

POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL REPORT

REPORT TO:	Corporate Performance Panel		
DATE:	21 October 2019		
TITLE:	Managing Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour		
TYPE OF REPORT:	Policy Review		
PORTFOLIO(S):	Performance		
REPORT AUTHOR:	Honor Howell – Assistant Director		
OPEN/EXEMPT	Open	WILL BE SUBJECT TO A FUTURE CABINET REPORT:	Yes

REPORT SUMMARY/COVER PAGE

PURPOSE OF REPORT/SUMMARY:
A recent review of corporate complaints and the Unreasonably Persistent Complaints Policy has highlighted a review of the policies was required to reflect best practice and to provide clarification on key points. This report relates to the Policy on persistent complainants and has been renamed the Unreasonable Complainants Policy.
KEY ISSUES:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for a review of the policy was identified • Clarification was required on the decision making process of the classification of unreasonable complainants • The requirement for a review following the development of a corporate complaint policy
OPTIONS CONSIDERED:
Not applicable
RECOMMENDATIONS:
A tracked changes version of the Policy is attached to this report. Members are requested to review the proposed changes and approve the revised policy.
REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:
To ensure a clearly defined process is in place for the management of unreasonably persistent complainants and to provide transparency and accountability within the process.

1. Background

- 1.1 In a minority of cases, people pursue their complaints in a way that is unreasonable. They may behave unacceptably, or be unreasonably persistent in their contacts and submission of information. This can impede investigating their complaint (or complaints by others) and can have significant resource issues for the authority. The council has a policy on managing unreasonably persistent complainants and a review of this policy has been conducted.

2. Existing Policy

- 2.1 The existing policy was last reviewed in August 2018. Following the development of the corporate complaints policy it was considered an appropriate time to review the existing policy and to provide further clarification of particular areas.

3. Compliance with Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

- 3.1 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman offers guidance on managing unreasonable complainant behaviour. A review of best practice has been completed during the review of this policy.

4. Updated Policy

- 4.1 The policy has been updated to provide clarification on:

- The decision making process of declaring a customer unreasonably persistent
- Rights of appeal and whom that appeal should be made to
- The right to confidentiality
- Links to other council policies

5. Issues for the panel to consider

- 5.1 The panel is requested to review the updated policy on unreasonably persistent complainants and to provide feedback and recommendation on the proposal.

6. Financial implications

None

7. Any other implications/risks

None

8. Equal opportunity considerations

- 8.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) pre-screening form has been completed and a full EIA is not required.

8. Consultation

Consultation has taken place with the retired Chief Executive, Lorraine Gore, Chief Executive Officer and Management Team.

9. Background Papers

None.