

POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL REPORT

REPORT TO:	<i>Corporate Performance Panel</i>		
DATE:	8 November 2021		
TITLE:	Complaints against the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021		
TYPE OF REPORT:	<i>For information only</i>		
PORTFOLIO(S):	Cllr Brian Long		
REPORT AUTHOR:	Honor Howell – Assistant to the Chief Executive		
OPEN/EXEMPT	Open	WILL BE SUBJECT TO A FUTURE CABINET REPORT:	No

SUMMARY:
<p>This report is produced on an annual basis for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 and sets out the breakdown of MP Enquiries, Corporate and Ombudsman complaints and details on compliments received from members of the public. It is presented to Members for information only.</p>
ANALYSIS:
<p><u>MP Enquiries</u></p> <p>In total, 107 MP Enquiries were dealt with during 2020/21, compared with 82 during the previous year. These were broken down by service area with Leisure (15), Planning (16), Central Services (14) and Chief Executive (62). MPs are often contacted by their constituents for help and advice on a range of local issues or individual problems with a service delivered by the council. These are then passed to the relevant Assistant Director or Service Head for a response.</p> <p><u>Corporate Complaints</u></p> <p>22 Corporate Complaints were received during 2020/21, compared with 23 during the previous year. Of these complaints during 2020/21, 1 was considered to be justified and 2 were partly justified at stage 1 of the complaints process.</p> <p>Of the 22 Corporate Complaints which were received, 9 went to an Appeal to the Chief Executive (Stage 2) and out of the 9 complaints, 0 were considered to be justified and 0 partly justified.</p> <p>A breakdown of the complaints received and the service area they relate to is attached at Appendix A.</p> <p>The complaints relating to Finance include those made in respect of Revenues and Benefits. Some areas already have well established statutory processes for appeals on decisions e.g. Planning and Housing Benefits and these are not classed as corporate complaints unless the complaint is in respect of something the council or a member of staff has done. Complaints about decisions are directed via the usual appeals process.</p> <p><u>Ombudsman Complaints</u></p> <p>In total, 7 complaints were received by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, and out of these, 33% of complaints that were investigated were</p>

upheld.

Attached at **Appendix B** is the brief Ombudsman Annual Report 2020/21 for information. Of these 7 complaints, 1 was upheld. Again, the Ombudsman will usually only investigate certain complaints in respect of **process**. For example, a complaint about a planning decision will only be investigated if a process has not been correctly followed, not about the decision made as planning is so subjective.

Compliments

Whilst we receive complaints about a range of issues, we also receive compliments from customers, visitors and businesses expressing their gratitude and thanks for the service they received. This information is captured and published in the staff monthly magazine 'Internal Affairs' to share good feedback with colleagues and to acknowledge the service provided by that individual/team.

For the year 2020/2021, we received 65 compliments from our customers. This is slightly down from 2019/2020 but covered the majority of the national lockdown periods so services were reduced during this time.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS:

There are no recommendations; it is an annual report for Members to note.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A