

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERSHIPS)** will be held in **CIVIC SUITE 0.1A, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 4TH OCTOBER 2018** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**Contact  
(01480)**

## **APOLOGIES**

### **1. MINUTES (Pages 5 - 8)**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Customers and Partnerships) meeting held on 6th September 2018.

**A Green  
388008**

### **2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary and other interests in relation to any Agenda item.

### **3. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS (Pages 9 - 12)**

A copy of the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions is attached. Members are invited to note the Plan and to comment as appropriate on any items contained therein.

**M Stimpson  
388007**

### **4. ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT 2018 (Pages 13 - 24)**

The Annual Complaints Report 2018 is to be presented to the Panel.

**A Dobbyne  
388100**

### **5. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

Members are to agree their work programme for the ensuing Municipal Year.

**A Green  
388008**

Dated this 26th day of  
September 2018



Head of Paid Service

## **Notes**

### **1. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

- (1) *Members are required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and unless you have obtained dispensation, cannot discuss or vote on the matter at the meeting and must also leave the room whilst the matter is being debated or voted on.*
- (2) *A Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest if it -*

(a) relates to you, or

(b) is an interest of -

(i) your spouse or civil partner; or

(ii) a person with whom you are living as husband and wife; or

(iii) a person with whom you are living as if you were civil partners

and you are aware that the other person has the interest.

(3) Disclosable pecuniary interests includes -

(a) any employment or profession carried out for profit or gain;

(b) any financial benefit received by the Member in respect of expenses incurred carrying out his or her duties as a Member (except from the Council);

(c) any current contracts with the Council;

(d) any beneficial interest in land/property within the Council's area;

(e) any licence for a month or longer to occupy land in the Council's area;

(f) any tenancy where the Council is landlord and the Member (or person in (2)(b) above) has a beneficial interest; or

(g) a beneficial interest (above the specified level) in the shares of any body which has a place of business or land in the Council's area.

### **Non-Statutory Disclosable Interests**

(4) If a Member has a non-statutory disclosable interest then you are required to declare that interest, but may remain to discuss and vote providing you do not breach the overall Nolan principles.

(5) A Member has a non-statutory disclosable interest where -

(a) a decision in relation to the business being considered might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing of you or a member of your family or a person with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the council tax payers, rate payers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the authority's administrative area, or

(b) it relates to or is likely to affect a disclosable pecuniary interest, but in respect of a member of your family (other than specified in (2)(b) above) or a person with whom you have a close association, or

(c) it relates to or is likely to affect any body –

(i) exercising functions of a public nature; or

(ii) directed to charitable purposes; or

(iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a Member or in a position of control or management.

and that interest is not a disclosable pecuniary interest.

## **2. Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings**

The District Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in its decision making and permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social networking and micro-blogging websites (such as Twitter and Facebook) to communicate with people about what is happening at meetings. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Council and available via the following link [filming, photography and recording at council meetings.pdf](#) or on request from the Democratic Services Team. The Council understands that some members of the public attending its meetings may not wish to be filmed. The Chairman of the meeting will facilitate this preference by ensuring that any such request not to be recorded is respected.

Please contact Mr Adam Green, Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny), Tel No. 01480 388008/e-mail [Adam.Green@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Green@huntingdonshire.gov.uk) if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee/Panel.

Specific enquiries with regard to items on the Agenda should be directed towards the Contact Officer.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting as observers except during consideration of confidential or exempt items of business.

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website – [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk) (*under Councils and Democracy*).

If you would like a translation of Agenda/Minutes/Reports or would like a large text version or an audio version please contact the Elections & Democratic Services Manager and we will try to accommodate your needs.

***Emergency Procedure***

*In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit.*

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## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERSHIPS) held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 6th September 2018.

PRESENT: Councillor T D Alban – Chairman.

Councillors B S Banks, R E Bellamy, S Bywater, J W Davies, K I Prentice and Mrs J Tavener.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors B S Chapman, S J Criswell, Ms A Diaz and D R Underwood.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor J M Palmer.

