

## Appendix 1

**Summary of Complaints and Compliments - Quarter 2**  
**1 July 2024 – 30 September 2024**

**Complaints received**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Chief Executive</b>	<b>Deputy Chief Executive</b>	<b>Executive Director</b>	<b>Monitoring Officer</b>	<b>Liberty Leisure Ltd</b>
Number of Stage One complaints	115	78	13	23	1	0
Number of complaints concluded under Stage Two	19	19	0	0	0	0
Number of complaints determined by the Ombudsman	4	2	1	0	1	0

The Council has registered a total of 115 stage one complaints in the second quarter. There has been 19 complaints concluded under stage two of the complaint procedure and four complaints has been determined by the Ombudsman. A further breakdown of departmental complaints by section is shown below.

**Breakdown of complaints and compliments by department and section****Chief Executive's Department**

<b>Service Areas</b>	<b>Stage 1 Complaints</b>	<b>Stage 2 Complaints</b>	<b>Ombudsman Complaints</b>	<b>Compliments</b>
Development Control	7	4	0	0
Housing and Income	7	1	0	36
Housing Repairs	24	5	0	19
Housing Operations	26	6	0	34
Housing Strategy	14	3	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>92</b>

**Deputy Chief Executive's Department**

<b>Service Areas</b>	<b>Stage 1 Complaints</b>	<b>Stage 2 Complaints</b>	<b>Ombudsman Complaints</b>	<b>Compliments</b>
Capital Works	7	0	0	0
Revenues	6	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

**Executive Director's Department**

Service Areas	Stage 1 Complaints	Stage 2 Complaints	Ombudsman Complaints	Compliments
Administration	3	0	0	0
Environment	8	0	0	8
Waste and Recycling	12	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>

**Monitoring Officer's Department**

Service Areas	Stage 1 Complaints	Stage 2 Complaints	Ombudsman Complaints	Compliments
Complaints	0	0	0	1
Elections	1	0	0	0
Legal	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>

**Liberty Leisure Ltd**

Service Area	Stage 1 Complaints	Stage 2 Complaints	Ombudsman Complaints	Compliments
Bramcote Leisure Centre	0	0	0	0
Chilwell Leisure Centre	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

The Business Development Manager of Liberty Leisure Ltd has confirmed that no formal complaints have been received and that only service requests and minor service issues have been identified that did not require escalation to a complaint.

**STAGE 1 - FORMAL COMPLAINTS TO THE SERVICE DEPARTMENT****Time taken to acknowledge receipt of Stage One Complaints:**

	Total	Chief Executive	Deputy Chief Executive	Executive Director	Monitoring Officer	Liberty Leisure Ltd
Time taken to acknowledge complaints – 1 to 5 days	115	78	13	23	1	0
Time taken to acknowledge complaints - more than 5 days	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Time taken to respond to Stage One Complaints:**

	Total	Chief Executives	Deputy Chief Executive	Executive Director	Monitoring Officer	Liberty Leisure Ltd
Less than 10 working days	110	73	13	23	1	0
Over 10 working days	5	5	0	0	0	0

The following tables highlight the service areas that failed to respond to complaints within the target time in the second quarter, and the number of complaints where the target date was extended.

It should be noted that there has been a reduction in complaints being concluded outside of 10 working days. 96% of Housing Repair complaints were dealt with within the 10 working day deadline in the second quarter.

Five complaints fell outside of the 10 working day due to Officer leave. All complainants received the appropriate notification to inform them that the initial deadline could not be met.

The Complaints Team continues to monitor the performance of the Housing Repair complaints to ensure that they continue to be dealt with in line with the complaints procedure.

Where issues have been identified, such as Housing Repairs, the Complaints Team works with the Head of Service to implement improvements in areas that are required. This is further reviewed by the Housing Improvement Board (HIB). The role of the HIB is to ensure that the Housing stock and practises are fit for purpose. The Complaints Team reports to the HIB on its findings regarding complaints and the learning outcomes that have been and require implementation.

The Council's General Management Team further receive quarterly reports on complaint performance. All actions and recommendations provided by the General Management Team are implement to the various Teams to improve practises and procedures.

A Tenant Complaint Panel has also been established to assist with the Council improving complaint response satisfaction.

