

# People & Health Scrutiny Committee

## 2 November 2020

### Annual Complaints Report – 2019/20

Choose an item.

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr S Flower, Leader of the Council

**Local Councillor(s):**

**Executive Director:** J Mair, Corporate Director, Legal & Democratic

Report Author: Tony Bygrave  
Title: Senior Assurance Officer  
Tel: 01305 225011  
Email: [antony.bygrave@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:antony.bygrave@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

Report Author: Marc Eyre  
Title: Service Manager for Assurance  
Tel: 01305 224358  
Email: [marc.eyre@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:marc.eyre@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

**Report Status:** Public

**Recommendation:** The Committee are asked to:

- 1) Note the complaints performance for the financial year 2019/20;
- 2) Support the focus on working with services to ensure greater organisational learning from complaints;
- 3) Recognise the savings associated with informal resolution, mediation and relationship building

**Reason for Recommendation:**

To have an awareness of the numbers and types of complaints and embed a culture of organisational learning.

#### 1. Executive Summary

This annual report provides an update on the numbers, types and outcomes of complaints made against services at Dorset Council across the Directorate.

There are also appendices that meet statutory reporting requirements of Children's Services.

Key messages:

- There were 722 complaints across the Directorates in 2019-20;
- Of these only 358 were considered through formal processes;
- 364 have been resolved informally with the Complaints Team working with Operational managers towards more agreeable outcomes with less undue Process;
- Of the 34 Ombudsman investigations only 4 cases revealed maladministration. 3 in Adult services and 1 in Place, at a cost to the Council of £1800 (considerably less than the £14,416.00 in 2018-19);
- 16% of responses exceeded the 20 working day timescale;
- Only 5% of complaints were considered fully justified with 24% part justified;
- There is a large increase in learning and actions arising from complaints;
- There has been an increase in compliments across the directorates.

The Complaints Team as an Assurance function are really starting to make a difference in promoting a culture of learning from complaints. We are also pleased to report that we are able to support managers across the directorates in resolving complaints without undue process, where possible.

## **2. Financial Implications**

The new approach taken to complaint management provides a financial benefit with a reduction in Stage 2 complaints and independent investigators fees.

As a result there were £1,800 in LGSCO maladministration charges in 2019-20 compared to £14,416.00 2018-19. In 2018-19 **£15,961.75** was spent on independent investigators for the more complex complaints case. Our positive work towards informal resolutions has reduced this figure to just **£30** in 2019-20

## **3. Climate implications**

None

#### **4. Other Implications**

None

#### **5. Risk Assessment**

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

#### **6. Equalities Impact Assessment**

The Corporate Complaints policy has been subject to EQIA.

#### **7. Appendices**

Appendix A – Annual Complaints Report

#### **8. Background Papers**

None

#### **Footnote:**

Issues relating to financial, legal, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.