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Telford & Wrekin  
COUNCIL

# Resolving Complaints and Improving Services

## Policy & Procedure for Corporate Complaints, Compliments & Comments

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## Section 1 - Scope of the Representations and Complaints Procedure

### 1. Defining representations and complaints

- 1.1 At Telford and Wrekin Council we welcome all feedback from customers, this is because it helps us improve the way we do things and to learn from things that have gone wrong.
- 1.2 The intention of this document is to set out the procedure for a customer who is likely to want to make representations, including complaints about, the actions, decisions or apparent failings of our corporate services and to allow any other appropriate person to act on their behalf.
- 1.3 This policy and procedure on complaints, compliments and comments applies solely to corporate feedback that sits outside of all statutory processes.
- 1.4 We define a complaint as

**‘An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standards of service, action or lack of action, decisions taken by the Council or the way in which the council employees carry out their duties’**

People can complain, where they believe the Council has:

- Failed to do something it should have done
- Behaved unfairly or discourteously
- Failed to carry out a service to a recognised standard
- Done something wrong
- Done something it should not have done

It is recognised that this definition does not cover every scenario and that complaints can range from major grievances to minor annoyances.

- 1.5 We realise that it would be unrealistic to register every such statement within the procedure, particularly in cases where it is possible to deal with the matter of concern there and then.
- 1.6 It is nevertheless the complainant’s right ultimately to decide whether or not the matter of concern should be registered within this complaints procedure. It is crucial therefore that clear information about the procedure is made available in advance, so that complainants can make an informed decision about whether they want to make a complaint in line with this procedure.
- 1.7 Representations may not always be complaints; they might also be positive remarks or ideas that require a response from the Local Authority. Enquiries or comments about the availability, delivery or nature of a service which are not criticisms are also welcomed and can help us to improve our services.

## 2. Our Policy on Complaints

2.1 Users of any service provided on or behalf of Telford & Wrekin Council should have access to a simple, well-publicised procedure common to all services

2.2 The policy is framed to:

- Provide high quality and responsive service;
- Acknowledge that all people who receive services have a right to complain if they think that something that should have been done has not been done, or that something has been done poorly or incorrectly.

2.3 We know that things can go wrong with services, and that staff and managers can make mistakes. When this happens, we believe it is important to put things right, as rapidly and as effectively as possible. Through this complaints procedure, we are committed to working with customers who use our services, their advocates, carers and relatives, listening to them and deciding with them, where possible, the most effective way of sorting out whatever has gone wrong, with a view to putting the customer back into the position they were in prior to any injustice occurring.

2.4 Above all, the way we deal with complaints will be based on

- Customer focus – listening to what people tell us
- Responsiveness – acting on what people say to us
- Promptness – making sure people get answers in good time
- Transparency – dealing openly and honestly with problems
- Proportionality – making sure that the resolution fits the complaint
- Learning – making sure complaints result in changes and improvement, where appropriate

2.5 We recognise our responsibility to ensure the customer has a proportionate level of awareness of their entitlement to complain among people who use or may be eligible for services. We will therefore make sure, in a number of ways that people are well informed and reminded that the complaints procedure is available if necessary. Customers can expect assistance and support if they have cause to use it.

Among the ways in which we will meet this obligation are:

- Information about the complaints process will be made available in a variety of ways e.g. on the Council website, by means of leaflets and posters.
- Our customers will be given details by staff members in the course of their work.
- Case management correspondence will routinely incorporate references to the right to make complaints.
- A dedicated email address for complaints

2.6 For this procedure to be of benefit, we think it is crucial for all customers/service users to be well informed about how the complaints process works, so that everyone is aware of their rights and obligations. Recognising that we serve a diverse community, we will

therefore make details of the procedure available on request in a range of formats, in order to maximise its accessibility and to ensure it remains inclusive.

