

## London Borough of Enfield

### Overview and Scrutiny Committee

8<sup>th</sup> September 2022

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**Subject: Enfield Council Corporate Complaints Annual Report 2021-22**

**Cabinet Member:**

**Executive Director: Fay Hammond, Executive Director of Resources**

**Key Decision: N/A**

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### **Purpose of Report**

1. To summarise the findings of the Corporate Complaints Annual Report 2021-22. The report focuses on the nature of complaints and learning they provide to improve services in the future.

### **Proposal(s)**

2. Note the findings and improvement actions included in the Corporate Complaints Annual Report.

### **Relevance to the Council's Corporate Plan**

3. Analysing corporate complaints, Members Enquiries (MEQs) and compliments on an annual basis provides valuable insight into customer experience. This learning informs Enfield Council's future approach to service improvement.

### **Background**

4. This annual report covers the period of 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. It focuses on the nature of complaints received by the Council, handling performance and learning elicited to shape future service improvements. It also provides insight into MEQs and compliments received during the same period.
5. As discussed at February 2022 OSC, the report content has changed compared to previous years to provide improved insight and learning such as multiple year trend analysis, greater granularity regarding service volumes and response performance breakdowns. Recent technology changes will provide further detailed insight for 2022/23 report.
6. In addition, the annual Ombudsman Complaints Report is now incorporated into the Annual Corporate Complaints Report to provide a holistic overview of complaints and learning.

7. The Annual Statutory Complaints reports for Adults and Children Social Care are produced separately to the Corporate Complaints report as these complaints are processed and monitored under a specific statutory framework. The social care reports are currently being finalised and will be presented to the relevant scrutiny panels in the coming months.

### **Main Considerations for the Council**

8. This section summarises the key findings from the Corporate Complaints Annual Report which is an appendix to this covering OSC paper.

### Findings

9. During 2021/22, Enfield Council received 2,069 complaints and 7,844 MEQs. Response time performance targets were not achieved although there were in-year performance improvements (Complaints - 77% on time responses; MEQs – 78% on time responses).
10. When comparing 3 year-trends, both Complaints and MEQ volumes have increased year-on-year with the highest received for both areas between April 21 to March 22. Complaint response performance time has remained broadly the same despite the increase in volume. MEQ volumes have significantly increased year-on-year whilst response performance has decreased.
11. There were reduced escalations from first to final stage complaints as well as the number of decisions upheld in favour of the complainant by the Ombudsman.
12. The majority of complaints related to service delivery, quality and staff conduct. High volume service areas included Waste Operations, Housing Repairs, Housing Advisory and financial assessment, income & debt services. These also represent high contact service areas (e.g. bin collections and council housing repairs) and services which have experienced significant demand increase, notably homelessness applications post Covid-19 which almost doubled compared to the previous year.
13. Member Enquiries demonstrated significant focus on fly-tipping, resident missed bin collections as well as maintaining public spaces, preventing homelessness and traffic calming measures.
14. Ombudsman upheld complaints identified development opportunities to reduce service delays and improve documentation processes.

### Improvement Actions

15. A series of corporate and individual service improvements are underway to improve response times, quality and service delivery.
16. At an organisational level, changes to resources structures, processes and systems are being implemented and embedded throughout 22/23 to improve

initial handling delays and provide improved insight to inform targeted service improvements.

17. Complaints learning from 21/22 have informed a series of specific service level action plans. These include enhanced staff training and induction programmes, service redesigns, recruitment drives and improved customer communication processes to enhance service delivery and reduce the initial complaints received.

### **Financial Implications**

18. The improvements in service delivery associated with changing the structure, processes and systems have been incorporated into the 2022-23 budget

### **Legal Implications**

19. There are no Legal implications

### **Workforce Implications**

20. There are no workforce implications

### **Property Implications**

21. There are no property implications

### **Other Implications**

22. There are no other implications

### **Options Considered**

23. Not applicable as this report is to note the findings from the Annual Corporate Complaints Report 2021-22.

### **Conclusions**

24. 2021/22 saw the largest volume of Complaints and MEQs compared to the last three years and challenges regarding response performance. However, there were reductions in the number of complaints escalated from first to final stage. The Ombudsman also upheld fewer complaints compared to the previous year.
25. From a customer perspective, there were high complaint volumes regarding waste management, housing, homelessness and financial support. Member Enquiries demonstrated significant focus on fly-tipping, resident missed bin collections as well as maintaining public spaces, preventing homelessness and traffic calming measures.
26. In addition to redesigning corporate resource structures, processes and systems to improve response time and quality, a number of actions plans are underway at an individual service level, informed by complaints learning

throughout the year. These include enhanced staff training and induction programmes, service redesigns, recruitment drives and improved customer communication processes to improve service delivery and reduce the initial complaints received.

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Services

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Date: 23/08/22

Appendix: Enfield Council Corporate Complaints Annual Report 2021/22  
(attached separately).