

**Standards Committee 3 November 2014**

**Minute:**

The Chief Officer (Governance) introduced the report on the Annual Letter of the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales.

He explained that the number of complaints had reduced slightly and the figure for Flintshire County Council was now below the Welsh average. A summary of cases for a range of subject areas considered by the Ombudsman were reported and the Chief Officer (Governance) said that it was important to listen to, and learn from, the comments of the Ombudsman. He advised that three complaints had been made under the Local Resolution Procedure and had been resolved by the Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer.

Councillor Hilary McGuill highlighted the complaint about unauthorised development and sought clarification of the process put in place to update the complainant about the progress being made with the enforcement action. Robert Dewey also referred to the complaint about noise & other nuisance issues which included a recommendation from the Ombudsman that the complainant be kept up to date with progress in addressing the noise issue.

Councillor Arnold Woolley raised concern that updates may not be provided to complainants once an initial response to the complaint had been issued. Robert Dewey queried whether a quicker response time was in place for complaints by email rather than by letter and suggested that updates should be provided to complainants every 28 days until a case was completed and closed. The Chief Officer (Governance) advised that the Customer Services Policy contained details of response times to complaints by email but did not include information on when updates should be provided to complainants of progress made.

In response to a query from the Chairman, the Democracy and Governance Manager suggested that the relevant Chief Officer be asked about the procedures put in place following the two complaints on unauthorised development and noise & other nuisance issues. He added that the response could be reported back to the next meeting of the Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the report and the reduction in the number of complaints be noted;
- (b) That congratulations be passed on about the progress made in dealing with complaints; and
- (c) Report back the findings on the procedures put in place following the two complaints on unauthorised development and noise & other nuisance issues to the next meeting of the Standards Committee.