

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
ADJUDICATION & REVIEW COMMITTEE
Town Hall
24 June 2021 (7.02 pm – 8.00 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS

Conservative Group Ray Best (Vice-Chair), Joshua Chapman,
Timothy Ryan (Vice-Chair) and Matt Sutton (Chairman)

Residents' Group Ray Morgon

**Upminster & Cranham
Residents' Group** Linda Van den Hende

All decisions were taken with no votes against.

The Chairman reminded Members of the action to be taken in an emergency.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE & SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Martin Goode, Denis O'Flynn and Jeffrey Tucker.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 January 2021 were agreed as a correct record and would be signed at a later date.

4 UPDATE ON CORPORATE COMPLAINTS 2020/21 YEAR END

It was noted that the complaints process had been closed for three months due to the pandemic and so the report before the Committee only covered 9 months of information. A total of 1,587 stage 1 complaints had been received in this period of which 77% had been responded to within the required 10 days. Some 68% of stage 2 complaints had been responded to within the target of 25 days.

It was accepted that the Council's overall performance on dealing with complaints had decreased slightly due to the effect of the pandemic.

There had been 10 cases from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman that been found as maladministration as well as 9 cases from the Housing Ombudsman, two of which had been found to constitute significant maladministration. These figures were similar to those for previous years. The cost implications of the maladministration cases ranged from £150 - £950 and covered areas such as housing, adult social care and traffic & parking.

It was suggested that the report should break down complaints received by the service the complaints were related to. Officers confirmed this would be fed back to service heads and it would be tried to present the data in this way. Perhaps the reason for and learning from complaints could also be included in the report.

Complaints due to the failure of an external agency were often related to parts of the waste management contract over which the Council had no direct control.

The Adult Social Care complaints report would be brought to Individuals OSSC in the autumn and then to Adjudication and Review. Refunds of charges to complainants would be passed on to the relevant agency, if this was appropriate to the complaint. It was pointed out however that the Ombudsman considered that the Council retained overall responsibility for the failure of a contractor. Market management and quality assurance undertaken by the Council was therefore important.

Details of sanctions used in Housing and Neighbourhoods in the event of a failure of a contractor could be provided.

The Committee noted the report.

Chairman