



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024/25

<p>GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE</p> <p>4th NOVEMBER 2024</p>	<p>AGENDA ITEM NO. 6</p>
<p>REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND GROUP DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, DIGITAL AND FRONTLINE SERVICES</p>	<p>CUSTOMER FEEDBACK SCHEME – COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS ANNUAL REPORT – 2023/24</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 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024.

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 2023/24 (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.

- 3.2 The Public Services Ombudsman Act 2019 provides the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) with investigative powers and, through the development of the Complaints 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, with the Annual Report being a key part of the overall arrangements in place.
- 3.3 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.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Customer Feedback Scheme (CFS) records all Comments, Compliments and Complaints received by both residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) and those people visiting RCT who access the Council's facilities. The scheme does not cover complaints where there are other statutory arrangements in place such as complaints about Social Care or School complaints.
- 4.2 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.

- 4.3 If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the stage two Investigation, they may progress their complaint to the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales.

5. PROGRESS & AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- 5.1 During the reporting period the overall number of CFS contacts were 1,103 compared to 796 contacts in 2022/23. The number of overall contacts remain low in the context of all contacts recorded by the Council's Contact Centre, accounting for less than 0.2%.
- 5.2 Following the review of the Customer Feedback process and analysis of the data presented at Appendix 1 of the report, priority areas for improvement during 2024/25 are as follows:
- 5.3 **Complaints Process and Training**
Working with services to capture comments/compliments/complaints and improve their CFS logging, categorisation and the triage of these feedback items. Other areas of training will be undertaken in line with the ongoing optimisation of digital systems.
- 5.4 **Data and Insight**
Work with services to develop data dashboards in order to enable improved data analysis and provide insight for services to better inform service delivery.
- 5.5 **Improved Customer Feedback**
Working with services that currently receive comments and feedback in writing and seek opportunities to digitise this feedback to allow for ease of reporting and to provide greater insight into customer's needs.

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.

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 requirement to have a Complaints Policy and the administration of the work of the Customer Feedback, Engagement and Complaints Team is underpinned by the standards and expectations set by the PSOW 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

4th November 2024

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Background Papers.

None.

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