

REPORT TO:	FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 12
DATE OF MEETING:	03 SEPTEMBER 2026	
REPORT FROM:	DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION (s151 OFFICER)	CATEGORY: <i>DELEGATED</i>
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	CATHERINE GRIMLEY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION AND HEAD OF CUSTOMER SERVICES LIZ PAGE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - LAW AND PEOPLE	OPEN
SUBJECT:	HOUSING OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINT HANDLING SELF ASSESSMENT AND REVISED COMPLAINT AND FEEDBACK POLICY	
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM04

1.0 Recommendations

That the Committee-

- 1.1 Approves the Customer Complaint and Feedback Policy at **Appendix 1**
- 1.2 Considers and approves the Complaint Handling Self-Assessment 2026, undertaken against the Revised Policy, for submission to the Housing Ombudsman attached to the report as **Appendix 2**
- 1.3 Considers the comments of the Housing and Community Services Committee on the report entitled Housing Ombudsman and Governing Body Response at **Appendix 3**

2.0 Purpose of the Report

- 2.1 To consider the amendments proposed to the Complaint and Feedback Policy following a review undertaken by the Housing Ombudsman.
- 2.2 To approve the Complaint Handling Self-Assessment 2026, undertaken on the Revised Policy, for submission to the Housing Ombudsman.

- 2.3 To consider the comments of the Housing and Community Services Committee on the report entitled Housing Ombudsman and Governing Body Response which the Housing Ombudsman requires to be published alongside the self-assessment.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Following a review of the Council's Complaint and Feedback Policy by the Housing Ombudsman Service a number of recommendations were made to ensure that the Policy continued to align with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code (The Code).
- 3.2 Whilst the Code does not constitute a formal instruction to landlords, there is a requirement for the Council to carefully consider the Code when developing and updating its Complaints Policy.
- 3.3 The Council's existing Complaints Policy has therefore been reviewed considering the recommendations that have been made by the Housing Ombudsman. The revised Complaints Policy is at **Appendix 1** together with a tracked version to show the changes made.
- 3.4 Should the Council as a Landlord, depart from the Code, the LGSCO has advised that it may make a finding of maladministration if no sufficient explanation has been provided as to why a departure has occurred. Furthermore, a finding of maladministration may also be made where a local authority, without good reason, does not meet the standards in the Code when responding to an individual complaint.
- 3.5 The Council, as a Landlord, is required to provide an annual submission to the Housing Ombudsman to demonstrate its compliance with The Code.
- 3.6 The annual submission includes the following -
- A self-assessment against The Code
 - The annual complaints performance and service improvement report (2025-6)
 - The "governing body's" response to the report
 - The Complaints Policy
- These documents must also be published on the Council's website and must be submitted to the Housing Ombudsman by 30 September annually.
- 3.7 Officers have undertaken a self-assessment of the revised Complaints Policy against The Code and this demonstrated the Council's compliance with The Code. The self-assessment is at **Appendix 2**.
- 3.8 The Council's annual housing complaints performance and service improvement report was considered by the Housing and Community Services Committee on 13 August 2026. The report can be viewed here- and the Committee's comments are appended at **Appendix 3**.

- 3.9 This Committee represents the “governing body” for the purposes of the Housing Ombudsman and is requested to consider and endorse the Housing and Community Services Committee’s comments for the annual submission.

4.0 Financial Implications / s151 comments

- 4.1 None directly arising from this report

5.0 Legal Implications / Monitoring Officer Comments

- 5.1 The Council as Landlord must comply with the Housing Ombudsman’s Statutory Complaint Handling Code from 1 April 2024. The Council must demonstrate compliance at least annually through the annual submission process.
- 5.2 Failure to provide the annual submission may result in the Housing Ombudsman finding failure to comply with the Code. Findings of non-compliance may result in the Ombudsman issuing and publishing a Complaint Handling Failure Notice.

6.0 Council Implications

Employment Implications / Head of Paid Services Comments

- 6.1 None directly arising from this report

Council Plan Implications

- 6.2 None directly arising from this report

Risk Impact

- 6.3 There is a risk if we were to not adopt or follow the Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code. If a matter were to be referred to the Housing Ombudsman, and it was found that we had not adopted or adhered to the Code, there is a risk of greater sanctions being imposed. This may have reputational and potentially financial consequences for the Council.

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

- 6.4 None directly arising from this report

7.0 Community Impact

Consultation

- 7.1 None directly arising from this report

Equality and Diversity Impact

- 7.2 Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any Amended for clarity. Reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any disabilities a resident has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.

Social Value Impact

- 7.3 None directly arising from this report

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.4 None directly arising from this report

8.0 Background Papers

- 8.1 None

9.0 Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 - Complaint and Feedback Policy
- 9.2 Appendix 2 - 2026 Self-assessment
- 9.3 Appendix 3 - Housing and Communities Committee comments