

**Report for: Cabinet**

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Date of Meeting:	01 April 2025
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Complaints and Feedback Policy</b>
Cabinet Member:	Cllr J Wright, Service Delivery & Continuous Improvement
Responsible Officer:	Lisa Lewis, Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement
Exempt:	N/A
Wards Affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1

**Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)**

To consider a recommendation from Scrutiny on delegation of authority to alter the Complaints and Feedback Policy.

**Recommendation(s):**

- 1. Scrutiny recommend to Cabinet that delegated authority be given to the Head of Digital Transformation and Customer Engagement to make minor legislative changes to the Complaints and Feedback Policy.**
- 2. That the Scrutiny recommendation to Cabinet be widened to give delegated authority to the Head of Digital Transformation and Customer Engagement to make changes to the Complaints and Feedback Policy in line with legislation and best practice.**

**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Complaints and Feedback policy was last reviewed in 2024, Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The policy sets out the standards and response timescales that customers can expect when providing feedback to the authority. It also provides standards for staff in dealing with complaints and feedback received.

1.3 As a result of discussions at Scrutiny on the Annual Complaints report and Freedom of Information processing at committees 25 November and 16 December respectively, Scrutiny have recommended delegating authority to the Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement to amend the Complaints and Feedback policy.

## **2.0 Summary of Changes**

2.1 Scrutiny committee wished for the following sentence to be removed from the policy to avoid confusion for officers and the public about the complaints and Freedom of Information (FOI) policies and processing.

2.2 The following sentence from page 7 of the current policy will be removed. "The term complaint in this guidance also covers requests made under access to information law such as the Freedom on Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018."

2.3 Given that the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGCSO) is embedding regulatory practice on a new code of complaints, it seems prudent to delegate authority to the Head of Digital Transformation and Customer Engagement to make any necessary changes to the policy on legislative, regulatory or best practice grounds to ensure that the policy remains current.

## **3.0 Conclusion**

The proposed changes to the Complaints and Feedback policy aim to clarify the distinctions between complaints and Freedom of Information requests, ensuring that both staff and the public have a clear understanding of the processes involved. By delegating authority to the Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement, the policy can be promptly updated to reflect any legislative, regulatory, or best practice changes, maintaining its relevance and effectiveness. These updates will help enhance the overall customer experience and ensure that the authority continues to meet high standards in handling complaints and feedback.

**Financial Implications** - Failure to deal with service failures and complaints promptly and appropriately may result in compensation being due to the complainant.

**Legal Implications** - Failure to deal with service failures and complaints promptly and appropriately as identified in our policies may have legal implications.

**Risk Assessment** – Failure to adopt and apply the new code may result in LGSCO action and reputational damage.

**Impact on Climate Change** - There is no impact or opportunity for improvement/adaptation in conjunction with MDDC Climate Action Plan.

**Equalities Impact Assessment** - Complaints are received in a variety of ways. MDDC ensures that there is equality of opportunity for all customers. In addition, and where there is a need, staff will assist in the recording of complaints. There is also an interpretation service available through Language Line.

**Relationship to Corporate Plan** - The Complaints and Feedback policy underpins the core values of MDDC relating to People and Performance and outlines the process to measure our success with service delivery.

### **Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks**

**Statutory Officer:** Andrew Jarrett  
Agree by or on behalf of the Section 151  
**Date:** 18.03.25

**Statutory Officer:** Maria De Leiburne  
Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer  
**Date:** 18.03.25

**Chief Officer:** Stephen Walford  
Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive  
**Date:** 18.03.25

**Performance and risk:** Steve Carr  
Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager  
**Date:** 26 February 2025

**Cabinet member notified:** yes

**Report: Exclusion of the press and public from this item of business on the published agenda on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. (Yes/No)**

**Appendix: Exclusion of the press and public from this item of business on the published agenda on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. (Yes/No)**

#### **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Lisa Lewis, Head of Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement  
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**Background papers:**