

Report to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of Meeting	25 th March 2021
Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Community & Culture
Report Author	Carolyn Whitham
Public/Private Document	Public

1st & 2nd Quarter Corporate Complaints

Executive Summary

1. The report provides Members with a summary of corporate complaints and compliments received during the first and second quarters of 2020/21.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members of the Committee consider and scrutinise the information contained in the report and assess whether further information or explanation is required regarding any of the issues raised in the report.

Reason for Recommendation

3. Part of the Council's performance management process is to ensure the Authority's ambition to continuously improve services is realised, and actions or decisions may need to be taken to maintain improvement.

Key Points for Consideration

4. The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman's definition of a complaint is *"an expression of dissatisfaction about a Council service (whether that service is provided directly by the council or by a contractor or partner) that requires a response"*

In total, 207 new complaints were received during the first half of 2020/21 across all services. The majority of the complaints were resolved at stage one, with only 10 escalating to stage two and 2 complaints being dealt with at stage three. A total of 135 compliments were received in this reporting period, 19 of which were Council wide and related to the response to the Covid 19 pandemic.

There was a marked reduction in the number of complaints received during this reporting period compared to the same period last year, and 26% of the overall number of complaints received were found to be not upheld.

Lessons learned

Complaints provide the Council with valuable feedback to develop and improve our services to meet the needs of our customers. The following are examples of changes made by services in response to feedback from residents during this reporting period:

The Environmental Management Service are working to improve the IT systems for bulky waste collections which will make it more feasible to check for bulky collections in each incidence of waste being reported or observed on private property.

Letters relating to the Subject Access Request process were revised to provide more clarity with regards to provision of ID whilst Number One Riverside was closed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Checks will be made to ensure trees are Council owned / maintained before tree work is undertaken and if not, resident's permission will be sought before work is ordered.

Additional customer service training was provided to officers working on the Dippy exhibition during the pandemic.

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

Details of complaints dealt with by the Ombudsman are presented in a separate report which is produced on receipt of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review.

4.1 Alternatives Considered

None. Information has been compiled from the complaints recording system used by all services to record complaints and compliments.

Costs and Budget Summary

5. None of the complaints dealt with in this reporting period had financial implications.

Risk and Policy Implications

6. There are no specific risk issues for Members to consider arising from this report.

Complainants have the opportunity to refer their complaint to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman for up to twelve months from completion of the Council's complaints process; therefore there is a risk that the outcome of a future Ombudsman investigation into a complaint may result in a recommended financial remedy. Complaints considered by the Ombudsman are reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee annually on receipt of the Ombudsman's annual report.

Consultation

7. Not applicable.

Background Papers	Place of Inspection
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| 8. None | |
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For Further Information Contact:	Carolyn Whitham, Tel: 01706 923508, carolyn.whitham@rochdale.gov.uk
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