- 2.7 Whenever we deal with a comment or a complaint, we will look critically at what has happened, to see what lessons we can learn and ensure that any changes which need to be made are applied. This not only applies to the case being complained about, but across the service. If we believe that something has gone wrong, then we need to put it right and to make sure that the customer/service user has not lost out as a result. If when the investigation concludes the complaint was not justified, we will provide a full written explanation. In all cases, we will provide clear information about how to take matters further, so that the person making the complaint can decide if that is what they want to do.
- 2.8 We realise that the different procedures which could be applicable when concerns are raised about services (e.g. the complaints procedures of other bodies, a provider's own in-house complaints arrangements, disciplinary processes, criminal investigations etc.) could result in confusion for customers/service users. In cases like this, complaints staff will ensure that there is consultation and engagement with complainants, and that sound decisions are reached with them about which procedure should take precedence, and why. We regard it as crucial however that people are provided with clear information about the possible interplay between different procedures and are reassured that they are entitled to request that any remaining issues can be taken up through this complaints process, once the other process is concluded.
- 2.9 We recognise that many people fear that making a complaint may result in reprisals or in a deterioration of the service provided, and so we offer an assurance that we would regard this as wholly unacceptable, and that we would take very seriously any concern that this had happened. We will work to ensure that all members of our staff and management have a positive and informed view of complaints, and will give whatever help is necessary to enable people to get due benefit from the procedure.
- 2.10 This policy and procedure will be available to members of the public on the Council's website, but hard copies will be provided on request. The complaint leaflet 'Have your say' which summarises this information is widely distributed and is available at a range of community contact points, as well as from the Customer Relationship Team.
- 2.11 We also believe that when people who use our services send us comments and compliments based on their experiences, they should be acknowledged, considered and acted upon. This is an important aspect of the dialogue between local people and local services.

### **3. What may be complained about?**

- 3.1 A complaint may arise as a result of many things relating to service functions such as:
- An unwelcome or disputed decision;
  - Concern about the quality or appropriateness of service;
  - Delay in decision making or provision of services;
  - Delivery or non-delivery of services including complaints procedures;
  - Quantity, frequency, change or cost of a service;

- Attitude or behaviour of staff;
- Policy and procedures

#### 4. Who can complain under this procedure?

4.1 This procedure is open to everyone who lives, works or visits the Telford & Wrekin area or uses Telford and Wrekin Council services.

4.2 Where the complaint is being made on behalf of another person:

Telford and Wrekin Council will consider representations including complaints made to us by any customer or third party who is contacting us on the customer's behalf. If someone makes representations on customer's behalf written consent will be sought, before the complaint is registered.

4.3 The Complaints Manager may decline to register a complaint if it appears that it is being brought by a representative who is not acting in the best interests of the customer. Any such decision will be recorded and notified in writing to the complainant.

4.4 From time to time the council receives anonymous complaints, these will be logged and passed to the relevant service for investigation, whilst a response cannot be sent in these cases it is important that we investigate and taking learning from these complaints.

4.5 Complaints will not be registered more than a year after the matter giving rise to concern arose. Nevertheless, the Complaints Manager may waive this time limit if;

- It would not be reasonable to expect the complainant to have made the complaint sooner, and
- It is still possible to deal with the complaint effectively and fairly.

#### 5. What is excluded from this procedure?

5.1 The procedure will **not** apply where it is a:

- request for service
- request for information

5.2 The corporate complaints procedure specifically excludes certain matters;

- **Legal matters** – issues that involve a legal action by or against, the Council.
- **Insurance matters** – issues that involve an insurance claim against the Council or its insurers.
- **Statutory, regulatory or other procedures** including:
  - Admissions to schools.
  - Complaints about decision to place a child on the Child Protection Register.

- Childcare matters such as court decisions and care proceedings.
- Childminders and residential care and nursing homes – decisions on appeals against failure to register and against decisions to de-register.
- Social services complaints:
  - Children & Young People
  - Adults and vulnerable people
- Objections to planning applications.
- Council tax and housing benefit determinations- should be considered under Courts or Tribunals.
- Complaints about Councillors- this will be referred to the Monitoring Officer.
- Enforcement procedures for which there is a right of appeal.
- Licensing and registration – appeals against refusals, revocations or conditions attached.
- Parking fines and Enforcement
- Planning decisions, applicant's right of appeal
- Right to Buy Valuation re-determinations
- Special Educational Needs Tribunals
- Staff matters covered by the grievance, disciplinary and recruitment and selection procedures.
- Statutory Landlord and Tenant matters.
- School Complaints- dealt with via the Head and board of governors.

A complaint will not be taken where it relates to the decision/ outcome of an appeal. However, a complaint may be taken relating to the process of how the decision was made.

### 5.3 **Relationship to other Policies and Processes**

This procedure may be suspended if any of the following procedures are invoked:

- a) Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures
- b) Harassment Procedures
- c) Police Investigation - Criminal
- d) Children's Social Services Complaints Procedure
- e) Adults Social Service Complaints Procedure
- f) Safeguarding Procedure

- 5.4 Any complaint which contains an allegation or suspicion of fraud, corruption or financial irregularity, whether allegedly carried out by an employee or third party against the Council, will be reported immediately to Audit Services for investigation.

