

<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	Review of the Customer Case Management Policy - Unacceptable Customer Behaviour
<u>Submitted by:</u>	Executive Director (Resources & Support Services)
<u>Portfolio:</u>	Economic Regeneration, Business and Town Centres
<u>Ward(s) affected:</u>	Non specific

Purpose of the Report

To seek Cabinet approval of the revisions to the Customer Case Management Policy.

Recommendation

That Cabinet approve the revisions to the Customer Case Management Policy.

Reasons

The Customer Case Management Policy has been in place since May 2013. It enables the Council to deal with customers who display unacceptable customer behaviour and actions in a fair and consistent way, through adhering to industry guidelines and best practice. A review of the existing Policy has been undertaken and as a result it has been revised and updated to ensure it continues to reflect Local Government Ombudsman best practice and guidelines, and accords with Council requirements.

1. Background

The Council welcomes the opportunity to hear from and respond to customers, and endeavours to put customers at the heart of all service delivery. To that end, the Council has in place a number of customer focused policies which ensure procedures are in place for supporting our staff and customers. The Customer Case Management Policy provides guidelines and considerations to be taken into account before taking action with regards to unreasonable customer behaviour or actions.

2. Issues

2.1 It is both important and good practice to regularly review an existing Council policy to ensure it continues to reflect current practice and guidelines. Whilst the existing Policy has been successfully applied in a small number of cases, a judgement needs to be made on the effectiveness of the current policy and resulting from that, any improvements put in place.

2.2 Following a review of the Policy, a number of revisions are proposed to provide greater clarification and incorporate enhancements to the Policy. These are highlighted in the Policy, attached as Appendix A. In summary the revisions are:

- Section 1 - Revised to include Customer Consultation.
- Section 2 - Revised to include the Local Government Ombudsman's recommendation to adopt a framework for managing unreasonable customer behaviour. Addendum to refer to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in relation to abuse of the right to request information.
- Section 3 – Addendum to reference the Members' Customer Case Management Policy.

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- Section 6 - Revised wording concerning time frames to be put in place and clarifies who monitors any sanctions. It also advises staff of the channels of communication and how any sanction is being managed from start to finish.

3. Outcomes linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities

The Policy supports 'becoming a cooperative Council delivering high quality community driven services', by providing a customer case management policy which enhances transparency and provides consistency in our dealing with customers.

4. Legal and Statutory Implications

Although there are no legal or statutory requirements for the Council to adopt such a policy, it is considered good practice to provide a framework that provides for consistency and fairness in our dealing with these instances.

5. Equality Impact Assessment

An equalities impact assessment review is undertaken regularly of the Corporate Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy and the Customer Case Management Policy as the same equality impact assessment is relevant to both.

6. Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial or resource implications associated with the approval of the amendments to this Policy. However, implementation of the Policy has seen a reduction in resource that was previously required to manage cases of unreasonable behaviour.

7. Major Risks

No major risks have been highlighted.

8. Earlier Cabinet Resolutions

Customer Case Management Policy, May 2013.

9. Recommendation

That Cabinet approve the revisions to the Customer Case Management Policy, as detailed in the report.

10. List of Appendices

Appendix A: Customer Case Management Policy for Unacceptable Customer Behaviours and Actions Revised July 2014

11. Background Papers

The approved Customer Case Management Policy is available to view on the Council's Intranet site at http://svint/utilities_page.asp?id=SX95B9-A78068D2

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