### 19. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12th July 2018 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 20. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor T D Alban declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in relation to Minute Number 22 as an employee of a company that engages in commercial activities with North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillor R E Bellamy declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in relation to Minute Number 22 as his wife works for the National Health Service.

Councillor S Bywater declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in relation to Minute Number 22 as his wife works for the National Health Service.

Councillor S Bywater declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in relation to Minute Number 24 as a Member of Cambridgeshire County Council.

### 21. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel received and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which has been appended in the Minute Book) which has been prepared by the Executive Leader for the period 1st September 2018 to 31st December 2018.

In response to a question the Executive Councillor for Partnerships and Well-Being explained the principle of the Community Chest Grant Aid Awards scheme and why some groups were awarded grants and

others were not.

## **22. CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP DISCUSSION**

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) and a report by the Director of Corporate Affairs at the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) (copies of which have been appended in the Minute Book) the Panel held a discussion on the work of the CCG.

Jenny Raine, the CCG's Interim Director of Finance and Cath Mitchell, Director of Community Services and Integration at the CCG were in attendance and introduced the report.

It was explained to the Panel that the issues addressed in the report were the factors that led to the inadequate rating from NHS England. The CCG are rectifying issues at leadership level and have recruited a strong permanent senior management team. Ms Raine added that the CCG are addressing the fundamentals.

In response to the question what have the CCG learned from other CCGs, the Panel was informed that there is a wealth of data including surveys and bench marking in which the CCG can pick out good practice from.

Members were informed that as a result of the rating, the CCG have moved into special measures. This means that the CCG has a high interaction with NHS England and that they are aware of the improvements the CCG are making.

Ms Mitchell explained to Members that the increase in prescribing costs was due to national pricing changes. With regards to new drugs, they are managed by joint prescribing group and they ensure that the drugs are compliant with The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence regulations.

When questioned on supporting new models of care and extended access to appointments, the Panel was informed that there are currently 500 people waiting for assessments and that this priority is designed to alleviate that.

The Panel was informed that the CCG have agreed a plan with NHS England to reduce the deficit by £7m. This includes moving to Guaranteed Income Contracts with providers as well as trying to reduce costs where appropriate.

A discussion ensued on how the District Council could assist. Ms Mitchell stated, using the example of diabetes, that exercise and diet could help and that the District Council could assist by preventing cases of diabetes by providing places for exercise such as leisure centres and parks and in deciding what food outlets are permitted within the Council's jurisdiction. It was recognised that more could be done and that if the District Council's customer services had the information they could signpost residents, when appropriate, to various services.

When the question of cost was raised, the Panel was informed that each organisation has responsibilities and budgets to carry out those responsibilities. By targeting budgets and activities more strategically, it could end up producing big benefits for each organisation.

In response to a question, Members were informed that Huntingdonshire is not affected disproportionately to the rest of the county and the CCG are not targeting any part of the county differently.

The Panel's representative to Cambridgeshire County Council's Health Committee stated that they will monitor CCG budget issues closely as mixed messages are being delivered by the CCG.

The Panel is reassured that Huntingdonshire is not being treated differently to the rest of the county. In addition, Members want to investigate whether reduced leisure memberships for those people with health issues would bring extra users in. The users would benefit from leisure memberships and the Council would be receiving income it otherwise wouldn't have.

**23. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

**24. HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE**

With the aid of a presentation from Executive Councillor for Partnerships and Well-Being and the Operations Manager (Environmental Services), the Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Outline Business Case was presented to the Panel.

As background information, Members were informed of the current offering on the site and the challenges facing the country park.

The Panel was informed of the issues facing the site and the options available. The strengths and weaknesses of each option were outlined and Members were invited to comment on the options.

The Panel asked questions on various aspects of the preferred option and in addition suggested a number of improvements. The Panel supported the preferred option.

**25. RE-ADMITTANCE OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED

That the press and public be re-admitted to the meeting.