### 5.5 **Complaints concerning staff from other agencies**

The complaint will be recorded by the Customer Relationship Team. The Customer Relationship Team will seek permission from the customer to pass the complaint to the relevant person who has the responsibility for managing complaints for the other agency.

## **5.6 Complaints regarding external contractors**

If the complaint involves services that are provided for the Council by external providers, in the first instance the Council would wish to be notified if there is a problem. However, it is important that the external provider be given the opportunity to investigate and try and resolve the complaint directly with the customer.

Each external provider has their own complaints procedure in line with their contractual obligation to the Council. The Council will maintain an oversight of all complaints dealt with under the contractual arrangement.

## **5.7 Compensation Claims**

When a complaint gives rise to a potential or actual insurance claim; usually this involves the customer suffering loss or injury arising out of an alleged negligent act by the Council, its employees or agents. Such complaints will be forwarded to the Councils Insurance Team and the customer informed.

## Section 2 - How the Process Works

### **6. How the process works**

6.1 This section details the procedure for handling all representations, which must be registered with the Customer Relationship Team.

#### **6.2 Compliments, Comments and Suggestions**

It is very important that the service learns from the positive statements made by customers as well as the negative comments about services. Where these other forms of representation are made, including criticisms which the sender does not wish to regard as a complaint, the Customer Relationship Team will record and forward these representations to the appropriate manager for their attention.

#### **6.3 Complaints**

The purpose of a complaints process is to resolve concerns raised by service users and their representatives, to deliver outcomes which are appropriate and proportionate to the seriousness of the issues and to ensure that changes are made in response to any failings which are identified.

6.4 To achieve this, the approach to handling complaints must incorporate the following elements

- Engagement with the complainant or representative throughout the process
- Agreement with him/her about how the complaint will be handled
- A planned, risk-based and transparent approach
- Commitment to prompt and focussed action to achieve desired outcomes
- Commitment to improvement and the incorporation of learning from all complaints.

#### **6.5 How complaints can be made**

Complaints may be received through a variety of channels (phone, letter, email, feedback form, personal visit etc.) and at various points within the organisation, to staff members via the respective email addresses or direct to the Customer Relationship Team. Complaint correspondence should be scanned and emailed to [customer.relationship@telford.gov.uk](mailto:customer.relationship@telford.gov.uk). The internal post should not be used.

6.6 Regardless of the medium used or the point where it arrives within the organisation, each complaint must be notified immediately to the Customer Relationship Team, so that it can be registered and formally acknowledged within two working days. If the complaint has been received verbally, staff in the Customer Relationship Team will make a written account of it which will be sent to the complainant for approval in an appropriate format, the complaint will be formally acknowledged when the written account has been approved.

6.7 There are two stages in the procedure, allowing for the initial response by the service concerned (usually the Service Delivery Manager or Team Leader) and a second stage investigation by an investigator independent of the service being complained about.

## **6.8 Stage One - Service Investigation**

- 6.8.1 If it has not be possible to resolve the complaint informally, the complaint will be recorded formally by the relevant service area on the Councils' Complaints System.
- 6.8.2 All complaints should be acknowledged by the Customer Relationship Team within two days of receipt. The acknowledgement letter/email should clearly state the reference number, name and contact details of the investigating officer, which will normally be the Service Delivery Manager or Team Leader responsible for the service in question.
- 6.8.3 The relevant service area will investigate the complaint and respond to the customer within the timescales set out in this procedure.
- 6.8.4 A full response should be sent within 15 working days of the complaint and should advise the customer of their right to take the complaint to Stage Two of the corporate complaints procedure. This request should be made by the customer within 20 working days of receiving the response to their concerns.
- 6.8.5 It may be appropriate on occasion for a complaint to be put on hold and a holding response sent. For example where there are ongoing legal proceedings or the matter is being considered via another process, which needs to be completed before it can be considered via the complaints process. Complainants will be informed of the reasons why a 'holding' response is considered appropriate, when the formal investigation will recommence and the timescale for completion.
- 6.8.6 Where an investigation is unlikely to be completed within 15 working days, the investigating officer should request an extension from the Customer Relationship Team giving a reason for the extension. The Customer Relationship Team will send an update informing the complainant of the extended response date, which should then be completed within 20 working days.
- 6.8.7 On completion, the investigating officer should pass a copy of the full response to the Customer Relationship Team so that the action taken can be recorded on the complaints system and any outstanding or follow up actions can be monitored.

