

**Minutes of a meeting of Scrutiny Committee for Customer Services  
and Service Delivery  
held on Wednesday, 7th November, 2018  
from 7.00 pm - 7.29 pm**

**Present:** A Boutrup (Chairman)  
M Belsey (Vice-Chair)

J Belsey  
L Bennett  
M Binks

P Bradbury  
S Ellis  
Anthea Lea

H Mundin  
K Page  
D Sweatman

**Absent:** Councillors C Catharine, B Forbes, C Fussell and G Heard

**Also Present:** Councillors M Thomas-Atkin

**1. TO NOTE SUBSTITUTES IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE  
RULE 4 - SUBSTITUTES AT MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES ETC.**

Councillor Coote substituted for Councillor Forbes. Councillor Stockwell substituted for Councillor Catharine.

**2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Councillors Forbes, Catharine, Marsh, Fussell and Heard.

**3. TO RECEIVE DECLARATION OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF  
ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA**

None.

**4. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19 September 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**5. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN AGREES TO TAKE AS  
URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**6. OVERVIEW OF COMPLAINTS - 2017/2018**

Simon Hughes, Head of Digital and Customer Service, introduced the report which provided Members with the annual information of formal complaints received by the Council from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 and summarised the complaints referred to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) during the same period. It was

noted that the Council had received a total of 232 complaints made to the Council and some of these were related to the 19 complaints and enquiries from the LGO of which 1 complaint was remedied before the LGO became involved and another complaint upheld after detailed investigation by the LGO.

Karen Speirs, Customer Services Manager, drew attention to the complaint upheld by the LGO. She confirmed that the complaint stemmed from a letter of complaint from a neighbour to a planning application however certain information about the neighbour was not redacted before it was published. The issue was identified 3 days later and subsequently removed.

A Member enquired whether there were any particular areas that had the most frequent complaints.

The Head of Digital and Customer Service confirmed that complaints were focused more on where the Council works the most such as the Waste Department. He added that although the Waste Department had received a total of 51 complaints, they had also received a total of 51 compliments.

A Member sought clarification on how the Council deals with complaints made on social media as it is generally not considered a formal complaint.

The Customer Services Manager explained that her team monitors social media for any comments made about the Council or its services and have previously made a formal complaint on behalf a complainer when it was deemed that they had made a valid complaint on social media.

A Member commended the report and the fact that the public are being assisted to make complaints.

A Member questioned what is considered defamatory comments.

The Head of Digital and Customer Service confirmed that if a person are named and the comments are derogatory then it could be considered defamatory however the severity would be reduced if derogatory comments were made about an unnamed individual.

A Member sought clarification over whether the whole document would be removed or certain parts be redacted if defamatory comments are made in the document.

The Head of Digital and Customer Service outlined that it depends on the comments made in the document. He highlighted the fact that planning officers have asked previously for comments about a planning application to be reworded as such comments were not suitable for publication.

A Member suggested that a Learning Pool Module could be created to better inform Members on how the Council deals with complaints.

The Head of Digital and Customer Service expressed delight with the suggestion and confirmed that he will liaise with Democratic Services to have a Module created.

The Chairman noted that no Member wished to speak so moved to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

**RESOLVED**

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

**7. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CUSTOMER SERVICES AND SERVICE DELIVERY WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19**

The Chairman confirmed that there is two items on the agenda for the next meeting; Environmental Enforcement Powers and Customer Services as a Whole. She also noted that there will be a review of the British Heart Foundation Project being brought forward in the near future in addition to a Street Cleaning Review which was requested by Cllr Ellis.

A Member enquired when the Committee will look at food waste being implemented.

The Chairman confirmed that she had been informed that there will be a major waste strategy after the Local Elections take place in May 2019.

The Chairman noted that no Member wished to speak so moved to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

**RESOLVED**

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

**8. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10 DUE NOTICE OF WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN.**

None.

The meeting finished at 7.29 pm

Chairman