**26. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

At the commencement of the item, the Panel agreed to change the recommendations in the report to the following:

- 1) That the agreed work programming sub-group of Councillors T D Alban, B S Chapman, K I Prentice and Mrs S Smith meet to make recommendations for the work programme and time table for the Panel's work programme, which will be considered at the Panel meeting in October.
- 2) That the Chairman will write to each Member of the Panel and ask them to identify areas of interest and expertise which they might like to contribute to the Panel's work programme.

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was discussed by the Panel. In addition to this the Corporate Director – Services outlined, via a presentation, the challenges the Council is facing and the draft work programme.

The Panel praised the draft work programme as it brings difficult challenges to the attention of Members. A Member commented that some solutions could arise out of working smarter and not necessarily harder. It was mentioned that if the Panel was to consider homelessness then having a breakdown of areas creating homelessness would be beneficial.

The Panel agreed with the amended recommendations.

*(At 8.33pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor J M Palmer left the meeting and did not return.)*

Chairman



## NOTICE OF EXECUTIVE KEY DECISIONS INCLUDING THOSE TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE

**Prepared by** Councillor G J Bull, Executive Leader of the Council  
**Date of Publication:** 19 September 2018  
**For Period:** 1 October 2018 to 31 January 2019

Membership of the Cabinet is as follows:-

Councillor Mrs M L Beuttell	Executive Councillor for Regulation and Operations	Councillor J A Gray	Executive Councillor for Resources
Councillor G J Bull	Executive Leader of the Council	Councillor J M Palmer	Executive Councillor for Partnerships and Well-Being
Councillor R Fuller	Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning and Economic Development	Councillor D M Tysoe	Executive Councillor for Digital and Customer

Notice is hereby given of:

- Key decisions that will be taken by the Cabinet (or other decision maker)
- Confidential or exempt executive decisions that will be taken in a meeting from which the public will be excluded (for whole or part).

A notice/agenda together with reports and supporting documents for each meeting will be published at least five working days before the date of the meeting. In order to enquire about the availability of documents and subject to any restrictions on their disclosure, copies may be requested by contacting the Democratic Services Team on 01480 388169 or E-mail [Democratic.Services@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@huntingdonshire.gov.uk).

Agendas may be accessed electronically at [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk).

Formal notice is hereby given under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 that, where indicated part of the meetings listed in this notice will be held in private because the agenda and reports for the meeting will contain confidential or exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it. See the relevant paragraphs below.

Any person who wishes to make representations to the decision maker about a decision which is to be made or wishes to object to an item being considered in private may do so by emailing [Democratic.Services@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@huntingdonshire.gov.uk) or by contacting the Democratic Services Team. If representations are received at least eight working days before the date of the meeting, they will be published with the agenda together with a statement of the District Council's response. Any representations received after this time will be verbally reported and considered at the meeting.

### Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended) (Reason for the report to be considered in private)

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the Financial and Business Affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)

4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations that are arising between the Authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of or office holders under the Authority
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings
6. Information which reveals that the Authority proposes:-
  - (a) To give under any announcement a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
  - (b) To make an Order or Direction under any enactment
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

Huntingdonshire District Council  
 Pathfinder House  
 St Mary's Street  
 Huntingdon PE29 3TN.

- Notes:- (i) Additions changes from the previous Forward Plan are annotated \*\*\*  
 (ii) Part II confidential items which will be considered in private are annotated ## and shown in italic.

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private.	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
10 Car Parking Strategy Part 2	Cabinet	18 Oct 2018		Neil Sloper, Head of Operations Tel No. 01480 388635 / Email: Neil.Sloper@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		M Beuttell	Performance and Growth
Community Resilience Plan	Cabinet	22 Nov 2018		Chris Stopford, Head of Community Tel No. 01480 388280 or email: chris.stopford@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		J M Palmer	Customers and Partnerships
Gambling Act Statement of Principles Review ***	Cabinet	22 Nov 2018		Chris Stopford, Head of Community Tel No. 01480 388280 / Email: Chris.Stopford@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		M Beuttell	Not Applicable

