



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023/24**

<p><b>GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE</b></p> <p><b>12<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2023</b></p>	<p><b>AGENDA ITEM NO. 5</b></p>
<p><b>REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND GROUP DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, DIGITAL AND FRONTLINE SERVICES</b></p>	<p><b>CUSTOMER FEEDBACK SCHEME – COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS ANNUAL REPORT – 2022/23</b></p>

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report provides the Governance and Audit Committee with an overview of the operation and effectiveness of the Council's Customer Feedback Scheme (CFS) between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Governance and Audit Committee:

- 2.1 Note the content of the report, the Customer Feedback Scheme (CFS) Annual Report for 2022/23 (Appendix 1) and the work undertaken by the Customer Feedback, Engagement and Complaints Team.
- 2.2 Consider whether they wish to scrutinise in greater depth any matters contained in the report.
- 2.3 Form a view on the Authority's ability to handle complaints effectively.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Whilst there is no current statutory requirement for the Local Authority to produce an Annual Report, it is important that customer feedback information



and how it has been acted upon by the Council is reported to Members, as part of demonstrating sound governance arrangements in the delivery of services.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Management of the Customer Feedback Scheme merged with the existing management arrangements for the Social Services statutory process on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2019.
- 4.2 The Customer Feedback Scheme records all Comments, Compliments and Complaints received by both residents of RCT and those people visiting RCT who access our facilities. The scheme does not cover complaints where there are other statutory arrangements in place such as complaints about Social Care or School complaints.
- 4.3 The complaints process is a two-stage process, as set out below, and is in line with the Public Services Ombudsman's Model Complaints Policy. The Complaints Standards Authority has confirmed Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's compliance with this policy.

**Stage One: Local Resolution** – The emphasis at this stage of the process is early resolution of the complaint either by providing an explanation, putting things right or agreeing a way forward which may include identifying where improvements to services are necessary. The timescale for local resolution is 10 working days.

**Stage Two: Formal Consideration** – If the complainant remains dissatisfied after completion of stage one, they may request that the complaint proceeds to stage two of the process. This involves a formal investigation of the complaint with a report being produced by a Senior Council Officer. The timescale for dealing with this stage is 20 working days.

- 4.4 If the claimant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the stage two Investigation, they may progress their complaint to the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales.
- 4.5 Alongside the above arrangements, the Public Services Ombudsman Act 2019 provides the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) with investigative powers and, through the development of the Complaint's Standards Authority, a role in monitoring standards, trends and patterns across public service delivery in Wales. The Council is, as part of this legislation, required to report on complaints activity to the PSOW.
- 4.6 In addition to the above and in line with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the Governance and Audit Committee has responsibility to review and assess the authority's ability to handle complaints effectively and make reports and recommendations in relation to this, noting that these



responsibilities have been incorporated into the Committee's Terms of Reference.

## **5. PROGRESS & IMPROVEMENT**

### **5.1 Complaints Awareness and Training**

Training for staff was provided in 2023 by the PSOW Complaints Standards Authority on complaints handling and managing unreasonable customers. The 2023/24 training programme provided by the Customer Feedback and Engagement Team will focus on 'what is a complaint' and further improving data quality in respect of customer feedback. Targeted training sessions will also be provided to Services to inform service improvements as an outcome of complaints for areas such as "you said, we did".

### **5.2 System and Process Development**

The implementation of a new customer relationship management system provided an opportunity to review the complaints process and update service area information as part of an on-going programme of work to improve data quality and reporting. In parallel, the development of data dashboards have further improved management information and are enabling monitoring reports for each service area to support service planning and delivery.

### **5.3 Improved Customer Feedback**

Work will continue with services on how feedback is provided to residents and visitors to Rhondda Cynon Taf about how services have made improvements based on customer experiences. The 'You said, we did' webpage will be launched in Autumn 2023 in line with the revised and updated web information for the CFS.

## **6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY**

6.1 There are no equality and diversity or socio-economic implications arising directly from this report.

## **7. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no Welsh Language implications arising directly from this report. The Annual Report is available in Welsh.

## **8. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT**

8.1 No consultation has been undertaken in relation to this report as it provides information on the operation of the Customer Feedback Scheme and direct



feedback from service users in relation to how well services are delivered through the monitoring of compliments, comments and complaints. This report will also be reported to the Council's Cabinet during October 2023.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

9.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

10.1 The Customer Feedback Scheme is not a requirement of specific legislation; however, the administration of the work of the Complaints Feedback and Engagement Team is underpinned by the standards and expectations set by the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) and is subject to scrutiny under the powers afforded to the PSOW under the Public Services Ombudsman Act 2019.

## **11. LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

11.1 The effective capture, review and use of customer feedback is a key part of informing service planning and delivery arrangements across all Council Services and, in doing so, supports all Corporate Plan priorities and underpins the principles as set out within the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

## **12. CONCLUSION**

12.1 All customer feedback provides valuable information from which services can improve and develop. This data also enables services and the Council, as a whole, to better understand the needs of its residents and to assist in both the planning and delivery of services.

12.2 The Governance and Audit Committee, in line with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and its Terms of Reference, has responsibility to review and assess the authority's ability to handle complaints effectively and make reports and recommendations in relation to this.



**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**12<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2023**

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**Background Papers.**

None.

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