

## **Business Strategy and Public Protection Savings Targets 2015-2016**

A savings target of 90k is required from the Business Strategy and Public Protection Division for 2015-2016.

### **Proposed Strategies 2015-2016**

(1) It is proposed to disband the existing Complaints and Representations Unit and relocate the revised duties within the Directorate Support Office, **Savings Target £30k.**

### **Rationale**

The Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulation 2014 and the Representation Procedures (Wales) Regulation 2014 came into effect on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2014. A key implication flowing from the implementation of the regulations on complaints is the need for the authority to strengthen the way in which it manages the process of investigating and responding to complainants within required timescales and of learning and applying any lessons that are identified.

The Director of Social Services Health and Housing enlisted the support of an external consultant to review existing arrangements and make recommendations for future delivery of the service in light of implementation of the revised Regulations 2014.

Consultation was held with senior staff and stakeholders from both within the Directorate and across the wider Council.

Consultation findings concluded that arrangements should be differentiated as follows:-

**The Directorate Support Office** will be responsible for administering and supporting the complaints system by applying the procedures laid down by the regulations promptly and efficiently.

**The Individual Service Areas** will be responsible for ownership of the process and investigation of complaints at Stage 1, bringing them to resolution or outcome and learning and applying the practice, procedural and policy implications.

This constitutes an internal reconfiguration of how complaints and representations are handled within the Directorate and clearly separates the administrative and investigative functions at Stage 1 of the Complaints process.

The current Complaints and Representation Unit comprises of a Governance Compliance Officer and a Complaints Assistant

The Governance Compliance Officer is due to retire at the end of March 2015. It is therefore proposed to delete the existing Complaints Assistant post and redistribute these duties and responsibilities within the Directorate Support Office.

Overall responsibility for the operation and effectiveness of the complaints process remains with the Director of Social Services, Health and Housing. The regulations require, however, that the Council designates a Senior Officer to be responsible for ensuring compliance with the complaints procedure made by it under those regulations. It is proposed that Angela Thomas, Head of Business Strategy and Public Protection, should be designated.

The regulations also require that the Council appoints a Complaints Officer to manage the procedures for handling and considering

complaints. It is proposed that the current Governance Compliance Officer, Colin Evans, is appointed to this role for the time being

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

An Equality Impact screening exercise has been completed. The proposed strategy is designed solely to render more fulfilling of the Council's statutory obligations with regards to complaints and representations. This will be achieved through changes to internal structure, and no change is proposed to the manner in which complaints or representations may be made, nor any restriction upon access by any person, whether or not within a group sharing a protected characteristic. Accordingly, there is no requirement to undertake a full EIA.

(2) It is proposed to expand the Council's Foundation apprentice scheme across the wider Business Strategy and Public Protection Division. **Savings Target £60k.**

### **Rationale**

The Business Strategy and Public Protection Savings strategy 2013-2014, included a proposal to introduce Foundation apprentices into the workplace. The scheme has proved an overriding success with eight of the eleven young people employed via this scheme having secured further employment within the Council.

There has been significant interest from within the Business Strategy and Public Protection Division in the Council's enhanced ER/VR scheme. In order to facilitate/support staff to leave the Council by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, it is proposed to restructure back office functions and introduce a new cohort of foundation apprentices. All changes

will be managed in accordance with the Council's Management of Change in Partnership Policy.