

APPENDIX 6

Policy Section	Suggested Change	Reason for Change
1.3	An individual does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with this Policy.	Amended in response to feedback to give choice to residents.
1.4	The Council must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint . This is set out in appendix A. A service request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.	Updated to two provisions (1.4 and 1.5) for clarity. Updated to clarify that service requests are not necessarily a complaint.
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.	Updated to two provisions (1.4 and 1.5) for clarity. Updated to clarify that service requests are not necessarily a complaint.
1.6	An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint, though wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to. Where landlords ask for wider feedback about their services, they also must provide details of how residents can complain.	Amended in response to feedback to give choice to residents.

2.3	The Council must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the individual becoming aware of the issue, unless they are excluded on other grounds. The Council must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so. If it is decided not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the individual setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the Council to take on the complaint.	New provision
2.5	The Council must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	New provision.
5.4	<p>The complaint handler must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; b) give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; c) take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d) consider all relevant information and evidence carefully. 	Amended for clarity.
5.5	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, the Council must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. This is referred to as “the complaint definition”. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the individual must be asked for clarification.	Amended to confirm that the complaint definition must be clarified at both stages of the complaint process.

5.6	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, the Council must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Amended for clarity.
5.11	The Council must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. The Council must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this policy.	Amended in response to feedback.
6.3	The Council must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints within 10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.	Amended in response to feedback. This confirms the 10 days is from the date the complaint is acknowledged.
6.4	The Council must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform individuals of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the individual. The individual must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman regardless of where the extension has been agreed.	Amended in response to feedback and for clarity.
6.5	When the Council informs an individual about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the relevant Ombudsman.	Amended in response to feedback. This sets out that residents must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman, regardless of whether extensions have been agreed.
6.9	Where individuals raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related and the stage 1 response	Amended in response to feedback and for clarity.

	has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated, or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	
6.12	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the individual's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be progressed to stage 2 of the Complaints Policy. Stage 2 is the Council's final response.	Amended in response to feedback.
6.13	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received .	Amended in response to feedback. This now confirms that escalation requests must be acknowledged within five working days.
6.19	The Council must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform individuals of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the individual.	Amended for clarity and consistency in approach between stage 1 and stage 2.
6.20	When an individual is informed about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Amended in response to feedback. This sets out that all residents must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman, regardless of whether extensions have been agreed.