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Long Term Business Plan##	Cabinet	22 Nov 2018		Neil Sloper, Head of Operations Tel No. 01480 388635 / Email: Neil.Sloper@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		J M Palmer	Customers and Partnerships
HDC Ventures - Business Plans ## ***	Cabinet	22 Nov 2018		Chris Stopford, Head of Community Tel No. 01480 388280 or email: chris.stopford@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		D M Tysoe	Performance and Growth
Approval of Council Tax Base → →	Chairman of Corporate Governance and Section 151 Officer	3 Dec 2018		Amanda Burns, Benefits Manager, Benefits Manager Tel No. 01480 388122 or email: amanda.burns@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		J A Gray	Performance and Growth
Godmanchester Nursery Update##	Cabinet	13 Dec 2018		Neil Sloper, Head of Operations Tel No. 01480 388635 / Email: Neil.Sloper@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		J M Palmer	Customers and Partnerships
Paxton Pits Long Term Business Plan ## ***	Cabinet	17 Jan 2019		Neil Sloper, Head of Operations Tel No. 01480 388635 or Email: Neil.Sloper@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		J M Palmer	Customers and Partnerships

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**Public**  
**Key Decision - No**

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** Annual Complaints Report 2018

**Meeting/Date:** Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Customers and Partnerships)  
– 4th October 2018  
Corporate Governance Committee – 10th October 2018

**Executive Portfolio:** Councillor D M Tysoe, Executive Councillor for Digital and Customer

**Report by:** Adrian Dobbyne, Corporate Team Manager

**Wards affected:** All

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### **Executive Summary:**

The report provides Members with information on complaints referred to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) 2017/18 along with data relating to stage 1 and stage 2 complaints received by the council between April 2017 – March 2018.

### **Recommendation(s):**

Members are invited to comment on the LGO local authority report for Huntingdonshire District Council and the data relating to formal stage 1 and stage 2 complaints received.

## 1. WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT/PURPOSE?

- 1.1 This report provides Members with information on complaints referred to the Local Government Ombudsman and those received by the council April 2017 – March 2018.

## 2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 One of the purposes of the annual summary of statistics on complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) is to help ensure that learning from complaints helps inform service provision. The LGO statistics show complaints and enquiries received by service area and whether a decision was upheld, not upheld, advice given, closed after initial enquiry, incomplete/invalid, or referred back for local resolution.
- 2.2 A further purpose of this report is to provide Members with data relating to stage 1 and stage 2 complaints by Service area.

## 3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS

- 3.1 There were slightly more complaints/enquires received by the LGO during 2017/18 - 20 complaints in total, including those which did not progress to the LGO assessment stage or beyond. There were three detailed investigations carried out by the LGO in 2017/18. In summary:

Two were **upheld**:

- Planning Enforcement matter - the LGO upheld a complaint about the council's planning enforcement investigation. Although the LGO have not found fault with the council's decisions about whether structures were permitted development, there was fault in the council's communications with the complainant (delayed response). The LGO have agreed a remedy which was to recommend that the council make a formal decision about whether it was expedient to enforce the breach of planning permission it had identified. The Planning Enforcement Team have also made a lot of effort to make timely decisions and communicate them effectively.
- Planning Decision - there was some fault by the council in the way in which it responded to the initial complaint. The council has apologised for this. The complainant did not suffer injustice through the fault in relation to the substantive planning issues raised.

One was **not upheld**

- Planning Enforcement matter - the council properly investigated complaints about breaches of planning control. It exercised its discretion to seek a negotiated solution through discussion and a retrospective application to regularise breaches. That was an approach it was entitled to take. The process took some time but there was no undue delay in the council's actions.
- 3.2 The number of stage 1 complaints has risen significantly, largely as a result of the refuse/recycling round reconfiguration which took place early 2017. The majority of complaints related to missed bin collections, in Quarter 1 (April – June 2017) there were a total of 280 complaints of which 270 were Operations. The high volume of missed bin complaints meant that many of these were not resolved within 20 working days.

3.3 The number of stage 2 complaints has risen proportionately to the number of stage 1 complaints. Figures indicate that complaints are largely being resolved at stage 1, which is positive indication that formal complaints are being dealt with effectively in the first instance.