<b>Directorate / Section</b>	<b>Chief Executive</b>	
	<b>Number responded to outside of 10 working days</b>	<b>Number of complaints where an was extension sort</b>
Housing Repairs	5	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>

## Appendix 2

**Stage 2 - Formal Complaints**

19 formal complaints have been responded to in the first quarter; all of which were acknowledged within the 5 working day timescale, and 95% were responded to within the 20 working day timescale. The complainant was notified that the initial 20 working day deadline could not be met. An extension was required to a stage 2 complaint due to conflicting information and records on the Housing Repairs system.

Reasons for the delays include:

- Further information being required from the complainant.
- Further information being required from the department complained about.
- Complexity of the complaint including in-depth research required.
- Resource issues.

**Time taken to respond to stage two complaints:**

	Total	Chief Executives	Deputy Chief Executive	Executive Director	Monitoring Officer	Liberty Leisure Ltd
Less than 20 working days	18	18	0	0	0	0
Over 20 working days	1	1	0	0	0	0

**1. Complaint against Housing Repairs**

Response – 20 working days

**Complaint upheld**Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to repair a roof leak at a block flats.

Council's response

It was noted that there had been unreasonable delays in the Capital Works and Housing Repairs Teams undertaking and completing the necessary works and keeping the complainant updated on their completion.

These delays occurred due to the Council not progressing the works or monitoring their completion to ensure that they were undertaken in a timely manner. Furthermore, works that were identified as part of the complaint were not undertaken.

During the stage 2 complaint process, the Council had since procured a contractor to repair the flat roof. As part of the complaint, the Council had agreed to prioritise the complainant's block and repair this first as it is the most affected by the leaking flat roof. The Council would continue to monitor the progress of the repair by undertaking weekly site visits to the block.

The Council would further ensure that the complainant was communicated to in a timely manner should there be any developments or updates. The Head of Housing and the Modernisation Manager had agreed to be the complainant's points of contact for these updates.

Furthermore, the complainant was offered and accepted £2,000 compensation.

### Head of Service Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by agreeing to undertake the works and then delaying them. The Housing Repairs and Capital Works Team had been reminded of their responsibility in booking and completing works in a timely manner.

### Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The responsibility to appropriately communicate with tenants/complainants.
- To accurately log necessary works in a reasonable period and to prioritise repairs where necessary.
- To monitor all works to ensure that they completed in a reasonable timeframe whether being completed by the Council or referred to our Contractors.
- To keep the tenant/complainant updated of any issue that would delay the completion of the works.
- To action and monitor complaints, within agreed timeframes until they are satisfactorily concluded.

## **2. Complaint against Housing Operations**

Response – 20 working days

**Complaint not upheld**

### Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to provide them housing within the borough as part for their homelessness application.

### Council's response

It was concluded that as the complainant had not been living within the Borough for a minimum period of 6 months, the Council were unable to evidence a local connection. As the complainant did not have a local connection to the area, the Council were unable to consider their request for homelessness duty.

Furthermore, the Council were unable to progress the application as the necessary information was not received to demonstrate the complainant's local connection.

As the complainant had been living in the Nottingham City area for the past three years, their location connection was with Nottingham City. The complainant had been informed of this.

### Head of Service Comments

The Council is required to follow process defined by the Allocations Policy. This ensures fair treatment of all tenants.

### **3. Complaint against Housing Repairs**

Response – 30 working days

#### **Complaint upheld**

### Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to repair a garden that had been reallocated to them.

### Council's response

It was found that delays had occurred due to the Council delaying the inputting of the works on to the Housing Repairs system and incorrectly passing the works to an incorrect contractor to complete repairs.

This was further exacerbated by the Housing Repairs Team not following up on the completion of these repairs despite them being registered as part of the complainant's stage 1 complaint. The Housing Repairs Team acknowledged that the repairs were not entered on the system for an extended period of time or monitored to ensure their completion. Furthermore, the full requirements of the inspection that took place at the complainant's property were not correctly undertaken. This resulted in a further delay in the Housing Repairs Team undertaking the necessary works.

A full inspection of the complainant's property was subsequently undertaken to identify the full extent of the work needed to be complete the issues raised.

The complainant was offered and accepted £1,750 compensation.

### Head of Service Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by agreeing to undertake the works and then delaying them. The Housing Repairs had been reminded of their responsibility in booking and completing works in a timely manner.

### Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The responsibility to appropriately communicate with tenants/complainants.
- To accurately log necessary works in a reasonable period and to prioritise repairs where necessary.
- To monitor all works to ensure that they completed in a reasonable timeframe whether being completed by the Council or referred to our Contractors.