## **6.9 Stage Two - Independent Investigation**

- 6.9.1 If the customer is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation at Stage One, they may request that the complaint be reviewed providing their reasons for this. A request can be made to progress their concerns to Stage Two by completion of a Stage Two escalation pro-forma. This records the reason for escalation and the outcome required by the customer. The request for a review and any subsequent investigation would be considered by the Senior Formal Complaints Investigator, who is a member of the Customer Relationship Team and Independent from Corporate services.
- 6.9.2 The customer will be asked to provide details of why they feel that their complaint has not been fully responded to at Stage One;
- 6.9.3 However, if it is considered that there are no suitable grounds for escalating the complaint to a full investigation at Stage Two the customer will receive written confirmation detailing the reasons why their request had been declined, together with

contact details for the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). The request to escalate to Stage Two should be considered and if the escalation is refused will be responded to within 10 working days of the request.

6.9.4 If the complaint is escalated and a full investigation is to be considered, the independent Senior Formal Complaint Investigator will compile a full response within 25 working days. If this deadline is not met an interim reply will be sent to the customer detailing progress. The investigation should then be completed within a maximum of 65 working days.

6.9.5 The purpose of Stage Two in this procedure is to consider if:

- The customer's complaint was fully understood and addressed;
- All of the relevant evidence was taken into account;
- The Council's policies and procedures were properly followed;
- The complaints process was carried out properly and fairly;
- The conclusions were reasonable and fair and reached on the basis of evidence;
- Any other actions or remedies are appropriate.

It is not to:

- Reinvestigate the complaint – it will focus on understanding continuing concerns and consider whether the Stage One resolution was undertaken fairly and that the conclusions reached were reasonable;
- Revisit a decision taken by committee or an officer under delegated powers;
- Undermine the professional judgement of officers;
- Deal with any new matters that were not part of the original complaint;
- Cover any points dealt with by a court or where an appeal against a decision lies with a court or other legal process.

6.9.6 On completion of the Stage Two investigation the recommendations will be passed to the Assistant Director to agree any recommendations / service improvements resulting from the investigation. The investigation report will then be forwarded to the customer and will include information on their right of redress to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, if they continue to remain dissatisfied.

## 6.10 Special Cases

In certain cases, the general rules regarding who investigates complaints will not apply. These cases will be as follows:

- At Stage One, if the complaint relates to the actions of the Service Delivery Manager/ Team Manager who would normally act as investigating officer, it should be referred to the appropriate Assistant Director for action.
- Any complaint against an Assistant Director should be referred to the Chief Executive for action.

- There is a separate procedure for investigating complaints about Elected Members of the Council, which should be referred to Council's Monitoring Officer.

### 6.11 Complaints covering more than one service

Where a Stage One or Stage Two complaint involves more than one service, then the relevant investigating officers should liaise so that whenever possible a single coordinated response is sent to the complainant. The Customer Relationship Team may at times coordinate such a response.

### 6.12 The Process

	Action	Timescale	Responsibility
<b>Stage One</b>			
1.	To notify the Customer Relationship Team of any complaint which has been received elsewhere in the Council	Immediately, by phone, fax or email	All members of staff
2.	Send a formal acknowledgement to the customer that the complaint has been received and registered.	Within 2 working days	Customer Relationship Team
3.	To pass the complaint to the relevant Service Delivery Manager	Within 2 working days	Customer Relationship Team
4.	To undertake investigation and actions to resolve the complaint informally at Stage One to the customer's satisfaction. The findings should be communicated in writing to the customer.	15 working days (extendable by 5 more working days if the complaint is complex)	Relevant Service Delivery Manager
<b>Stage Two</b>			
1.	Customer makes a request to escalate their complaint to Stage Two. Provide details of the complaint and what they consider has not been addressed.	Within 20 working days of the Stage one response.	Complainant
2.	The Senior Formal Complaints Investigator reviews the escalation request and provides a written response confirming a full investigation or if the request has been refused.	Within 10 working days	Senior Formal Complaints Investigator
3.	If a full investigation is required appoint an Investigator to undertake a Stage Two Investigation.	Within 5 working days of confirmed escalation to Stage Two or agreed complaint statement	Customer Relationship Team
4.	To complete the investigation and submit the draft Stage Two report to the appropriate Assistant Director for approval of the recommendations / service	Within 25 working days of complaint statement being signed (unless extension agreed with complainant in which case this period is	Investigator

