

## **FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

**DATE:** WEDNESDAY, 24 APRIL 2013

**REPORT BY:** DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE MANAGER

**SUBJECT:** STANDARDS FOR RESPONSES TO COMMUNICATIONS

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.01 To report to the Committee on corporate service standards for responses to communications.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

- 2.01 At its meeting on 24 October 2012 the Committee considered a report from the Democracy and Governance Manager on updating parts of the Constitution. During consideration of Article 3 of the Constitution concerning citizens' rights, Councillor Bithell asked whether response times to customer queries should be included. In response the Democracy and Governance Manager said that the section dealt with legal rights but if the Committee wished the Constitution could be expanded to include procedures for corporate communication. Councillor Bithell asked for this to be investigated further and it was resolved that a report be brought to a future meeting on this.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.01 The Council currently has the Customer Care Policy Statement and Standards shown in Appendix 1. These are currently the subject of an ongoing review with a target date for completion of 30 June. This review is being carried out by the Customer Services Team Leader and will include consultation with Members.
- 3.02 As can be seen, the policy statement and standards go beyond merely requiring written communications to be responded to within 10 working days.
- 3.03 It is not normal for a constitution which is a legal document dealing with legal rights to include policy statements or standards. Whilst the Council will use its best endeavours to comply with its policy statements and standards, such documents do not create legal rights or place legal duties on the Council. If the Constitution Committee was minded to include this particular policy statement it would set a precedent for other policy statements being included in the

Constitution which is currently a very lengthy document.

**4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.01 To not include the Customer Care Policy Statement and Standards in the Council's Constitution.

**5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.01 None

**6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

- 6.01 None

**7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- 7.01 None

**8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 8.01 None

**9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.01 None

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

- 10.01 The current review of the Customer Care Policy Statement and Standards will include consultation with Members.

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

- 11.01 None

**12.00 APPENDICES**

- 12.01 Appendix 1 - Customer Care Policy Statement and Standards

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985  
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

As referred to in the report.

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