

THURSDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2017

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ASSETS AND FINANCE**MANAGING UNREASONABLE CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR POLICY****PURPOSE**

To update Cabinet in relation to the introduction of a new policy designed to effectively manage unreasonable customer behaviour.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet endorse and approve the new Managing Unreasonable Customer Behaviour policy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is evident that customer's behaviour towards the Council, elected members and officers is changing. The majority of customers who interact with the Council do so courteously, with dignity and respect. However, there are a small number of customers whose behaviour towards the Council is proving difficult to manage and in some cases customers have –

- Demanded an excessive amount of officers time, preventing those officers from carrying out their duties.
- Challenged the way the Council disseminates information regarding decisions it has made.
- Not adhered to the behaviour and access contracts put in place and in some cases openly flouted them.
- Covertly and openly recorded their interactions with officers without permission to do so.
- Questioned and challenged officers' capability, and not accepted a professional viewpoint of their report/request for service.
- Failed to respect the Council's policies and officers.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Training will be delivered to all staff and elected members in relation to this policy, however it is expected that costs can be met within existing budgets.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

Safe systems of work need to be in place to further comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act. This policy provides staff with additional assurance and customers with clear guidance of process.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Council's demand management model encourages an intelligence led organisation to define strategy, policy and process.

Following this model, the intelligence gathered in relation to the Harrassment, Assaults and Threat (HAT) policy and Tell Us policy identified a gap in the management of customers' behaviours. The Tell Us policy advises how to deal with those customers who are vexatious when making a complaint and the HAT policy deals with those customers who harass, assault or threaten officers. When you take into consideration that customers' behaviour is changing in relation to service requests and delivery, this gap needs to be addressed and managed in order to keep the Council's staff, its representatives and elected members safe.

Historically, customers whose behaviour has caused concern to officers or inhibited the ability for the Council to deliver a service have been managed under the Tell Us Policy and/or HAT policy. Unfortunately, this is no longer appropriate.

Every person has the right to have his or her concerns heard and considered, and to request a service from the Council. To that end, and, to ensure a fair and transparent approach for each member of the public the Council has adopted the 'Tell Us policy'.

When the actions of a person are considered by the Council to be unacceptable then action in the interest of the public and of the Council is required to be taken. As such, work generated and contact made from a customer affects the ability to respond to that contact and deliver the service.

In this instance customers are deemed to be persistent and unreasonable with their comments, requests and with the demand placed on the Council.

REPORT AUTHOR

Tracey Tudor

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Managing Unreasonable Customer Behaviour Policy.

Appendix 2 Community Impact Assessment