

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE
17 JUNE 2008

EXETER CITY COUNCIL VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS POLICY AND GUIDANCE

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for a policy on dealing with vexatious complaints from customers.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Vexatious complaints are those where the customer persists unreasonably with their complaint or corresponds with the Council in such a way as to make it difficult for staff to do their work and provide a service to others. Although the Council experiences very few vexatious complaints when they occur they can make disproportionate demands on staff time.
- 2.2 Each vexatious complaint is currently dealt with on an individual basis by the director responsible for the service that is the subject of the complaint. However it is recognised that it would be helpful for the public as well as staff, if there were guidance available to make the procedure clearer.
- 2.3 The attached policy statement and guidance note has been drafted with regard to best practice from other councils and guidance from the Local Government Ombudsman. It includes an option to restrict contact with a customer when all other avenues in the complaints process have been exhausted and the level and nature of correspondence is having an impact on staff ability to do their work.
- 2.4 The final approved policy and guidance will be placed on the Council's web pages with the Corporate Complaints information.

3 RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the Executive support and approve the corporate Vexatious Complaints Policy

ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CHIEF EXECUTIVE SUPPORT UNIT

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

4 June 2008