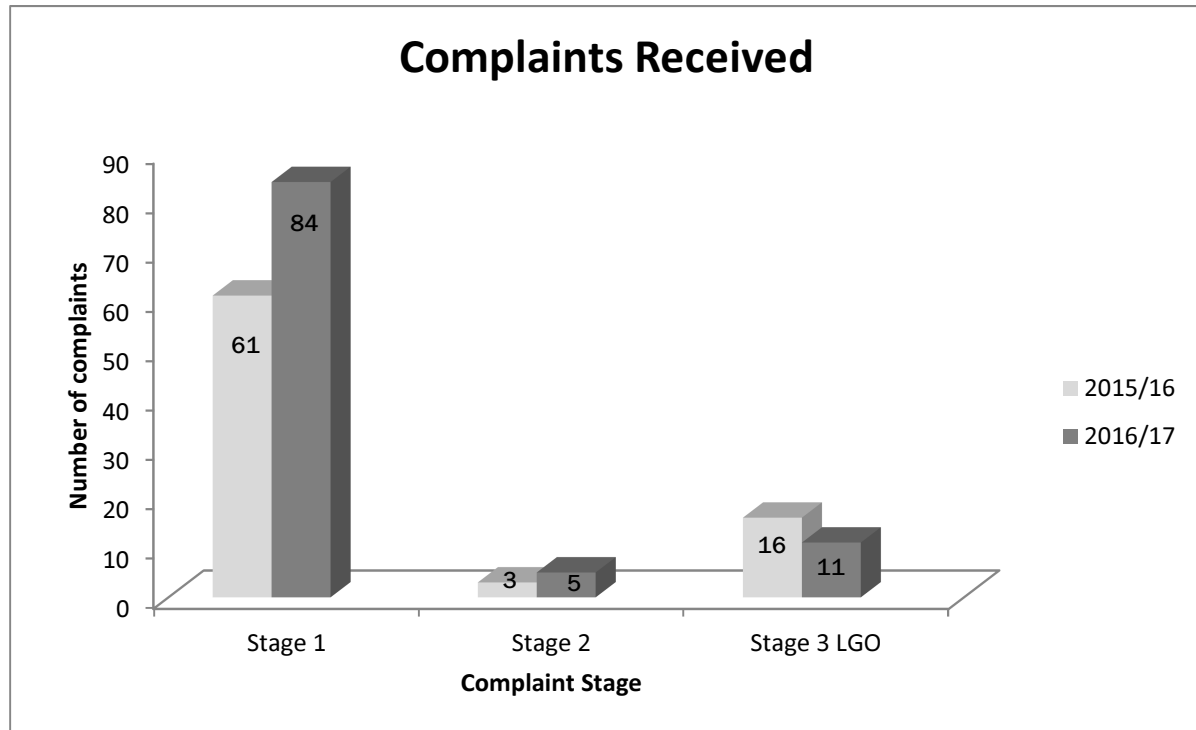
Recommendation to Policy & Performance Advisory Committee: That the report be noted.

Introduction and Background

- 1 This report provides details of formal complaints received by Sevenoaks District Council during the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017. Complaints data provides the Council with a useful tool to highlight specific concerns, assist in the identification of trends and common areas of concern and act as a guide to which remedial action may be required to deliver service improvement.
- 2 The Council's formal complaints procedure defines a complaint as '*any expression of dissatisfaction with our services whether justified or not*'. If a customer is contacting the Council for the first time regarding assistance for a Council service then this will be dealt with as a service request. The complaints process will be used if a customer specifically states they would like us to follow the "complaints process" and/or they make reference to items from within the formal process (e.g. Stage 1) or the customer is contacting us for a second time regarding the same matter and wishes to make a complaint.
- 3 The procedure is based on a two-stage internal process. If complainants are still dissatisfied with the outcome after both Stage 1 and Stage 2, they can then request the Local Government Ombudsman investigate at Stage 3.

2016/17 Complaints figures

4 The Council received a total of 100 complaints in 2016/17, an increase of 20 since 2015/16. The following graph shows at which stage of the complaints process each of the complaints were received.



Stage 1 Complaints

5 Stage 1 complaints received

| | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|--------------|---------|---------|
| Total | 61 | 84 |

6 2016/17 saw an increase in Stage 1 complaints received. Revenues, Parking Services and Development Services attracted the most complaints. There was also a rise in complaints for Electoral Services, likely attributable to the significant increase in activity due to PCC elections and EU referendum during this period. For a break down of Stage 1 complaints received by service area see appendix A.

7 Of the 84 Stage 1 complaints received in 2016/17 81% were found to be invalid. This was because customers had made incorrect claims or unrealistic claims.

8 Outcome of complaints at Stage 1

| | Total 2015/16 | Total 2016/17 |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Complaint invalid | 47 | 68 |
| Complaint upheld | 14 | 16 |
| Total | 61 | 84 |

No financial payments were made at Stage 1.

Stage 2 Complaints

9 Stage 2 complaints received

| | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|--------------|----------|----------|
| Total | 3 | 5 |

This year saw an increase in Stage 2 complaints by 44%, however in terms of the number of services the Council provides and in comparison to the number of Stage 1 complaints, this number is very low. For a breakdown of Stage 2 complaints received by service area see appendix B.

Out of the 5 Stage 2 complaints investigated during 2016/17, 100% were found to be invalid. This was because customers had made incorrect or unrealistic claims. 2 of the complainants requested their concerns be reviewed by the Local Government Ombudsman. These related to Development Services and Parking Services.

