

Title: Information Items

Portfolio	All
Ward(s) Affected:	n/a

Purpose

To receive an ‘exception’ report on areas within the Committee’s remit where fluctuations are limited.

Background

1. At the end of the previous municipal year and recognising that a number of statutory and other reports to the Committee reflected little change year-on-year, Members agreed to have an annual report, covering a number of areas which met this criterion, reporting on exceptions or any significant areas of change only.
2. In order to ensure that the Committee is aware of change in key areas, the following summary reports have been submitted:
 - 2.1 Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) - During the municipal year 2016/2017 there were no authorisations, reviews or renewals under RIPA for the carrying out of direct surveillance;

2.2 Equalities

(i) Internal Equalities and Diversity

Disability

Since January 2015, Surrey Heath Borough Council has been awarded the ‘Two Ticks - Positive About Disability’ scheme accreditation by Jobcentre Plus. This scheme has since changed and after a migration process the Council is now on Level 2 – as a Disability Confident Employer.

As an accredited organisation, the Council is required to implement and annually review practices that meet the scheme’s 5 commitments in relation to recruitment, employment, retention and career development of people with a disability. The accreditation has been a key achievement that demonstrates, both internally and externally, the Council’s commitment to driving a positive culture shift among our staff and the local community that we support.

(ii) External

The Surrey Heath Faith Forum – Update June 2017

The Faith Forum is a local group initiated by the Council that consists of (up to 30) members from the diverse range of faith groups that operate and are based within Surrey Heath. It meets quarterly and in February it agreed that for 2017 an action plan would focus upon three main events these being:

a) Surrey Heath Museum Exhibition - Take 10

20th May – 2nd September 2017

Gillian Barnes-Riding invited members to participate within this museum display which features the narrative and includes the faith, language, heritage, culture and diversity available now to see.

b) Faith Safari Supper

The Faith Forum has joined together for the past 3 years to host an Inter Faith Lunch, this year members expressed a wish to hosting something different with the aim to galvanise support from a wider number of the faith groups that practise locally. The idea of a faith safari supper was suggested by Rev. Bruce Nicole and agreed by all.

A provisional date of Thursday 28th September at 7pm has been set and this will be linked to the International Peace Day on the 21st September.

c) School Project

Revd Susan Bolan is leading this project based upon offering a service to local schools whereby a discussion/presentation is made available focussing upon our British Values which are: democracy; individual liberty; the rule of law; mutual respect; tolerance of those with different faiths and belief, with each being defined and placed in a school context through the use of examples.

Susan discussed and started to deliver at Lakeside schools with other group members from May 2017.

The collective group are also very keen to offer a home to a Syrian Refugee Family and an information event is being hosted at The Camberley Mosque on Saturday 8th July to promote how the community can assist to enable this to happen.

From the recent number terrorist attacks this has galvanised the group to find a collective voice and host a number of Peace Vigils and issue their statement of peace. Please see photo and statement from the last vigil which took place on Saturday 10th June.

2.3 Complaints

In 2016/17, 37 formal complaints were received by the Council as either Stage 2 or Stage 3 complaints made in accordance with the Councils Complaints Policy.

The table below details the complaints received each quarter, with the numbers for the previous year included as a comparison:

	2015/16	2016/17
Total for Quarter 1 (April – June)	7	8
Total for Quarter 2 (July – September)	8	6
Total for Quarter 3 (October to December)	5	17
Total for Quarter 4 (January – March)	12	6
Total for year	32	37

The complaints were recorded against the following Council service areas.

Number of complaints received	2015/16	2016/17
Business	1	4
Community	5	7
Finance	8	10
Regulatory	17	16
Corporate	1	0

Of the 37 complaints received in 2016/17, 9 were dealt with by the Chief Executive at Stage 3.

For comparison, the table below details the Stage 3 complaints received in 2015/16 and 2016/17.

Service	2015/16	2016/17
Regulatory	4	3
Finance	2	4
Community	1	2

Of the 37 complaints received:

- All were acknowledged within 2 days.
- 24 were resolved within 10 days.
- 6 complaints took longer than 10 days to investigate, however the customers were made aware of the reason for delay.
- 7 complaints exceeded the 10 day target. Of these, 5 were in the third quarter when a higher number of total complaints were received. Although by their nature complaints can be complicated, with significant work undertaken to resolve them, customers should be kept informed if the complaint will take longer than 10 days. This is now being addressed.

Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) complaints

The Council is currently awaiting the 2016/17 Annual Review letter from the LGO which details the number of complaints and enquiries received and the decisions made about the Council by the LGO. This may be available to table at the meeting or will be reported to the next meeting of the Committee in September.

3. The Committee is asked to note this report and the specific areas addressed therein.

Annexes: Nil

Background Papers: Nil

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