

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Item No. 4

MEETING: GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE 29 JULY 2022

SUBJECT: COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER/CHIEF EXECUTIVE (THE CLERK
TO THE AUTHORITY) THE FINANCE DIRECTOR AND THE PERSONNEL
ADVISOR TO THE AUTHORITY**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Governance Committee with an overview of the compliments and complaints received by Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.
- 1.2 During 2021/22, 41 compliments and 27 complaints were received, the volume of both are minor in comparison to the 63,848 'official' interactions recorded with the public for this period. The attached report provides an overview of the compliments and complaints received.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Service is committed to providing the highest quality of service to the communities of Tyne and Wear and recognises feedback as an essential component of continuous improvement. Feedback offers critical reflection of performance against standards and may describe activities undertaken to an exceptional standard or identify areas for improvement.
- 2.2 Whilst the Service strives for operational excellence, there may be occasions when it does not deliver to the standards expected and welcomes views about performance, allowing the opportunity to investigate and correct circumstances of underperformance and learn from the outcomes in order to improve the quality of service provided.

3 COMPLIMENTS

- 3.1 The recording and dissemination of compliments provides an opportunity for the Service to hear about the experiences of service users and the views of the public.
- 3.2 During 2021/22, the number of compliments increased by 48%, rising from 41 in 2020/21 to 86. This is due to increased staff awareness of the reporting process through internal promotional activities such as the corporate governance bulletin, compliments and complaints intranet page, news articles and the designated email address.

- 3.3 The compliments received illustrate the breadth of the work undertaken by staff and details their contribution to the Covid-19 response, prevention activities, work with the third sector, emergency response and good deeds undertaken by staff both on and off duty. Further analysis of these compliments is presented in section 3 of the main report.

4 COMPLAINTS

- 4.1 The complaints process allows for expressions of dissatisfaction to be reported and investigated identifying any instances of substandard performance or conduct, the analysis of which can support potential areas for improvement.
- 4.2 Of the 27 complaints received for 2021/22, 35% (7) were upheld following investigation, which is a reduction of 13% on 2020/21. The highest number of complaints received (14) were related to on duty staff conduct, although only two of these (14%) were upheld and three party upheld (21%).
- 4.3 Further analysis of the complaints received is offered in sections 4 -10 of the attached report, including a breakdown by department, cause and outcome.
- 4.4 In addition to the effective complaint handling training provided by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) to the Senior Leadership Team in May 2021, a further two training sessions have been undertaken in March 2022 for Station Manager or corporate equivalent level. In total, 52 staff have been trained by the LGO in effective complaint handling.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 There are no risks associated in respect of this report.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no financial implications in respect of this report.

7 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equality and fairness implications in respect of this report.

8 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members are recommended to:
- a) Endorse the contents of this report.
 - b) Receive further reports as appropriate.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None