

External Complaints against HEFCW Annual Report

Disclosable

Meeting
04/07/08

Agenda Item
17

Reference No
HEFCW/08/48

1 Issue

This paper provides for information an annual report of complaints received by HEFCW against the Council itself or its officers for the financial year 2007-08.

2 Corporate Planning Implications

HEFCW shall, under its '*Corporate Governance and Compliance Arrangements*' Corporate Strategy to 2010 and Corporate Plan and Operational Plan 2006-07 to 2008-09 deal with complaints received against the Council itself.

3 Recommendation

The Committee is invited to:

- i. Note the complaint received against the Council in 2007-08 and actions taken.

4 Timing for decisions

The report is received by the Council at the end of each financial year.

5 Council members' interests

No conflicts of interests have been declared in advance of the meeting.

6 Further information

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7 Background

7.1 HEFCW's External Complaints Procedure (attached Annex A)

7.2 HEFCW's External Complaints Procedure is concerned with claims of impropriety, irregularity, misconduct, poor performance or ineffectiveness by HEFCW officers.

7.3 Complaints are received by the member of staff who dealt with the complainant, or their line manager. If the complaint remains unresolved, the complainant will contact the Clerk to the Council. A detailed response and an explanation will normally be made within 15 working days. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, they can then write to the Chief Executive and ask for the complaint and response to be reviewed. If the complainant is not satisfied with the Chief Executive's response, they can request for their complaint to be considered by the Council's Complaints Panel, consisting of three members: two external members drawn from a pool of experienced figures independent of the Council, and one Council member chairing the Panel. Individuals who remain dissatisfied with the Council's decision may refer their complaint to the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales.

7.4 There was one complaint received this year which was responded to by the member of staff dealing with the matter and subsequently by their Head of Team. The complainant was invited to write to the Chief Executive if they were not satisfied with the response but no further correspondence has been received.

8 Financial implications

8.1 There are no financial implications for the Council arising from this paper.

9 Communications implications

9.1 There are no communications implications for the Council arising from this paper. A copy of the complaints procedure is available from the HEFCW website at: http://194.81.48.132/About_Us/4040.htm

9.2 The procedure has recently been updated to reflect changes in roles post Organisational Design and will undergo a review and Equality Impact Assessment in 2008.

10 Diversity and Equal Opportunities implications

10.1 This paper has no implications for age, disability, gender, race, religious belief, sexual orientation or the Welsh language.

11 Risk Assessment

11.1 It is possible that a complaint would be mishandled by the Council.

RISK	ACTION TO ADDRESS RISK
Complaints not managed in accordance with the procedures	Periodic reminders to staff of complaints procedures