	improvements resulting from the complaint investigation. A copy of this report will also be sent to the Customer Relationship Team	extended to 65 working days maximum.)	
5.	To notify the complainant where appropriate the reasons for necessary extension past 25 working days and to specify a new completion date.	Within 25 working days of the complaint statement being signed	Customer Relationship Team
6.	To provide the complainant with a formal Stage Two response.	Within 5 working days of receiving the final reports and in all cases, within 65 working days of the complaint statement being agreed & signed.	Customer Relationship Team
7.	To discuss Learning to prepare a Service Action Plan to monitor any service improvements.	Within 25 working days of complaint response having been sent to the customer.	Customer Relationship Team

## 7 Resolution and Remedies

- 7.1 Where some justification is found for a complaint consideration needs to be given to the question of appropriate remedy.
- 7.2 An apology and/or explanation will always be needed where any part of the complaint is upheld. It may be necessary to determine who can provide remedial action and what arrangements are needed.
- 7.3 The Council's guidance in the use of financial redress is that this should be made in exceptional circumstances where some direct financial loss has been incurred, and where agreement has been reached with the Assistant Director, as well as the Monitoring Officer.

## 8 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

- 8.1 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman is independent and impartial and gives a service which is confidential and free of charge. The Ombudsman has the same powers as the High Court to require people to provide information and to produce documents for investigation.
- 8.2 Any member of the public is able to complain to the Ombudsman if they feel there has been an injustice. However, the Ombudsman's office usually states that customers should first take up their complaint with the relevant Department or Council.
- 8.3 If the customer is not happy with how the Council has dealt with their complaint, they can take the matter to the Ombudsman, whose role is to investigate complaints of maladministration by Local Authorities. Maladministration means that there has been a fault in the way the Council has or has not done something, such as a failure to follow its own rules or a breach of legislation.

- 8.4 Complaints which members of the public make to the Ombudsman will be dealt with by the Customer Relationship Team who will ensure that the complaints process has been followed.
- 8.5 The Ombudsman may reject any complaint as premature if the complaints procedure has not been followed. The Ombudsman's involvement may be ended at any point where it is clear there is no maladministration or where the Council agrees to settle with the customer.
- 8.6 Complainants who remain dissatisfied with the proposed outcome after their complaints have been handled within this procedure will be notified advised that they are entitled to approach the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, to request that the matter be considered. The Ombudsman by telephone on **0300 061 0614** or online at [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk).
- 8.7 People who use the Council's services are in fact entitled to make an approach to the Ombudsman at any point. It is generally the case however, that the LGSCO declines to undertake an investigation until the complaint has been dealt with within the local authority's complaints process.

## **9 Improving services following complaints**

- 9.1 A primary objective of the complaints process is to ensure that mistakes are identified and remedied, and that they are not repeated in future. Achieving this requires analysis of what went wrong, why the mistake was made and what changes are needed to ensure that it does not recur.
- 9.2 We are committed to ensuring that all possible lessons are learnt from the complaints we deal with, that our services improve as a result and that any mistakes that are identified are not repeated. For this reason, we have put in place ways of maximising the learning opportunities which arise from complaints.
- 9.3 Most complaints prove capable of being resolved with relative informality at the first stage. It is nevertheless crucial that the issues and themes which arise from these complaints are considered carefully and comprehensively so that any poor practice or structural difficulties are identified and addressed. The number and type of complaints about each service area are reported on a quarterly and 12 monthly basis to the Senior Management Team with a summary of comments, recommendations and any emerging themes.
- 9.4 Complaints which are handled at Stage Two invariably raise important issues for the Council and the Investigator's report provides an invaluable independent perspective on the service provided and on the matters which resulted in the complaint.
- 9.5 A summary of learning points and changes made arising from complaints will be included in the annual report on complaints.

## 10. Unacceptable behaviour and unreasonable persistent complainants

10.1 We are committed to providing an inclusive, responsive and easily accessible complaints process. We will generally not impose restrictions upon the way in which complainants are able to contact or communicate with staff members.

