

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: GOVERNANCE AND CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE
DATE: 13th NOVEMBER 2019
REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND COMMISSIONING
AUTHOR: ANDREW LEADBETTER

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with details of the recent review of the Compliments and Complaints Procedure.

Recommended That:

- [1] the proposed changes to the Compliments and Complaints Procedure be approved.

Background

2. Since 2010 the Compliments and Complaints Procedure (the Procedure) has been reviewed on a regular basis to identify any further improvements. Officers last reviewed the Procedure in November 2017 and some small updates were made e.g. to accommodate compliments and complaints received through social media.

Information

3. The Procedure has recently been reviewed and a number of further minor amendments have been included (shown in red) in the version contained in Appendix 1 to this report.
4. The proposed changes are as follows:

Paragraph 2: The latest data protection legislation is referred to.

Paragraph 3: There was a role for an Independent Senior Investigating Officer at the second stage of the formal process. Officers are not convinced that this is necessary and believe that an internal review by a Principal Officer (i.e. the Chief Fire Officer or one of the Assistant Chief Fire Officers) is sufficient for this procedure. The matter can be externally reviewed by the Local Government Ombudsman if necessary. An explanation of the Principal Officer's role and responsibilities is now included.

Paragraph 6: Wording has been added to the initial stage of the Procedure to ensure that the complainant is informed at the start of the process where an exclusion applies so that the complaint can consider pursuing the issue under a different procedure, if one exists.

Paragraph 7: Clarification that an acknowledgment will be sent within 5 working days, rather than calendar days, and that the response to the complaint will be a written response.

Paragraph 14: The CFRS website has recently been updated with details of the procedure for handling complaints about a Member of the Authority and the link to this has been included for reference.

Appendix 4: The initial response letter has been updated to explain why we are collecting equality monitoring data.

Equality Monitoring Form: This has been reviewed and amended by the Data Protection Officer to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Financial Implications

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

Legal Implications

11. Apart from the changes made in connection with the Data Protection Act 2018, there are no other legal implications arising from this report.

Equality & Diversity Implications

12. The information collected on the Equality Monitoring Form will be used for researching whether there are any trends in the complaints and compliments made about the Service and to monitor the equality of opportunity or the treatment of its customers.

Environmental Implications

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

BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE

Appendix 1 – Amended Compliments and Complaints Procedure