

Governing Body Response to Annual Complaints Performance/Self-Assessment and Service Improvement Report September 2025.

Purpose: To provide a formal response from the Governing body following a review of the Annual Complaints Report 2024–25 and the Self-Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code.

The Council Cabinet and Housing Advisory Board (HAB) have reviewed the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for 2024–25, alongside the refreshed Self-Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code.

Scrutiny and Challenge

The Governing body and the tenants Voice Forum have actively scrutinised the report through formal meetings and engagement with the Complaints Manager, Engagement Manager and senior leadership. Key areas of challenge included:

- Escalation Rates and Timeliness: The Board noted the increase in Stage 2 complaints and the decline in performance against the 100% timeliness target (recorded at 83.78%). This was challenged, and assurance was sought on the introduction of escalation tracking and additional staffing resources to improve future performance.
- Maladministration Findings: The governing body reviewed the three Ombudsman determinations (two maladministration, one severe maladministration) and have been briefed of root causes. It was confirmed that bespoke training and service reviews have been implemented in response, including an end-to-end complaints process review led by the Tenants Voice Forum.
- Learning Themes and Strategic Priorities: The governing body has oversight of the eight learning themes and four strategic priorities, ensuring they were evidence-based and aligned with tenant feedback.
- Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs): The Governing body and the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) has questioned the 37.6% satisfaction rate in complaints handling, which is below the sector benchmark. It was agreed that this metric will be monitored closely, with quarterly updates provided to the governing body.

Risk Identification and Mitigation

The governing body has assurance that the appropriate mitigation actions have been taken:

- Partial compliance against the code section 3.3 Low complaint volumes per 1,000 properties in Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) may indicate under-reporting and a lack of appropriate escalation when tenants’ express dissatisfaction. Internal reviews and feedback from the Tenants Voice Forum highlighted confusion between service requests and complaints, and delays caused by internal triage processes. This is addressed in the actions for improvement in section 3.3 of the self-assessment.
- Risk of Escalation Due to Incomplete Stage 1 Actions: Mitigated through the introduction of an action tracker and early escalation protocols.
- Risk of Inaccessible Complaint Channels: Mitigated by expanding access routes, including digital, face-to-face, and assisted channels, and by embedding reasonable adjustments into the complaints process.
- Risk of Cultural Barriers to Complaint Handling: Addressed through a programme of staff training, leadership engagement, and tenant-led scrutiny.

Conclusion

We are satisfied that the report and self-assessment demonstrate a commitment to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement. The Governing Body will continue to monitor performance, challenge outcomes, and support the embedding of a positive complaints culture across Housing Services.

Signed,



Leader of the Council

Date: 10/09/25