10.2 In line with the authority's duty of care however, staff are entitled to protection from complainants whose behaviour is abusive, offensive or threatening. In such cases, the Customer Relationship Team will inform the complainant why his/her behaviour is considered unacceptable and ask him/her to change it. If this has no effect, possible ways forward will be discussed at a formal (noted) strategy meeting, convened and chaired by the Customer Relationship Team. Decisions and action in such cases must be consistent, proportionate to the concerns, time-limited and subject to review at least on a six monthly basis.

10.3 Among the possible measures available are

- Restriction of access to service area sites
- Routing of all contact with the person through a named staff member
- Requiring contact with the person to be by letter only
- Proposing a formal agreement with the complainant about his/her behaviour
- Accessing legal advice regarding obtaining an injunction
- Notification to the police
- Notification to the keeper of the Council's Personal Safety Precautions Register

10.4 Whilst no single definition of an unreasonable persistent complainant exists, vexatious behaviour may include some or each of the following, this is not an exhaustive list;

- Refusing to specify grounds of the complaint, despite offers of assistance from the council.
- Refusing to cooperate with the complaints investigation process whilst still wishing the complaint to be resolved.
- Refusing to accept that issues are not within the remit of a complaints procedure despite having been provided with information about the procedure's scope.
- Unwillingness to accept the terms of the complaints procedure.
- Insisting on the complaint being dealt with, in ways that are incompatible with the complaints procedure or good practice.
- Making what appear to be groundless complaints about the staff dealing with the complaint, and seeking to have them replaced.
- Changing the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds and/or denying statements made at an earlier stage.

- Introducing trivial or irrelevant new information which the complainant expects to be taken into account and commented on, or raising large number of detailed but unimportant questions and insisting they are fully answered.
- Electronically recording meetings and conversations without the prior knowledge and consent of the other persons involved.
- Making unnecessary excessive demands on the time and resources of staff whilst a complaint is being looked into, by for example excessive telephoning or sending emails to numerous council staff, writing lengthy complex letters every few days and expecting immediate responses.
- Submitting repeat complaints, after the complaints processes have been completed, essentially about the same issues, with additions/variations which the complainant insists make these “new” complaints which should be put through the full complaints procedure.
- Refusing to accept the decision – repeatedly arguing the point and complaining about the decision.
- Repetition of identical or similar complaints, but failure to accept any outcome
- Excessive focus on the complaints process, as opposed to the desired outcome
- Focus on unrealistic and unachievable outcomes
- Unreasonably persistent and repetitious contact with the service area
- Tendency to approach different parts of the organisation, in the apparent hope of eliciting different responses
- Abusive or threatening behaviour or language towards council staff.

10.5 Subject to any considerations about unacceptable behaviour, it is crucial to ensure that the substance of any complaint which seems to be being pursued in a vexatious manner is considered and investigated with the same rigour as any other complaint, as far as possible. Only on this basis could the service area justify any later course of action which had the effect of treating the complainant differently from others.

10.6 The basis on which a vexatious complainant might be treated differently from any other complainant stems from the authority’s obligation to deploy its resources as fairly as possible. This entails avoiding using resources disproportionately and unproductively in respect of some individuals. Responding to vexatious complaints can be stressful to the staff involved and the authority’s duty of care to its employees requires appropriate remedial action to be taken in such cases.

## **11. Compliments and comments**

- 11.1 All comments or compliments, whether received in person, by telephone, in writing or by e-mail should also be passed to the Customer Relationship Team, as soon as possible i.e. by fax, e-mail or telephone for acknowledging.
- 11.2 If a comment requires further action or a response, this will be passed to the Team Leader or Service Delivery Manager responsible for the service concerned. The Manager will aim to deal with the comment within the same time scale as a complaint and should notify the Customer Relationship Team of the action taken.

## **12. Performance monitoring**

- 12.1 Activities undertaken within the complaints procedure will be reported on a quarterly and 12 monthly basis to the Service Delivery Management Team, and will be summarised in an Annual Report, which will be published on the Council's website.
- 12.2 In considering complaints performance, particular attention will be paid to
- Number of complaints arising in each service area.
  - Proportion which were upheld on investigation.
  - Significance of any common themes which emerge from complaints.
  - Extent of compliance with agreed timescales.
  - Extent of service user satisfaction with the operation of the process.
  - Number of complaints which have not been resolved within the process, and are referred to the Ombudsman.
  - Any learning identified.
  - Changes and improvements which occur in consequence of complaints.

### 13. Corporate Complaints Flowchart

**Key**  
 CRT – Customer Relationship Team