- To keep the tenant/complainant updated of any issue that would delay the completion of the works.
- To action and monitor complaints, within agreed timeframes until they are satisfactorily concluded.
- Increase checks, by an appropriate manager, on actions identified as part of the complaints process to ensure that these are completed in a timely manner.
- The Housing Department have undertaken a self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Record Keeping Guidance. The Council has implement actions to ensure that records are regularly monitored and updated.

#### **4. Complaint against Planning**

Response – 20 working days

**Complaint not upheld**

##### Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Planning Department did not make reasonable adjustment to assist them when requesting information.

##### Council's response

The Council had provided the complainant with detailed explanations, as requested, as part of the complainant's neuro divergence. The correspondence was polite and factual and adjustments were made when the complainant notified the Council of their neuro divergence.

##### Head of Service Comments

The Planning Department had correctly supported the complainant during their correspondence.

#### **5. Complaint against Housing Operations**

Response – 20 working days

**Complaint upheld**

##### Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Allocations Team did not correctly register the death of their brother or issued a Notice to Quit correctly.

##### Council's response

It was found that the Housing Department had requested to that complainant contact a different Housing Team to inform them of their brother's passing. The Housing Department should not have requested this action from the complainant and should have been more proactive in registering the passing of the complainant's brother and requesting that the appropriate departments contact the complainant directly should they require any further information.



As this was not undertaken, this resulted in the complainant having to contact a different Housing Team to register the bereavement.

Furthermore, the Council did not provide the correct advice regarding the complainant's brothers passing by requesting that they notify individual Housing Departments of the bereavement.

Furthermore, it was found that the Housing Allocations Team did not issue the Notice to Quit correctly for the complainant's deceased brother which resulted in their rent account accruing arrears.

The complainant was offered and accepted £250 compensation.

#### Head of Service Comments

The Council recognises the distress caused by requesting the complainant to contact the Council multiple different times to register their brother's death. The Housing Team have been reminded of their responsibility to register bereavements efficiently and sympathetically.

#### Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- Refer or advise bereaved individuals to the "Tell us Once" offered by the Government to register deaths.
- Provide a more proactive approach to registering bereavements. Where all details cannot be taken in the first instance, arrange for telephone calls to be made from the appropriate departments to minimise the bereaved having to make this contact.
- Issue Notice to Quits in a timely manner when a death is reported.

### **6. Complaint against Housing Operations**

Response – 20 working days

**Complaint not upheld**

#### Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to provide them housing within the borough.

#### Council's response

The Housing Allocations Team had correctly assessed the complainant's current housing band in accordance with the information that they had supplied and in line with the Council's Allocations Policy.

The complainant had not provided the necessary information for the Council to consider their requests for a higher banding and to demonstrate that they were eligible to enter the Independent Living scheme.

#### Head of Service Comments

The Council is required to follow process defined by the Allocations Policy. This ensures fair treatment of all tenants.

## **7. Complaint against Planning**

Response – 20 working days

**Complaint upheld**

### Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that they had not been notified of an amendment to a planning application.

### Council's response

It was concluded that the Planning Team had correctly notified the neighbouring properties of the development and its subsequent amended plans with the correct time frames.

The Officers had determined that the amended planning application did not require a full resubmitted application as the amendment was not a large departure from the original application.

Statutory timeframes for the consultation for the original application had been provided correctly. Furthermore, when receiving the amended application, the Planning Team provided an additional consultation for the neighbouring properties. The Council is only required to consult on the first occasion. Amended plans do not have a statutory requirement for the Council to re-consult. However, the Council undertook this process.

As no objections were received during either consultation periods, the Council deemed the application to be acceptable.

### Head of Service Comments

The Planning Department had correctly assessed the planning application.

## **8. Complaint against Housing Operations**

Response – 20 working days

**Complaint not upheld**

### Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that there had been a lack of action to provide them housing within the borough as part for their homelessness application.

### Council's response

The Council were unable to progress the complainant's application as the necessary information was not received to allow further consideration toward their application.

Head of Service Comments

The Council is required to follow process defined by the Allocations Policy. This ensures fair treatment of all tenants.

**9. Complaint against Housing Strategy**

Response – 20 working days

**Complaint not upheld**Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that they had been requested to remove their CCTV cameras from their property.

Council's response

The Council is obligated to investigate complaints of Anti-Social Behaviour by tenants and leaseholders when they are received. In this case, as complaints about the complainant's conduct and the installation of CCTV had been received from the local residents and Nottinghamshire Police, the Council was obligated to investigate these issues.

