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| Scrutiny Panel 3rd February 2020 Item 4 - Minutes and matters arising | Item No 4 |
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OUTLINE

Attached are the draft minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Panel held on 7th October 2019.

MATTERS ARISING FROM OCTOBER MEETING

Action at 4.2

ACTION 1: Group Director, Finance and Corporate Resources

To include an update on the financial implications of the Council's new Waste Strategy to the next finance update.

A verbal update at the meeting.

Action at 5.4

ACTION 2: Head of Business Intelligence and Member Services

to provide a breakdown of the following:

- (a) the percentage and number of complaints which relate to traffic schemes
- (b) for the most recent period, the number of complaints going to Stage 2 which are then upheld
- (c) further detail on what additional compensation is being paid arising from Ombudsmans complaints
- (d) further detail on why the number of days taken to resolve ASC complaints is high.

Update below

- a. Streetscene complaints - what is the % (and number) which are due to new traffic schemes.

Streetscene received 133 complaints in 2018/19. 58 (44%) related to new traffic schemes. Of the 58, 20 were regarding no left turn from Mare Street into Richmond Road, 14 to Westgate Street bus gate/London Fields school streets and 8 to other school streets inc Gayhurst (4) and Millfields (3).

b. Reviews - what %/number do we change the outcome/view from resolution.

During the period covering April to September 2019, there were 69 stage 2 investigations concluded. Of the 69 cases,

- 43 arrived at the same or similar decision as stage 1
- 26 found fault, of which
 - 19 found fault when stage 1 found none
 - 7 found fault in addition to that found at stage 1.

c. Ombudsman - What additional compensation are we paying?

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman decisions - in 2018/19 there were 21 complaints upheld and finding fault against the Council. Of these, 10 resulted in compensation orders being made which were in excess of the amount offered by the Council to the total of £13,247.00.

Housing Ombudsman Service - in 2018/19 there were 19 complaints upheld and which found maladministration or service failure by the Council. Of these, all 19 resulted in compensation orders being made which were in excess of the amount offered by the Council to the total of £5605.00.

Total across both Ombudsman was £18,852.00.

d. Adult Social Care - explanation as to why the number of days to respond to complaints is so high.

The statutory process for adult social care complaints allows the Council and residents to agree how the complaint will be processed and to set suitable deadlines appropriate to the complexity of their concerns. As such, where the complaints are complex the agreed timeframes can extend over 20 days.

This flexibility underpins two changes that were introduced in 2018:

- Improved procedures were introduced to personalise our service. As a result we now spend more time ensuring residents have a greater opportunity to discuss their concerns and ensuring our responses address their needs.
- Residents are now offered the opportunity for a quick response in preference to a full investigation. Before 2018 all customer concerns were treated in the same way even though many issues were relatively simple and did not need 20 days to resolve. As a result of our improvements many residents now get a resolution within a day or so also explaining our reduction in numbers of overall complaints. However, it has meant the average response times do not reflect these simple cases but are based on the more complex ones that take a lot longer to investigate.

The 2018/19 figures did also include some backlog cases. Although they are now cleared, that took time and this contributed to our overall average time to respond that year.

We are continuing to build on the improvements we made in 2018:

- we have reintroduced weekly reports to senior managers of both internal services and our mental health partners. These have been expanded to include cases that are due to close as well as details of overdue cases, summarising the reasons for the delays and flagging key performance issues.
- the Adult Service complaints team now meet every other week to review the overdue cases and draw up plans to unblock progress.
- training is being prepared for Adult Service investigating officers to improve their investigation skills and the quality of their responses.

Action at 6.11

ACTION 3: Head of Procurement

to provide examples of how they have worked in the last year with local SMEs to seek delivery of wider sustainability benefits particularly relating to contracts valued at less than £100k.

ACTION 4: Head of Procurement

to share with the Panel Members the DRAFT of the guidance given to Heads of Service on examining the viability of in sourcing which they utilise when assessing contracts that are coming due for renewal within the next 2 years.

Information was circulated to Members on 22nd October 2019.

Action at 7.1

ACTION 5: Head of Scrutiny and Ward Forums

to collate list of issues to be raised with the Director of Communications, Culture and Engagement at a future meeting.

This item has been scheduled for the next SP meeting.

Action at 8.1

ACTION 6: Head of Scrutiny and Ward Forums

To add to the work programme a briefing from Group Directors/Directors on how learning from the Complaints Service are cascaded down within service departments.

Following Members discussion to confirm the service areas they wish to review. This item will be included in the work programme for the next SP meeting.

ACTION

Members are asked to agree the minutes and note the matters arising.