3.4 Leisure and Health Active Lifestyles record complaints through their own systems, however it was agreed that a clear reporting and monitoring process for Leisure and Health formal complaints should be put in place as a priority and to ensure the process aligns with the corporate approach. Some progress was made during 2017/18, for example One Leisure are now providing the Corporate Office with their complaints spreadsheets, thus enabling the team to record and report on the data. However this could be further improved by investigating whether data could be imported directly into the Corporate Complaints SharePoint site.

3.5 Further progress with the implementation of the Complaints Lean Review includes:

Obtaining clarity and agreement on definition of a complaint being used across the council and streamlining how Services record and monitor complaints:

- Individual workshops with Operations, Development, One Leisure – to explore what their issues and challenges they experience with the current complaints process.
- Following each of these workshops a challenge brief was created (record of outcomes and next steps). The challenge brief was then presented to each Head of Service.

New recording system or upgrade to current system, decide on developing a new system, procure a new system, adapt the current system or adapt another existing system

- Investigating adaption of current Complaints SharePoint site – 3C ICT suggested it may not be advisable to commit extensive resources to amending existing Complaints SharePoint site as it was unclear whether SharePoint would align with new CRM system.
- Procuring a new system – team visit to Cambridge City who use Complaints Tracker software. Although the system seemed fit for purpose it is likely to incur a considerable cost.
- Adapt another existing system - Vuelio (Freedom of Information System) was explored but it would still require duplicate data entry from complaints received via our on line portal.

3.6 Although 3C ICT advised not to update the current Complaints SharePoint site, the lack of a timescale when new CRM/IEG4 would go live combined with an urgent need for reliable recording of complaints data a decision was made to proceed with the redesign of current Complaints SharePoint site. This did not incur any cost apart from minimal staff time to develop, test and implement. Feedback from staff included that the site is much easier to read and understand and far less cluttered.

3.7 The project structure to deliver the Customer Portal is being sorted and the scope of the work is also coming together. The software is installed and some of the technical 'behind the scenes' work to set things up is happening now. Delivering customer complaints through the portal is very much in scope, but the order of which functions and being delivered through this is still being determined. It will be an iterative release, which means that we will be able to launch and improve the service too and then work to develop the further reporting systems and processes in place.

- 3.8 It has not been possible to visit all Services to explore issues and challenges however the three Services chosen were those with highest number of complaints recorded and it was decided that any learning from these workshops could be shared with the remaining Services.
- 3.9 The complaints policy and internal staff guidance on management of complaints has not been reviewed, this has been due to a lack of resource to undertake this work.
- 3.10 As part of the Action Plans arising out of the Challenge Briefs, Services were asked to give consideration to whether it would be more efficient and effective if the Heads of Service or members of Management Team undertook more stage 2 complaints. During 2018 there has been a slight increase in stage 2 complaints being managed by these Managers.
- 3.11 In 2017/18, we recorded a number of Unreasonable Complainants and reviewed three cases. It became increasingly clear that the application of our policies was not being followed as strictly as it should and was subsequently placing some staff in difficult positions. In a couple of cases, we have reiterated our position to the management of such cases, such as having a single point of contact, so that far greater proportionality is achieved in the amount of time spent on these cases. This has led to us withdrawing some of our services to these three complainants, save for statutory obligations.
- 3.12 There have been a few incidents of complainants being rude, using inappropriate language or tone to our employees and this has highlighted a need to have a corporate approach to be outlined and communicated to staff so that we can consistently support our staff in such situations and take a zero tolerance on such matters.

**4. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS?  
HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED?**

- 4.1 With Complaints, there is always a risk that we do not record all the complaints we receive and so do not have the full picture or identify trends. Complaints continue to come in by a variety of means with a number of systems and people to comprehensively and accurately record them all.

We have been unable to make all of the changes required i.e. we still don't have a system in place that gives us the best opportunity to have a comprehensive recording and monitoring system and so are unable to state confidently that all Services are consistently applying the corporate definition of a complaint.