The Council, having noted the breaches of the complainant's Leasehold Agreement by installing CCTV cameras without permission, were obligated to contact the complainant to ensure that the appropriate action was undertaken to remove these.

Head of Service Comments

The Council correctly investigated the issues raised by local residents and were obligated to request that the complainant remove the CCTV as this was a breach of their Leasehold Agreement.

**10. Complaint against Housing Repairs**

Response – 20 working days

**Complaint upheld**Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the damp proofing previously undertaken by the Council had been ineffective.

Council's response

The Council had undertaken inspections to the complainant's property in a timely manner to review the effectiveness of the damp proof works. However, there was a delay in completing the works to the door may have potentially exacerbated the damp issue.

Despite the recommendation provided by the Council's contractor, Baggaley and Jenkins, to ensure that the front door is water tight, the Council had failed to undertake this work. While the Housing Repairs Team attempted to remedy the issue but access could not be

made to the property, there were no records to suggest that this was followed up or a return visit was arranged.

This has caused a 9-month delay in the door being repaired.

The complainant was offered and accepted £1,974 compensation.

### Head of Service Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by agreeing to undertake the works and then delaying them. The Housing Repairs had been reminded of their responsibility in booking and completing works in a timely manner.

### Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The responsibility to effectively communicate with tenants/complainants, especially where delays are anticipated or have occurred.
- To accurately log necessary works in a reasonable period and to prioritise repairs where necessary.
- To monitor all works to ensure that they completed in a reasonable timeframe whether being completed by the Council or referred to our Contractors.
- To keep the tenant/complainant updated of any issue that would delay the completion of the works.

## **11. Complaint against Housing Operations**

Response – 20 working days

**Complaint not upheld**

### Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Operations Team had not provided adequate car parking provision at a block of flats or are enforcing the car park.

### Council's response

The Council was not obligated to provide car parking at this site and the car parking currently provided was not enforceable.

To assist with this situation, the Council would erect additional signage indicating that the car park was for residents only as a deterrent for non-residents parking on the site. Furthermore, the Council would install new bays and a disabled parking bay to assist with the provision currently offered.

### Head of Service Comments

The Council correctly manages the parking provision provided at the site.

## **12. Complaint against Housing Income**

Response – 20 working days

**Complaint not upheld**

### Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Operations Team had not investigated an issue of noise nuisance correctly.

### Council's response

The Council had actively investigated the complainant's complaints of Anti-Social Behaviour when they had raised them.

On the occasions that the complainant had raised the complaints of Anti-Social Behaviour, the Independent Living Team had determined that the noise they were experiencing did not count as a nuisance and the case were subsequently closed.

### Head of Service Comments

The Council correctly investigated the issue of noise nuisance. As no evidence had been provided to substantiate the complaint, the case was correctly closed.

## **13. Complaint against Housing Repairs**

Response – 20 working days

**Complaint upheld**

### Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Repairs Team had failed to repair a leak at a neighbouring property which had caused damage to their property.

### Council's response

It was found that there had been delays in the Council inspecting, and procuring, the necessary works from a contractor to repair the leak at the neighbour's property and also repairing the damage caused at complainant's property.

These delays occurred due to the Council not attending an inspection despite it being correctly scheduled. This resulted in the Council delaying the works necessary to repair the leak at the neighbouring property and repairing the damage caused by the leak.

Furthermore, the Housing Repairs Team delayed procuring a contractor to repair the bathroom leak at the neighbour's property. Part of the planned works were also to repair the damage caused to complainant's property by the leak, and as a consequence these were also delayed.

This delay occurred due the Housing Repairs Team not approving the quote for the works in a timely manner. This further delayed the repairs to the properties.

The complainant was offered and accepted £1,000 compensation.

### Head of Service Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by agreeing to undertake the works and then delaying them. The Housing Repairs had been reminded of their responsibility in booking and completing works in a timely manner.

### Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The responsibility to effectively communicate with complainants, especially where delays are anticipated or have occurred.
- To accurately log necessary works in a reasonable period and to prioritise repairs where necessary.
- To monitor all works to ensure that they are completed in a reasonable timeframe, whether being completed by the Council, or referred to Contractors.
- Additional training has been provided to the Housing Department regarding record keeping, complaint handling and monitoring the outcome of complaints. The Housing Repairs Team are required to actively monitor any repairs scheduled as part of complaints to ensure their completion following this training
- The Housing Department has undertaken a self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Record Keeping Guidance. The Council has implemented actions to ensure that records are regularly monitored and updated.
- The Housing Repairs Team has since updated its process for logging repairs. This includes, giving Housing Repairs Inspectors allocated times for logging works to ensure that these are done promptly.

