



RECORD OF DELEGATED DECISION (OFFICER)

1. Decision Reference No.	CEX435
2. Name/Title of Officer	Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)
3. Email address of Officer	mhoward@melton.gov.uk
4. Title / Subject Matter:	Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy
5. Type of Decision:	Public
6. Key Decision?	No

7. Decision Taken

7.1 To update the Council's Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy following a review against the updated **Complaints Handling Code (2024)** by the Housing Ombudsman and guidance from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. Minor changes have been made to the Council's Policy. These changes are as set out in the amended sections outlined below:

4.1 We should receive your complaint as soon as possible but not more than 12 months from the incident which has led to your complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative on your behalf will be investigated in line with this complaints policy with your consent.

6.5 All relevant employees or third parties that are involved in complaint handling will:
a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments.
b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others and;
c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body'.

7.2 To update the Council's Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy to add a new section on **reporting and oversight** (section 20, following a recommendation from the Council's Monitoring Officer:

20.1 We maintain transparency and oversight of complaints through our governance and reporting arrangements. To ensure strategic oversight by Cabinet, complaints statistics are reported quarterly to Cabinet as part of the Council's standard performance reporting arrangements.

20.2 To ensure good governance, these are compared with performance data so that the organisation can analyse performance in services and identify any trends or areas where improvement is required and learning at the earliest opportunity.

20.3 In addition to this an annual ombudsman report is taken to Cabinet which details an overview of cases in that year. Where there has been a finding of maladministration (usually by way of a formal Report) these will be reported to Cabinet or Council as appropriate by the Monitoring Officer on an as required and timely basis

20.4 In addition, Scrutiny Committee receive Cabinet's performance reports for noting as part of their role to hold the Cabinet to account and regulatory committees will also receive reports regarding complaints relating to their functions.

20.5 The portfolio holder for Governance, Environment & Regulatory Services has within their portfolio, oversight of complaints on behalf of the Cabinet.

8. Reasons for Decision:

Policy updated to bring in line with the latest guidance from the Housing Ombudsman and to embed information on the council's governance arrangements in respect of complaints.

9. Authority / Legal Power:

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 amends the Housing Act 1996 to allow the Housing Ombudsman to issue a Code of Practice about the procedures social housing providers such as the Council should have in place for considering complaints made to them. From 1 April that Code has legal effect, from which time the Council's Complaints Procedure must contain certain provisions. The amendments referred to above reflect the requirements in the Code.

The Director of Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive) has delegated powers. Chapter 2 Part 4 of the Constitution, delegates operational housing functions to the Director of Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive). Since the provisions of the Code apply to housing functions and are required by law, the above amendments may be made under that delegation.

10. Background Papers attached?

No

11. Alternative options available / rejected:

1. Policy not updated; this would result in our policy not remaining compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code.

12. Implications:

Legal	<p>The legal powers and delegation to make this decision are set out above. If the Council does not amend its Complaint Procedure it will be in breach of the requirements of the Code and the Housing ombudsman may make adverse findings in relation to the Council's handling of complaints.</p> <p>Legal Implications approved by: Monitoring Officer, 12 April 2024</p>
Finance	<p>None arising directly from this decision.</p> <p>Financial implications reviewed by: Director for Corporate Services, 27 March 2024</p>
HR	<p>There are no HR implications as a result of this decision.</p> <p>HR Approval: 8 April 2024</p>

13. APPROVAL/SIGN OFF (Do not complete until all implications signed off at Section 12)

Signature of Decision Maker with authority to sign :	Signature redacted Michelle Howard, Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)
Consultation with:	Not applicable
Date:	15 April 2024

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