

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: GOVERNANCE AND CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE
DATE: 12th JULY 2022
REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND COMMISSIONING
AUTHOR: ANDREW LEADBETTER

SUBJECT: COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS ANNUAL
REPORT 2021-22

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with information about compliments and complaints, about the Service, received during the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022.

Recommended That:

- [1] the information regarding compliments and complaints received during the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022 be considered and noted.

Background

2. Since 2010 the Service has recorded three categories: informal complaints, formal complaints (those that cannot be resolved informally at the first attempt) and compliments.
3. The Compliments and Complaints Procedure (the Procedure) has been reviewed on a regular basis to identify improvements. Officers reviewed the Procedure in November 2021 and some small updates were made. The Procedure can be found on the Service's website via the following link: [Compliments and Complaints Procedure](#).

Information

4. The Procedure contains a two-tier approach to complaints. The Service aims to resolve all complaints received at initial contact, classifying them as informal. If the initial response does not bring about a satisfactory resolution, the complainant is asked if he/she wishes to escalate the matter when it becomes a formal complaint.

Statistics for 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022

5. The statistics for 2021-22 are:

- i. Formal Complaints - 1
- ii. Informal Complaints - 27
- iii. Compliments - 8

Performance Comparison

6. Comparison of the overall numbers is a crude indicator because of the relatively low numbers. The comparison figures for the past five reporting periods are presented below:

	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
Formal complaints	1	1	3	3	3
Informal complaints	27	30	31	20	14
Compliments	8	86	42	48	41

7. As can be seen from the table, there has been a significant decrease in compliments during 2021-22 and a small reduction for informal complaints compared to the previous year. As was the case last year there was just one formal complaint.
8. It seems inconceivable that there has been such a drop in compliments. Officers believe that, for some reason, many have not been communicated to the corporate database-holder. Officers plan to publish an article in the weekly Green bulletin to remind staff to forward any compliments received to the Complaints mailbox.
9. Appendix 1 to this report provides brief details of the informal complaints received and whether they have been dealt with within the timescales set out in the Procedure. Appendix 2 provides a summary of the formal complaint. Appendix 3 summarises the compliments received.
10. The following observations may be helpful:-
- (a) The complaints cover a range of issues with the vast majority being resolved quickly and on occasion resulting from a misunderstanding. The nature of complaints received can be categorised into key areas as follows: Communication (2); Conduct of staff (6); Covid-19 Breaches (4); Incident (7); Prevention (1); Protection (3); Thematic Inspections (2); and the Wholetime Recruitment Process (2).

- (b) The formal complaint received was concerned with the response of the service during a forced entry incident.
- (c) The compliments received all related to the Service's departments that have direct interaction with members of the public. They related to: fundraising efforts (2); the Service's response to incidents (3); and Safe and Well visits (3).

Financial Implications

- 10. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

- 11. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Equality & Diversity Implications

- 12. There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

Environmental Implications

- 13. There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE

- Appendix 1 – Informal Complaints recorded
- Appendix 2 – Formal Complaint recorded
- Appendix 3 – Compliments recorded