

## CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

**MEETING OF:** GOVERNANCE AND CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE  
**DATE:** 29<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2020  
**REPORT OF:** DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND COMMISSIONING  
**AUTHOR:** ANDREW LEADBETTER

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**SUBJECT:** COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS ANNUAL  
REPORT 2019-20

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### Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with information about compliments and complaints about the Service made during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

### Recommended That:

- [1] the information regarding compliments and complaints made during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 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 2017 and some small updates were made e.g. to accommodate compliments and complaints received through social media. The Procedure can be found on the Service's website via the following link: [Compliments and Complaints Procedure](#).

### Information

4. The Procedure has 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 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020

5. The statistics for 2019-20 are:

- i. Formal Complaints - 3
- ii. Informal Complaints - 31
- iii. Compliments - 42

### 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:

	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
<b>Formal complaints</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Informal complaints</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Compliments</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>82</b>

7. As can be seen from the table, there has been an increase for informal complaints during 2019-20.

8. 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 Procedures. Appendix 2 provides a summary of the formal complaints and Appendix 3 summarises the compliments received. 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 (3); Construction (2); Equality and Diversity (2); Protection (3); Prevention (2); Service Delivery (16); Staff Welfare (2); and Supplier Relations (1).
- (b) One of the three formal complaints received was concerned with the handling of a recruitment process. Another related to the actions of firefighters in gaining entry to a property. The final formal complaint was concerned with the arrangements for the Chester IRMP Roadshow.
- (c) The compliments received all related to the Service's departments that have direct interaction with members of the public. They related to: community engagement (11), Safe and Well visits (5),

the Safety Central facility (5) and the Service's response to incidents (21).

### **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 Complaints recorded

Appendix 3 – Compliments recorded