

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET - 5th DECEMBER 2023

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK POLICY

**REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AND
CORPORATE POLICY MANAGER**

**LEAD CABINET MEMBER – DAVID WILLIAMS, DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND
ESTATE MANAGEMENT**

PART A – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This report presents an updated Customer Feedback Policy (appendix 1) to Cabinet for approval. Alongside this policy, a new procedure is being introduced for the management of customer complaints, comments and compliments, underpinned by a new on-line system which will improve the management of these processes. The management of these processes through the online system will also enable regular reporting and data analysis to inform service changes.

2. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

POLICY/COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Council Plan objectives?	
	Yes	Customer feedback relates to all of the Council Plan priorities and the proposed changes are facilitated by making better use of the technology now available to us through recent investments.
	Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) been completed?	
	Yes	
	Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been completed?	
Yes		
SCRUTINY POWERS APPLICABLE	Yes	The Constitution and associated protocol provides that front line Councillors, the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer will have five clear working days following dispatch of a notification of a proposed decision in which to call in for scrutiny, decisions proposed by the Cabinet or its members. In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and associated protocol, any two or more members wishing to request that this proposed decision should be called in for scrutiny should do so by giving notice to the Director Legal & Governance either by e-mail or in writing before the end of the fifth day specifying the reason or reasons therefore. The Director Legal &

		Governance will then call in the proposed decision and arrange for it to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee/relevant Scrutiny Panel. A copy of such notice must also be sent to me either by email or in writing by the end of the fifth day. This proposed decision will be confirmed and implemented or, where appropriate, referred to the Council for consideration at its next meeting, on or after the date to be notified upon circulation of the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet, unless called in for scrutiny by that date.
KEY DECISION	No	
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE		
FINANCIAL IMPACT	No	Costs are within the broader programme of system improvements.
LEGAL ISSUES	No	The Policy incorporates provisions for complaint investigations which can potentially be escalated by customers to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. Equality data collection is being introduced in line with our Public Sector Equality Duty.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES including climate impacts and health impacts if applicable	None	
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	None

PART B – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

3. INFORMATION

3.1 The current Customer Feedback Policy was introduced in April 2014. While most of the policy remains unchanged, the significant proposed updates include:

- A new online dedicated form being made available on the Council website for people to make complaints and submit comments and compliments. This form is linked to a Verint based system to manage these interactions.
- People choosing to use this method to provide feedback will be asked to voluntarily complete equality profile questions to improve insight into this important aspect of customer interaction. Previously, equality data was

collected in the occasional surveys of people who had made complaints. Collecting this information at the start of interactions is recommended as a key improvement.

- All other channels – including telephone, in-person and written interactions (email, social media direct messaging and letters) are still available to customers but will all be inputted to the new system for recording interactions, sharing comments and compliments and investigating and responding to complaints.
- It is recommended that complaints must normally be submitted within three months of the matter or incident being complained about. This had previously been 12 months. Often, data retention requirements can result in data on interactions being deleted well before the current 12 month limit and no longer available for some investigations. As shorter time limit is consistent with practice elsewhere.

3.2 The review has been undertaken alongside the development of a new procedure for managing complaints, comments and compliments which is supported by a new system based on the Verint Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, which is being rolled out across many service areas in the Council.

3.3 The Verint CRM will enable improvements to the management and recording of customer interactions. In particular, it will improve the administration of complaints handling and other feedback. The management of these processes through the online system will also enable regular reporting and data analysis to inform service changes. The Verint CRM platform is also being used in the management of other services, such as garden waste accounts and Freedom of Information requests and will be rolled out in many other service areas.

4. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 Equality Impact (appendix 2) and Data Protection (appendix 3) Assessments are attached.

5. PREVIOUS MINUTES

5.1 The current Policy was adopted by Council on 1st April 2014.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 The proposed Customer Feedback Policy is attached as appendix 1 to this report.

7. RECOMMENDATION

7.1 That Cabinet approve the Customer Feedback Policy.

Report prepared by: Kevin Hubery – Corporate Policy Manager