

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Policy and Performance Portfolio Holder

26 January 2012

**AUTHOR:** Executive Director, Corporate Services

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### COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY LEARNING FROM FEEDBACK

#### **Purpose**

1. To enable the portfolio holder to agree a response to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee regarding its recommendations of 6 September and 3 November 2011.
2. This is not a Key Decision.

#### **Recommendations**

3. It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder send the Scrutiny and Overview Committee the responses at paragraphs 10 and 11 of this report, subject to any changes agreed at this meeting.

#### **Reasons for Recommendations**

4. The recommendations aim to make constructive use of input supplied by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee in the most efficient way.

#### **Background**

5. On 6 September 2011 the Scrutiny and Overview Committee considered the draft Compliments, Comments and Complaints (CCC) policy and made several suggestions and recommendations for improving it. Details can be seen in the minutes which are at <http://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=417&MIId=5455&Ver=4>.
6. The Committee also set up a small task and finish group to conduct a related review, looking at Learning from Feedback. This group's report was presented to the Portfolio Holder at the Scrutiny and Overview Committee meeting of 3 November 2011. It can be viewed at <http://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=417&MIId=5456> item 28.
7. The suggestions for improving the CCC policy were discussed at the Portfolio Holder's meeting of 13 October 2011 and the Portfolio Holder asked for it to be revised and re-presented to this meeting.

#### **Considerations**

8. To collate and effect the many suggestions and amendments received from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, Portfolio Holder and others would take a

substantial commitment of officer time. Some of the accepted suggestions would have an extensive impact, such as changing the whole document to address Customer Feedback, rather than the compliments, comments and complaints. This may lead to slippage on the Customer Experience Strategy and other projects.

9. Also, within months, this policy will be subsumed within the Customer Experience Strategy and associated work programme; to develop, implement and embed a customer charter including Council commitments, based on customer, member and officer consultation due for publication in June 2012 and will then become defunct.
10. In light of these two points, the Portfolio Holder is recommended to respond to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee saying that no further work will be done on the CCC policy. However, its suggestions will be taken forward to inform the new overarching Customer Experience Strategy.
11. With regard to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee's second piece of work, Learning from Feedback, the Portfolio Holder is recommended to endorse the following responses:

Recommendation of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee	Recommended response
1: Wherever possible the Council should invite, address and learn from "customer feedback", rather than "compliments, comments and complaints".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This recommendation was accepted at the Portfolio Holder's meeting of 13 October 2011 and the term is already being used.</li> </ul>
2: Member training and induction should include guidance about the timely sharing of customer feedback with the relevant corporate manager or customer experience coordinator.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The member training and induction programme for 2012-13 includes brief presentations by all service areas. Officers will be asked to apply an extra focus on the value of sharing all types of feedback with service managers and officers.</li> </ul>
3: Officers should be made aware of the value of asking members about customers' views and experiences regarding the services they provide.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The staff induction programme includes a presentation from customer &amp; business services. Officers will be asked to ensure the value of seeking input and feedback from members is promoted and encouraged.</li> <li>• The value of seeking input and feedback from members will feature in the new customer experience strategy scheduled for development in 2012.</li> </ul>
4: EMT should build on current good practice to develop a range of new methods across the Council for collecting feedback from internal and external customers and partners using a 'whole customer' approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The portfolio holder has endorsed this recommendation and asked EMT to keep him informed of progress.</li> <li>• Additionally, as part of the contact centre project the customer and business services team is already</li> </ul>

Recommendation of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee	Recommended response
	<p>exploring better ways to gather feedback via the website and other channels such as Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This team will also seek the views of customers through a Council wide programme of customer journey mapping.</li> <li>• A review of online communities, pressure groups, blogs, forums and other online dialogue has been undertaken by Public-i. The Council is engaging with these online communities to establish a relationship and explore further opportunities for consultation.</li> <li>• The Council is developing an online consultation panel.</li> <li>• An annual plan for corporate consultation is being drawn together. This will coordinate the Council's consultation activity and promote the sharing of feedback. This will be supported by staff training.</li> <li>• A review of the reception customer satisfaction and customer insight surveys will be completed by March 2012.</li> </ul>
<p>5: EMT should develop a range of ways to systematically communicate the outcomes resulting from feedback - "you said, we did" – to customers, staff and partners individually and collectively. This should include a role for Members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The portfolio holder has endorsed this recommendation and asked EMT to keep him informed of progress.</li> <li>• Additionally, a 'you said, we did' presentation will be made a permanent feature within the reception area, the website and the South Cambs magazine.</li> </ul>
<p>6: EMT should ensure that their meeting agendas regularly include "Learning from Feedback" and that the lessons are cascaded back to service teams.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The portfolio holder has endorsed this recommendation and asked EMT to keep him informed of progress.</li> </ul>
<p>7: Managers need to build on current good practice to ensure a regular team-based approach across the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The portfolio holder has endorsed this recommendation and asked to be kept informed of progress.</li> </ul>

Recommendation of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee	Recommended response
council to learning from customer feedback and using it to design and improve services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The leadership programme will also encourage managers to actively promote an environment where feedback is valued and used to inform service design.</li> </ul>

### Options

12. The Portfolio Holder could ask that the CCC policy be revised and re-presented but this would run the risks outlined at paragraphs 8 and 9 above.
13. No options are offered regarding the draft responses at paragraph 11 above but these may be amended through discussion at this meeting.

### Implications

14.	Financial	Actions recommended in this report would be achieved within existing resources.
	Legal	None.
	Staffing	Actions recommended in this report would be achieved within existing resources.
	Risk Management	If recommendations in this report are not implemented, there is a risk of slippage on the Customer Experience Strategy and other projects.
	Equality and Diversity	No adverse impacts identified.
	Equality Impact Assessment completed	A new EqIA would be needed if the CCC policy is kept and updated. The new overarching customer experience strategy will have a full EqIA.
	Climate Change	None

### Consultation

15. As detailed in the report.

### Consultation with Children and Young People

16. Young people will be involved in developing the customer experience strategy.

### **Effect on Strategic Aims**

17. Improvements to the Council's efficient use of information gained via customer feedback will help to meet the Council's commitment to being a listening council, providing first class services accessible to all.

### **Conclusions**

18. It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder send the Scrutiny and Overview Committee the responses as at paragraphs 10 and 11 of this report, subject to any changes agreed at this meeting.

### **Background Papers**

SCDC Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy as at  
<http://scams.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s57063/Complaints%20process.pdf>

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