10 Outcome of complaints at Stage 2

| | Total 2015/16 | Total 2016/17 |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Complaint invalid | 3 | 5 |
| Complaint upheld | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 3 | 5 |

No financial payments were made at Stage 2.

Stage 3 complaints - Local Government Ombudsman

- 11 In 2016/17 the Local Government Ombudsman received 11 complaints about this authority. Of the 11 complaints 4 were premature, 4 were closed after initial enquiries and 3 decisions were made during the year. The following table shows the decisions made by the LGO. For Local Government Ombudsman complaints received by service area see Appendix C.

| LGO Decision | Service area | Number of decisions |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Not upheld - no maladministration | Development Services | 2 |
| | Parking Services | 1 |
| Total | | 3 |

- 12 The Ombudsman has yet to provide the annual letter. Therefore, no comparison can be made to other Local Authorities as in previous years. In 2016 the government announced the intention to produce draft legislation for the creation of a single ombudsman for public services in England. This is something the LGO support as they feel it will provide the public with a clearer route to redress in an increasingly complex environment of public service delivery.

- 13 No financial payments were made at this stage.

Key Implications

Financial

The Council made no financial payments as compensation in 2016/17 to resolve complaints.

| | Compensation Paid (£) | |
|--------------|-----------------------|----------|
| | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| Stage 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Stage 2 | 0 | 0 |
| LGO | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 0 | 0 |

Equality Impacts

There are no decisions recommended through this paper. There is therefore a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Appendices

Appendix A - Table to show Stage 1 complaints received by service area.

Appendix B - Table to show Stage 2 complaints received by service area

Appendix C - Table to show LGO complaints received by service area

Background Papers

None

Jim Carrington-West

Chief Officer Corporate Services

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Appendix A - Stage 1 complaints received by service area

| | Stage 1 Complaints received | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | 2015/16 | % of total | 2016/17 | % of total |
| Audit | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Benefits | 2 | 3.3 | 2 | 2.4 |
| Building Control | 1 | 1.6 | 0 | 0 |
| Communications | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Communities & Business | 2 | 3.3 | 2 | 2.4 |
| Customer Services | 3 | 4.9 | 2 | 2.4 |
| Democratic Services | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Development Services | 13 | 21.3 | 24 | 28.6 |
| Direct Services | 7 | 11.5 | 1 | 1.2 |
| Electoral Services | 2 | 3.3 | 7 | 8.3 |
| Environmental Health | 2 | 3.3 | 2 | 2.4 |
| Facilities Management | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Housing Advice | 3 | 4.9 | 4 | 4.8 |
| Housing Standards | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1.2 |
| IT Services | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Land Charges | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Legal | 1 | 1.6 | 0 | 0 |
| Licensing | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Local Tax | 11 | 18 | 19 | 22.6 |
| Parking Services | 14 | 23 | 20 | 23.7 |
| Planning Policy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Print | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Property | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 61 | 100 | 84 | 100 |

Appendix B - Stage 2 complaints received by service area

| | Stage 2 Complaints received | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|----------|------------|
| | 2015/16 | % of total | 2016/17 | % of total |
| Audit | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Benefits | 1 | 33.33 | 0 | 0 |
| Building Control | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Communications | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Communities & Business | 1 | 33.33 | 0 | 0 |
| Customer Services | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Democratic Services | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Development Services | 1 | 33.33 | 2 | 40 |
| Direct Services | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Electoral Services | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Environmental Health | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Facilities Management | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Housing | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Housing Standards | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| IT Services | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Land Charges | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Legal | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Licensing | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Local Tax | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Parking Services | 0 | 0 | 3 | 60 |
| Planning Policy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Print | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Property | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 3 | 100 | 5 | 100 |

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Appendix C - Local Government Ombudsman complaints received by service area

| LGO Complaints received 2015/16 | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Democratic Services | 1 |
| Development Services | 5 |
| Electoral | 1 |
| Parking Services | 1 |
| Revenues | 3 |
| TOTAL | 11 |

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE PROJECT

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee - 25 May 2017

Report of Chief Officer Corporate Services

Status For Information

Key Decision No

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Peter Fleming

Contact Officer Amy Wilton, Ext. 7280

Recommendation to Policy and Performance Advisory Committee: That this report be noted.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The Customer Experience project is one of the Councils key corporate projects. In 2014 the Members Communications working group expressed a need for change with the then current website to accommodate far more online services, to provide an improved service to customers, 24/7. It was recognised that by enabling self service options for customers that are willing and able to do so, attention can be given to those customers who still require a more traditional service either face to face or over the telephone, during normal office hours.
- 2 A brief was written for a new website covering technical requirements, design and identity elements. A web design company called Jadu, who specialise in local authority websites were commissioned to build and design a new website for the Council. This went live on 28 March 2017.
- 3 All content on the old site was reviewed, reduced and then re-written before being added to the new site.
- 4 Where possible PDFs have been removed from the site, as these are recognised to not provide a good online customer experience as they are not searchable or screen reader friendly. They therefore do not fully meet accessibility requirements.
- 5 A customer account function has been introduced, which enables customers to see case history, view local information to them quickly and easily and register for updates from the Council.
- 6 A number of online forms, including bulky collection booking and garden waste permits have been introduced.

Policy & Performance Advisory Committee Work Plan 2017/18 (as at 12/5/17)

| 25 May 2017 | 5 October 2017 | 30 November 2017 | 22 March 2018 |
|--|--|----------------------|---------------|
| Annual Complaints Report - 2016/17 Customer Experience Project Corporate Projects update | Review of service dashboards and service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs) | Draft Corporate Plan | |

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