

## Havering Council – Decisions taken by the Adjudication and Review Committee on Tuesday, 16 August 2016

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision
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**Note: this decision list is for guidance only. The text of the minutes, which may be different, is definitive.**

### Part A – Items considered in public

<b>A1</b>	MINUTES	The Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 May 2016 were accepted and signed by the Chairman.
<b>A2</b>	CORPORATE COMPLAINTS QUARTERLY UPDATE	<p>Members were provided with a presentation from the Senior Complaint and Investigation Officer. The number of complaints dealt with at Stages One and Two of the Corporate Complaints process to 30 June 2016 was 604 with 594 (98%) completed within the 15 working days allowed. This compared with 814 complaints to 30 June 2015 of which 674 (83%) were completed within 15 working days. There were no escalations to Stage Three.</p> <p>The Committee was provided with a number of charts with data showing how these statistics were apportioned across the Council's services and these are appended to the Minute.</p> <p>The Senior Complaint and Investigation Manager informed Members that changes had been made to the way in which complaints were recorded and this had had some impact on the figures. Members expressed their satisfaction with the way in which the process appeared to be working.</p> <p>In response to a question from a member, the Senior Complaint and Investigation Officer confirmed that all requests for a complaint to be escalated to Stage Two was reviewed by the Chief Executive (CE) and if he considered that the response at Stage One had addressed the matter, the complainant was informed that their request had been declined and that the complaints process had been completed. If they remained dissatisfied, they could approach the appropriate Ombudsman. She also confirmed that the CE checked every response at Stage Two before it was sent and this ensured that the matter remained consistent and compliant with the procedure – as evidenced recently when the LGO complimented the Council on its complaints procedure.</p> <p>The Committee thanked the Senior Complaint and Investigation Officer for her presentation.</p>

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<b>A3</b>	MEMBER ENQUIRIES QUARTERLY UPDATE	<p>The Senior Complaint and Investigation Manager provided the Committee with a presentation concerning MP and Member enquiries for the period 1 April – 30 June 2016. She emphasised that the figures only represented those enquiries received and posted on CRM and added that since the previous year efforts had been made to identify and strip out complaints so that only enquiries were recorded. These efforts would continue.</p> <p>Members were informed that during the quarter there had been 882 enquiries of which 855 had received answers within the 15 working days and this compared with 504 enquiries for the same period in 2015 of which 433 (86%) had been completed within the response period. The low figure for enquiries during the previous year could – in part – be attributed to a good number of them being recorded as “complaints” and whilst Members could – and did – complain on behalf of their constituents, mixing them with enquiries skewed both data sets.</p> <p>Members expressed their satisfaction with the efforts being made to ensure that the information being provided was as accurate as possible and were pleased that the direction of travel of completions was positive.</p> <p>The Committee thanked the Senior Complaint and Investigation Manager for her presentation.</p>
<b>A4</b>	LGO AND HOUSING OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REVIEW UPDATE	<p>The Senior Complaint and Investigation Manager provided Members with a presentation concerning the Annual Statement from the LGO.</p> <p>Members were informed that during the year 1 April 2015 – 30 March 2016, the LGO had recorded 97 complaints against the Council. Of these 23 resulted in an</p>

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		<p>investigation. Of the 23 investigations, 14 were upheld. This represented 61%, but only 14% of the total recorded by the Ombudsman.</p> <p>To put this into a broader perspective, Members were informed that neighbouring boroughs – such as Barking and Dagenham (147 cases with 30% upheld), Newham (248 cases of which 63% were upheld) and statistical neighbours: Croydon (212 – 51% upheld) and Bromley (169 – 60% upheld).</p> <p>In more detail, Members were informed that of those cases upheld, five were for Adult Care Services – and in answer to a question, this was focused primarily on charging and care home provision. Housing Services (not covered by the jurisdiction of the Housing Ombudsman but more to do with homelessness etc.) had three complaints upheld, Highways had two and Environmental Services, Planning, Education/Children's Services and Benefits and Tax each had one case upheld. In answer to an enquiry from Members, the Senior Complaint and Investigation Manager stated that the education complaints were mostly from parents dissatisfied with the results of school appeals whilst the benefits/tax issues were largely to do with the involvement of bailiffs or NNDR matters.</p> <p>In conclusion, Members were informed that a recent training day with the LGO had been very well received. Positive relations were being developed with the staff there and that the LGO had been very complimentary, not only about the Council's complaints procedure, but of its persistent and vexatious complaints policy (modelled on its own guidelines) and that this positive relationship augured well for the future.</p> <p>The Committee thanked the Senior Complaint and Investigation Manager for her presentation, noting the positive application of the processes under her management</p>

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		and the encouraging feed-back from the LGO. The Committee urged her and her team to continue developing and refining the process and felt confident that this would be done.
<b>A1</b>		
<b>A2</b>		