**5. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN**

- 5.1 Complaints handling links to the following Strategic Priority within the Corporate Plan - Ensuring we are a customer focused and service led council.

**6 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS**

- 6.1 Members are invited to note the LGO local authority report for Huntingdonshire District Council and note the data relating to stage 1 and stage 2 complaints received by the council.



## **7. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED**

Appendix 1	LGO statistics for HDC
Appendix 2	HDC internal complaints
Appendix 3	LGO statistics – neighbouring authority comparison

### **CONTACT OFFICERS**

Louise Sboui  
Policy, Performance & Transformation Manager (Project Support)  
01480 388032

Adrian Dobbyne  
Corporate Team Manager  
01480 388100

**Appendix 1 LGO Local Authority Report – Huntingdonshire District Council**

**Complaints and Enquiries Received**

HDC	Benefits and Tax	Corporate and Other Services	Environment Services	Planning and Development	Housing	Highways and Transport	Total
2017/18	2	5	3	7	1	1	19
2016/17	2	2	2	8	0	2	16
2015/16	7	2	2	11	1	0	23
2014/15	3	3	3	7	0	0	16

**Decisions Made**

HDC	Upheld	Not upheld	Advice given	Closed after initial enquiry	Incomplete/invalid	Referred back for local resolution	Total
2017/18	2	1	1	6	0	10	20
2016/17	1	1	0	5	0	9	16
2015/16	1	1	0	11	0	8	21
2014/15	0	3	1	7	0	5	16

A number of cases will have been received and decided in different business years, this means the number of complaints and enquiries received will not always match the number of decisions made.

## Appendix 2 HDC Recorded Complaints

Year	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Number of complaints	40	43	22 Stage 1	15 Stage 1 14 Stage 2	237 Stage 1 15 Stage 2	284 Stage 1 12 Stage 2	565 Stage 1 23 Stage 2

Service	Stage 1		Stage 2		Total		LGO investigations	
	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18
Community	13	2	1	1	14	3		
Corporate Team	3	4	2	-	5	4		
Customer Services	24	11	2	4	26	15		
Development	18	24	3	5	21	29	2	3
Operations (1)	149	480	3	12	152	492		
Resources	1	-	-	1	1	1		
Leisure and Health (2)	76	42	4		76	42		
Shared Services	-	2	-	-	-	2		
Community/Development/Legal	-	-	1	-	1	-		
<b>Total</b>	284	565	12	23	296	588	2	3

Notes (1) Operations do not include most complaints relating to Bin Collections made in Quarter 4 2016/17, following the introduction of new waste collection rounds. (2) 2015/16 and 2016/17 include those recorded by One Leisure which were not shown in previous years.

Appendix 3 LGO Neighbouring Authorities Statistics

Cambridgeshire Councils	Complaints and enquiries decided (by outcome)		Complaints and enquiries received	
	Not upheld	Upheld	<u>2017/18</u>	<u>(2016/17)</u>
<u>2017/18</u>				
HDC	1	2	19	(16)
South Cambridgeshire	1	6	23	(22)
Fenland	0	3	13	(17)
East Cambridgeshire	1	2	14	(6)
Cambridge City	1	2	19	(18)
Cambridgeshire County Council	3	5	39	(51)

18 July 2018

*By email*

Joanne Lancaster  
Managing Director  
Huntingdonshire District Council

Dear Joanne Lancaster,

### **Annual Review letter 2018**

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) about your authority for the year ended 31 March 2018. The enclosed tables present the number of complaints and enquiries received about your authority and the decisions we made during the period. I hope this information will prove helpful in assessing your authority's performance in handling complaints.

### **Complaint statistics**

In providing these statistics, I would stress that the volume of complaints does not, in itself, indicate the quality of the council's performance. High volumes of complaints can be a sign of an open, learning organisation, as well as sometimes being an early warning of wider problems. Low complaint volumes can be a worrying sign that an organisation is not alive to user feedback, rather than always being an indicator that all is well. So, I would encourage you to use these figures as the start of a conversation, rather than an absolute measure of corporate health. One of the most significant statistics attached is the number of upheld complaints. This shows how frequently we find fault with the council when we investigate. Equally importantly, we also give a figure for the number of cases where we decided your authority had offered a satisfactory remedy during the local complaints process. Both figures provide important insights.

