

# **Performance and Finance Scrutiny Sub-Committee**

## **Minutes**

### **18 July 2023**

**Present:**

**Chair:** Councillor Yogesh Teli

**Councillors:** Kandy Dolor Jerry Miles  
Nitesh Hirani Samir Sumaria

**Apologies received:** Natasha Proctor

**24. Attendance by Reserve Members**

**RESOLVED:** To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Natasha Proctor

Councillor Kandy Dolor

**25. Appointment of Vice-Chair**

**RESOLVED:** To note that Councillor Jerry Miles was appointed Vice-Chair of the Sub-Committee for the 2023-24 Municipal Year.

**26. Declarations of Interest**

**RESOLVED:** To note that there were none.

**27. Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2023, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**28. Public Questions**

**RESOLVED:** To note that no public questions were received at the meeting.

**29. Petitions**

**RESOLVED:** To note that no petitions were received.

**30. References from Council and Other Committees/Panels**

**RESOLVED:** To note that there were none.

**Resolved Items**

**31. Annual Complaints Feedback Reports 2022 - 2023 - Children's and Adults'**

Members received the Children's Services Complaints and Feedback Annual Report 2022/23.

The report provided an overview of the Council's performance on Children's Services complaints and feedback activity between the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Children's social care complaints were handled in line with the Children Act 1989 Regulations 2006 and Getting the Best from Complaints guidance 2006.

There was a legal requirement for all local authorities to have a complaint process in place in accordance with these regulations, The Children and Adoption Act 2002 and Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and related guidance. The statutory complaints procedure was designed to ensure the needs of the child were the heart of the process.

The three stages of the Children's statutory complaints procedure were:

- a) Stage 1 - Local Resolution stage (10 - 20 working days);
- b) Stage 2 - Independent investigation stage (25 – 65 working days); and
- c) Stage 3 - Independent Review Panel (30 working days).

Non-social care complaints, concerning Education and Special Educational needs, complaints were investigated in line with the Council's Corporate complaints procedure, which comprises two stages as follows:

- a) Stage 1- Local Resolution (15 working days); and
- b) Stage 2 - Review (20 working days)

The final stage for both corporate and statutory children's complaints was escalation to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Complaints about schools were managed within each school's own complaints procedure. Appeals for school places were considered under the School Appeal Process and disputes, such as those relating to the Education, Health and Care plans were considered through appeals to the Statutory Appeals tribunal.

Members made comments, and asked questions, which were responded to by Officers.

During 2022/23, the complaints team received a total of 309 representations for Children's Services, as compared to 246 in 2021/22.

Between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023, the complaints service recorded:

- a) A total of 69 stage 1 complaints;
- b) 9 complaints escalated to stage 2 and there were no stage 3 reviews;
- c) the Ombudsman made a decision on three complaints;
- d) there were 96 Member and MP enquiries;
- e) 21 compliments were recorded;
- f) 106 queries were received.

43 stage 1 complaints concerned Children's social care and 26 complaints concerned Education and SEN services.

Complaint response times improved by 14% during 2022/23, with 63% of stage 1 complaints responded on time, as compared to 55% in the previous year.

68% of the complaints were not upheld, with 32% either upheld or partially upheld.

The complaints team will continue to work with all service teams to identify and address areas of learning from complaints for service improvement and to improve response times.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

Members also received the Adult Social Care Services Complaints & Feedback Annual Report 2022/23.

The report provided an overview of the Council's performance on Adult Social Care Services complaints and feedback activity between the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Adults social care complaints were investigated in line with the requirements set out in the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009.

Adult social care complaints were investigated under the Council's Adult Social Care Statutory Complaints procedure, which is a two-stage process for handling social care complaints. There was a statutory duty to produce an annual report on the complaints received, issues raised, and actions taken.

During 2022/23, the number of adult social care complaints recorded increased significantly, from six stage 1 complaints in 2021/22 to 116 complaints. This was due to an internal refresh of the complaints handling procedures.

Two thirds (66%) of stage 1 complaints were responded on time in 2022/23, which shows an improvement on the previous year (50%). Between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023:

- a) the complaints team recorded a total of 510 representations;
- b) there were 116 stage 1 complaints;
- c) sixteen complaints progressed to stage 2 review;
- d) the Ombudsman made investigation decisions on four complaints;
- e) there were 196 Member and MP enquiries;
- f) the service recorded 64 compliments; and
- g) there were 106 queries addressed outside the formal complaint process.

There was an increase of 23% of total representations in 2022/23, with 510 total representations, compared to 414 total representations received in 2021/22.

The complaints team remains committed to improving performance activity across all areas of our complaint processes in responding to complaints and enquiries.

Adult social care services will continue using the learning from complaints to inform practice development.

Members made comments, and asked questions, which were responded to by Officers.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 7.35 pm).

(Signed) Councillor Yogesh Teli  
Chair