## **14. Complaint against Housing Strategy**

Response – 20 working days

### **Complaint upheld**

#### Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Strategy Team had delayed in the acquisition of their property which caused them to lose money on their house sale. Furthermore, the Council Tax were inappropriately chasing the complainant for unpaid Council Tax.

#### Council's response

It was found that the Council incorrectly managed the complainant's expectations regarding the purchase of their property.

While the Home Ownership Team followed the correct process to undertake the potential purchase of your property, they had incorrectly informed the complainant that the Council were to purchase the property.

The Council recognised that Home Ownership Team may have influenced any decisions made regarding the sale of the property privately.

The Council Tax Team had acted appropriately when contacting the complainant or instructing solicitors to pursue the debt relating to their outstanding Council Tax.

### Head of Service Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by agreeing to purchase the property prematurely. The Housing Strategy Team did not have the authority to undertake this and they have been reminded of their responsibilities and to correctly manage expectations.

### Complaint Team Recommendations/actions

- The Home Ownership Team will review and amend any correspondence sent to potential vendors regarding the timescales of the acquisition process to highlight the likely timeframes the process takes.
- The Home Ownership Team have been reminded of their responsibility to manage an individual's expectations correctly.
- The Home Ownership Team have been reminded that they should not give their opinion on a likely outcome, as this can cause confusion and upset.

## **15. Complaint against Housing Operations**

Response – 20 working days

### **Complaint upheld**

### Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Operations Team had allowed them to bid on a property that they were not eligible for.

### Council's response

It was found that the Council had allowed the complainant to bid on a property that they were not eligible for due to an administrative error.

While the Council had correctly advertised the property with the correct requirements, the administrative error allowed the complainant to bid on the property on multiple occasions.

The Council recognised that this has caused the complainant frustration and that their expectations were not correctly managed. The Housing Allocations Team have since rectified this issue and the complainant is now only shown properties on the Homechoice system that they are eligible for.

### Head of Service Comments

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused by the administrative error. This has been identified and rectified.

## **16. Complaint against Housing Strategy**

Response – 20 working days

**Complaint upheld**

### Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Strategy and Repairs Team had agreed to undertake works to their garage but failed to action them.

### Council's response

It was found that the Council has not correctly managed the complainant's expectations by not clarifying that only minor works would be undertaken to maintain the garage and that no major works would be completed before the results of a stock condition survey had been received.

While the stock condition survey was being undertaken, the Council was unable to undertake any major works to the garages as this may result in their demolition. The Council was required to effectively use resources and undertaking works to the garages that would be demolished would not be appropriate.

In this instance, the complainant's garage requires major works but is still in a usable condition. Therefore, the major works identified would not be undertaken.

### Head of Service Comments

The Housing Strategy Team have been reminded of their responsibilities and to correctly manage expectations.

## **17. Complaint against Planning**

Response – 20 working days

**Complaint not upheld**

### Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Planning Teams online notification system was not working correctly, the site notices for a planning application were not correctly advertised and incorrect information was being used in the Planning Committee reports for HMOs.

### Council's response

It was found that the Council had acted appropriately when displaying the site notice and notifying the statutory consultees adjacent to the site.

Furthermore, the Planning Team had correctly applied the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document to the Planning Committee report. The Planning Committee report had included the percentage of Houses in Multiple Occupation as required.



The Council recognises that the website was not clear in the functionality of the notification system, in that it does not clearly explain that a notification would only be sent when an application had changed status and not when a document has been uploaded.

The Planning Team were currently exploring the option to update the wording with the supplier in order to make this clear.

### Head of Service Comments

The Planning Department had correctly displayed the site notice in line with statutory guidance and were correctly using the HMO information as stipulated by the Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document.

## **18. Complaint against Housing Repairs**

Response – 20 working days

### **Complaint not upheld**

#### Complaint

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Repairs Team had not repaired a roof tile at a neighbouring property which was causing their property to become damp.

#### Council's response

It was found that the Council has actively investigated the roof and the damp at the complainant's property.

The Council had attended the property on multiple occasions to inspect the damp and mould.

