



Housing Landlord Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Governing Body Response

Place Committee Response 17 July 2024

The Place Committee met on 17 July 2024 to consider amongst other items the Housing Landlord Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement report.

[Agenda for Place Committee on Wednesday 17 July 2024, 7:30 pm](#)

Annual Housing Landlord Complaints Report Recommendation

To approve the Housing Landlord Complaints Self Assessment 2023/24 and to note other relevant reports as required by the Housing Ombudsman Service.

The report alongside other documents were considered and the Decision Notice from the Committee is as follows:-

2. Annual Housing Landlord Complaints Report

RESOLVED that:

1. the Housing Landlord Complaints Self Assessment 2023/24 at Annex 1 of the report be approved; and
 2. the Annual Housing Complaints Performance and Service Improvement report 2023/24 at Annex 2 of the report be approved.
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Councillor Emily Davey Portfolio Holder for Housing - Member Responsible for Complaints (Housing)

I was happy to introduce this item to Committee members as Co-Chair and Member Responsible for Complaints. I welcome the changes to complaint handling which have been made as a result of the Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code, and it becoming statutory. These changes build on our own commitments to transparency and learning; giving our residents a clear view of service performance and the Council an opportunity to use complaints for feedback and improvement of the Housing Landlord service.

The report reinforces what we know to be the primary causes of residents complaints which is the housing repairs service. This is why we placed residents at the heart of the procurement and management of our new repairs contract due to start on 1 October 2024. Complaints information on repairs will be used by the Council as a way of monitoring the new contractor and their performance, and will be reviewed by both the Council and residents so housing is really understood from the resident's point of view.

The debate on the report raised points about performance and recognised that there was an improvement plan in place to drive up performance, as well as the already implemented changes that are starting to have an impact. Members were keen to ensure that although we tend to look at numbers, we must remember that each number relates to a real issue and a real person who has had cause to complain to the Council, therefore we must ensure the planned improvements go ahead at pace.

The descriptions of causes of complaints confirm that a common theme is poor communication between the Council and/ or its contractors and its residents. Therefore, improving communication, especially introducing more proactive communication with residents, has been a key area where the Council has focused on improving and will continue to pay particular attention to.

It has been reassuring to see the resident centred focus attitude reflected in the report which explains the actions that have taken place to improve the way the Council manages and uses complaints to drive service improvement. We have a new procedure for officers that can be accessed at any time which includes advice for responding officers outlining what should be investigated when a complaint is received and a good response guide, closer contact with different teams, new ways of recording and reporting complaints, learning from complaints and a better understanding of the customer journey to identify root causes. This recording will also help the Council identify issues that may disproportionately affect different groups.

I was pleased to see that the Self Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code demonstrates the Council complies with its requirements.

The Committee unanimously voted for approval of the recommendations.