

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

15 MARCH 2022

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER - FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE

UPDATE OF REVIEW OF THE CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS PROCESS

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the work being undertaken to review the Authority's Concerns and Complaints process.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objective/objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1 In September 2021, the Governance and Audit Committee received a report from the Chief Officer – Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy on the Authority's Concerns and Complaints Policy and process.
- 3.2 Feedback from the Committee suggested they would like the Authority to take a more holistic view of complaints and explore whether there were digital options for complaints management.
- 3.3 The Committee established a working group consisting of Cllr Lyn Walters, Cllr Cheryl Green and Cllr Amanda Williams. The working group undertook research and spoke to other local authorities.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 On 26 January 2022, the elected member working group met the Chief Officer - Legal, and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy to feed back their findings and views.
- 4.2 It was agreed that the Chief Officer would raise the topic at Corporate Management Board where it was agreed that the matter should be referred to the Digital Transformation Board for further consideration.
- 4.3 Prior to presentation to the Digital Transformation Board, initial work has been undertaken to explore the opportunities of incorporating the current formal stage of concerns and complaints within the existing Customer Relationship Management

(CRM) system which is used in Customer Services for recording all informal concerns and complaints.

- 4.4 The current corporate complaints form has already been built into the new digital platform and is available online for customers to complete. Work is now underway to look at developing the system so that all concerns and complaints are held and processed within the CRM system, rather than recorded in a standalone Excel spreadsheet.
- 4.5 It is envisaged that by recording all informal and formal concerns and complaints within the system, it will improve the current reporting process across the whole organisation. The initial phase will be to incorporate the corporate complaints recording within the system, before exploring opportunities to also look at incorporating statutory social services complaints within the same system, so one system is used corporately.
- 4.6 A copy of the complaints performance report that is provided each quarter to the Complaints Standards Authority Wales is also being reviewed to ensure the right data can be captured within the CRM system to simplify and improve the current reporting process.
- 4.7 In addition, business analyst resource is being sought to review the process and the way concerns and complaints are received, considering both how they come into the Authority and the issues raised. This work will enable the Authority to identify new or recurring problems, put in preventative action plans and monitor customer experiences and outcomes to help improve services the Council provides.
- 4.8 This information will be used to develop an options appraisal which will be presented to the Digital Transformation Board for consideration and support for ongoing developments, ensuring it is also aligned to the existing “corporate front door” project where the entry points into the organisation are being reviewed.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 There is no impact of the policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

- 6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an EIA in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report. Future assessments will be carried out as the project continues.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

- 7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. The monitoring of complaints and the successful resolution of those complaints is consistent with the five ways of working within the Act as it supports the

provision of higher quality and more effective services to the public across all service areas. In addition, it enables each service to focus on areas of concern, to improve services and to monitor performance, ensure that any trends are identified and dealt with to be avoided in the future and to ensure that complaints are dealt with consistently and fairly across all service areas.

8. Financial implications

8.1 There are no financial implications directly linked to this report. The Digital Transformation Board will consider any financial implications as the project progresses.

9. Recommendation

9.1 The Committee is recommended to note the contents of the report.

Carys Lord
CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE
15 March 2022

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Background documents:

None