It had been identified that the damp and mould at the property was not being caused by the missing roof tile and this may be linked to the guttering. It was noted during a visit to the property that the complainant's guttering had vegetation within it and this might be the source of the damp and mould. As a private home owner, the clearance of the guttering would be their responsibility.

#### Head of Service Comments

The Housing Repairs Team had correctly investigated and notified the complainant of the necessary works to rectify the damp at their property. As a private homeowner, it remains their responsibility to maintain their property.

**19. Complaint against Housing Operations**

Response – 20 working days

**Complaint upheld****Complaint**

The complainant contacted the Council and complained that the Housing Operations Team did not correctly support them during a period of potential homelessness.

**Council's response**

It was found that the Housing Options Team did not respond to the complainant's correspondence in a timely manner.

While the Housing Options Team had correctly assessed the complainant's banding and Homelessness application, by not responding to their correspondence in a timely manner, the Council recognised that this had caused confusion and distress.

Furthermore, the Housing Options Team did not contact the complainant despite a specific action to do so as detailed in their stage 1 complaint response. The Housing Options Team had since contacted the complainant as part of the stage 2 complaint.

The Housing Options Team would continue to assist the complainant during their homelessness application and the prevention duty will be acted upon while that duty exists.

The Council encouraged the complainant to continue to bid on properties, inside and outside of their preferred area, and to explore the options provided by private rented and other social housing providers.

The complainant was subsequently housed with a social housing provider.

**Head of Service Comments**

The Council recognises the inconvenience caused not responding to the complainant's correspondence and that this caused distress that during their period of potential homelessness.

**Complaint Team Recommendations/actions**

- The Housing Options Team have been reminded of their responsibility to return correspondence in a timely manner.
- The Housing Options Team have been reminded of their responsibility to undertake actions identified during the complaint process.
- Managers have been reminded of the importance of ensuring that employees undertake actions identified during the complaint process, and that they should be monitoring this.

## **STAGE 3 – COMPLAINTS TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN/HOUSING OMBUDSMAN**

### **Stage 3 - Ombudsman Complaint**

#### **1. Complaint against Revenues (this was investigated by the LGO directly without following the Council's Complaint Policy)**

##### **Complaint Upheld.**

##### Complaint

The concern raised was that the Council had adequately dealt with the complainant's vulnerabilities when dealing with their Council Tax account.

##### Ombudsman's conclusion

The Housing Ombudsman determined that the Council had not adequately considered the complainant's vulnerabilities when issuing Council Tax reminders and summons. The complainant had notified the Council Tax of the need for assistance and information was provided to the complainant of what support could be offered. However, the LGO determined that the information was not sufficient to assist the complainant with their vulnerabilities to manage their Council Tax account.

The LGO ordered the Council to issue £250 compensation. The Complainant has yet to accept this offer despite several reminders being issued by the Council and the LGO.

#### **2. Complaint against Housing Operations (complaint concluded in 2023/24)**

##### **Complaint Upheld.**

##### Complaint

The concern raised was that the Council had adequately dealt with the complainant's homelessness application.

##### Ombudsman's conclusion

The LGO determined that the Council had not adequately considered the complainant's homelessness application. The LGO determined that the Council failed to use its discretion when assessing the complainant's homelessness. Furthermore, the LGO stated that the Council had failed to evidence its decision making and its communication with the complainant about her housing banding.

The LGO ordered the Council to issue £3,000 compensation and this was undertaken.

As part of the complaint, the Council had provided case law to the LGO to support its position. However, the LGO did not believe this to be relevant.

**3. Complaint against Planning (complaint concluded in 2023/24)**

**Complaint not Upheld.**

Complaint

The concern raised was that the Council had adequately dealt with the complainant's complaint regarding a Planning Enforcement issue.

Ombudsman's conclusion

The LGO determined that they would not investigate the complaint about how the Council dealt with breaches of planning control. This is because they were unlikely to find fault with the Council's handling of the issue.

**4. Complaint against Legal Services (this was investigated by the LGO directly without following the Council's Complaint Policy)**

**Complaint not Upheld.**

Complaint

The concern raised was that the Council had adequately dealt with the complainant's complaint regarding a member standards issue.

Ombudsman's conclusion

The LGO determined that they would not investigate the complaint about how the Council dealt with its member standards issue. This is because they were unlikely to find fault with the Council's handling of the issue.

The LGO does not provide an appeal against the Monitoring Officer's decisions.