

## DRAFT

### Protocol for elected Members to deal with “anonymous correspondence” received from individuals.

1. This protocol sets out how elected Members will respond to individuals who:
  - submit ‘anonymous’ correspondence to elected Members of Rhondda Cynon Taf, refusing to reveal their identity, and
  - whose correspondence may be interpreted as intimidating, threatening or unreasonably persistent.
2. This protocol should be read in conjunction with the Councils Customer Feedback Scheme Complaints procedure and the Unreasonably Persistent Customer policy. It adds to these documents and does not detract from them.
3. The following approach outlines a recommended course of action to be followed by elected Members who receive “anonymous” correspondence from individuals.
  - Respond to the individual requesting that they make themselves known, explaining that whilst it is accepted that they may not wish to meet face to face or speak via telephone to discuss their concerns, that it is common courtesy to reveal their identity to help identify individuals’ ‘legitimate’ concerns, as opposed to being of no substance, which may result in excessive time being taken up to the disadvantage of other constituency or Council business.
4. Should the individual respond and **agree** to reveal their identity, Members will deal with and respond to the individual’s concerns.
5. Should the individual respond and **refuse** to reveal their identity, Members will:
  - i) Bring this to the attention of the Monitoring Officer for advice and recording purposes.
  - ii) Respond to the individual confirming that their anonymous correspondence will not be dealt with for the reasons conveyed previously, stating that any further anonymous contact received will just be placed on file.

- iii) Forward a copy to the relevant Service Manager for information (if the anonymous correspondence is service specific) together with a copy of the elected Member response, so that a consistent approach can be taken should the service receive the same anonymous contact direct.
6. If the level or nature of follow up correspondence received escalates and/or becomes offensive, intimidating, or disrupts Council and/or constituency business, this will invoke the Council's Unreasonably Persistent Customer policy, whereby restricted contact arrangements or complete termination of contact with the individual may be determined.
  7. Should anonymous correspondence received be so extreme that it threatens the safety of elected Members the matter may be referred to the Police for investigation without warning of this action to the individual.