I want to emphasise the statistics in this letter reflect the data we hold, and may not necessarily align with the data your authority holds. For example, our numbers include enquiries from people we signpost back to the authority, some of whom may never contact you.

In line with usual practice, we are publishing our annual data for all authorities on our website, alongside an annual review of local government complaints. The aim of this is to be transparent and provide information that aids the scrutiny of local services.

### **Future development of annual review letters**

Last year, we highlighted our plans to move away from a simplistic focus on complaint volumes and instead turn focus onto the lessons that can be learned and the wider improvements we can achieve through our recommendations to improve services for the many. We have produced a new corporate strategy for 2018-21 which commits us to more comprehensively publish information about the outcomes of our investigations and the occasions our recommendations result in improvements to local services.

We will be providing this broader range of data for the first time in next year's letters, as well as creating an interactive map of local authority performance on our website. We believe this will lead to improved transparency of our work, as well as providing increased recognition to the improvements councils have agreed to make following our interventions. We will therefore be seeking views from councils on the future format of our annual letters early next year.

### **Supporting local scrutiny**

One of the purposes of our annual letters to councils is to help ensure learning from complaints informs scrutiny at the local level. Sharing the learning from our investigations and supporting the democratic scrutiny of public services continues to be one of our key priorities. We have created a dedicated section of our website which contains a host of information to help scrutiny committees and councillors to hold their authority to account – complaints data, decision statements, public interest reports, focus reports and scrutiny questions. This can be found at [www.lgo.org.uk/scrutiny](http://www.lgo.org.uk/scrutiny) I would be grateful if you could encourage your elected members and scrutiny committees to make use of these resources.

### **Learning from complaints to improve services**

We share the issues we see in our investigations to help councils learn from the issues others have experienced and avoid making the same mistakes. We do this through the reports and other resources we publish. Over the last year, we have seen examples of councils adopting a positive attitude towards complaints and working constructively with us to remedy injustices and take on board the learning from our cases. In one great example, a county council has seized the opportunity to entirely redesign how its occupational therapists work with all of its districts, to improve partnership working and increase transparency for the public. This originated from a single complaint. This is the sort of culture we all benefit from – one that takes the learning from complaints and uses it to improve services.

### **Complaint handling training**

We have a well-established and successful training programme supporting local authorities and independent care providers to help improve local complaint handling. In 2017-18 we delivered 58 courses, training more than 800 people. We also set up a network of council link officers to promote and share best practice in complaint handling, and hosted a series of seminars for that group. To find out more visit [www.lgo.org.uk/training](http://www.lgo.org.uk/training).

Yours sincerely,



Michael King  
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman  
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

**Local Authority Report:** Huntingdonshire District Council  
**For the Period Ending:** 31/03/2018

For further information on how to interpret our statistics, please visit our website:  
<http://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/reports/annual-review-reports/interpreting-local-authority-statistics>

## Complaints and enquiries received

Adult Care Services	Benefits and Tax	Corporate and Other Services	Education and Children's Services	Environment Services	Highways and Transport	Housing	Planning and Development	Other	Total
0	2	4	1	3	1	1	7	0	19

23

## Decisions made

				Detailed Investigations			
Incomplete or Invalid	Advice Given	Referred back for Local Resolution	Closed After Initial Enquiries	Not Upheld	Upheld	Uphold Rate	Total
0	1	10	6	1	2	67%	20

### Notes

Our uphold rate is calculated in relation to the total number of detailed investigations.  
 The number of remedied complaints may not equal the number of upheld complaints. This is because, while we may uphold a complaint because we find fault, we may not always find grounds to say that fault caused injustice that ought to be remedied.

### Complaints Remedied

by LGO	Satisfactorily by Authority before LGO Involvement
1	0

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