

9 June 2014 – At a meeting of the Committee held at 2.15 p.m. at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Mrs Jupp (Chairman), Mr Acraman, Mr Barling, Mr Burrett, Mr Peters, Mr R Rogers, Mr Smith and Mrs Urquhart.

In attendance: Mr Diamond (Independent Person)

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Sheldon.

Declaration of Interests

1. None declared.

Minutes

2. Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4 November 2013 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

Recruitment of Independent Persons

3. The Committee noted that Mr Kieran Diamond was appointed as an Independent Person by the County Council on 14 February 2013, following interviews by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the Head of Law and Governance.

Annual Monitoring Report of Complaints regarding Levels of Service Delivery

4. The Committee considered a report by the Chief Operating Officer and Head of Law and Governance (copy appended to the signed minutes), which provided a summary of complaints received by the County Council in the last financial year.
5. The report was introduced by Dave Loveman, Customer Relations Manager, who clarified that 677 claims against the County Council were made in relation to damage to vehicles due to potholes in 2013, of which 133 cases received a settlement payment or offer where the County Council had found that it had been negligent. The payments and offers come to a total of £36,410.38.
6. The Committee welcomed the report as it showed low levels of complaints compared to the number of regular transactions undertaken and compensation payments remained relatively low. It welcomed the positive way in which complaints were dealt with and that agreed timescales for responding to complaints were generally met. It asked for future reports to include information about the spread of complaints received by phone, email, letter etc.

7. The Committee raised two areas of concern, as follows:
- When commissioning services, it is important to ensure that all contracts have effective arrangements in place for complaints data to be recorded and reported to the County Council for monitoring purposes.
 - There was some concern that agreed timescales for responding to complaints in adults services were not being met 26% of the time and that holding letters were not always sent when a delay occurred, although it was acknowledged that delays were often only for several days. *Mr Loveman advised that the Customer Relations Team were intending to work with Adults' Services team managers to improve this situation.*
8. Resolved –
- (1) That the report be noted.
 - (2) That the Cabinet and the Performance and Finance Select Committee be advised of the Committee's view that when commissioning services, it is important to ensure that all contracts have effective arrangements in place for complaints data to be recorded and reported to the County Council for monitoring purposes.

Standards Committee Annual Report

9. The Committee received a report by the Director of Finance and Assurance and Head of Law and Governance (copy appended to the signed minutes), which proposed a draft annual report for submission to the County Council on 25 July 2014.
10. The Committee supported the draft report and considered that it demonstrated that the current standards regime and the high standards it demanded was well understood and adhered to by members.
11. It asked the Head of Law and Governance to highlight the lack of Confidential Report Policy cases and to add a section about the Committee's recommendations on the Annual Monitoring Report on Complaints regarding levels of service delivery, with the exact wording to be agreed by the Chairman.
12. Resolved – That, subject to the amendments to be made by the Head of Law and Governance in consultation with the Chairman, the draft annual report be approved for submission to the County Council on 25 July 2014.

Review of the Standards Regime

13. The Committee noted that it had provisionally agreed that a review of the Standards Regime should commence in 2014. Given the positive review of the year evidenced in the Committee's Annual Report, the Committee agreed that a review was unnecessary at this time.

14. Resolved – That no review of the Standards Regime be carried out in 2014.

Confidential Reporting Policy

15. The Committee noted that the Head of Law and Governance had not received any referrals via the Policy since the last meeting of the Committee.

Date of Next Meeting

16. The Committee noted that its next scheduled meeting will take place on 3 November 2014 at 2.15 p.m. at County Hall, Chichester.

The meeting ended at 2.55 p.m.

Chairman