



North  
Northamptonshire  
Council

# Complaint Remedy Policy

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# Document Version Control

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Type of document: **Draft**

Version Number: **.03.2**

Document File Name: Remedy Policy

Issue date: **XXXX**

Approval date and by who (CMT / committee): **XXX**

Document held by (name/section): Assistant Director Customer Services

For internal publication only or external also: Internal

Document stored on Council website or Intranet: Intranet

Next review date: **XXXX**

## Change History

Issue	Date	Comments

## Consultees

Internal	External
services	e.g. Stakeholders / Partners /Organisation(s)

## Distribution List

Internal	External
e.g. Individual(s) / Group / Section	e.g. Stakeholders / Partners /Organisation(s)

## Links to other documents

Document	Link
NNC Compliments, comments and complaints Policy	<a href="https://cms.northnorthants.gov.uk/media/374/download">https://cms.northnorthants.gov.uk/media/374/download</a>
LGSCO Remedies Guidance	<a href="#">Guidance on remedies - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman</a>
HOS Remedies Guidance	<a href="#">Policy and Guidance on remedies - Housing Ombudsman (housing-ombudsman.org.uk)</a>
s92 Local Government Act 2000	<a href="#">s92 Local Government Act 2000</a>
Housing Act 1996	<a href="#">Schedule 2 Housing Act 1996</a>

# Additional Comments to note

\*\*Make any additional comments as might be relevant here\*\*

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## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The council helps thousands of residents every year and welcomes customers' comments and suggestions; they are key in helping the council develop and improve the services it offers. In the carrying out of all functions the council will always seek to be guided by its values:

- Customer-focused
- Respectful
- Efficient
- Supportive
- Trustworthy

Sometimes things go wrong and organisational learning can be drawn and processes developed to stop the same mistakes happening again. Where someone has suffered an injustice because things have gone wrong, it must be acknowledged, and steps taken to put things right. Not all maladministration or poor service results in injustice or hardship, but where it does, steps should be taken to restore the complainant to the position they would have been in if the maladministration or poor service had not occurred. If that is not possible a remedy would be appropriate.

## 2.0 Scope

2.1 This policy applies to remedies offered in resolution of complaints raised under the North Northamptonshire Council Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy.

2.2 This policy does not apply to claims for personal injuries, damage or insurance. This policy does not apply to mandatory payments made under statutory policy.

## 3.0 Policy outcomes

3.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles, guide decision making, actions and requirements on the administration of remedy. This policy's aim is to ensure a financially robust corporate response that is also fair and proportionate where it is not possible to restore a person to the position they would have been in had a service failure not occurred.

This policy will identify:

- the circumstances to which remedy may apply and the methods available

- required authorisation levels to ensure maintenance of robust internal financial controls
- monitoring responsibilities to ensure performance awareness supports outcome achievement

## 4.0 Remedy Policy

### 4.1 Responsibility for the Policy

- The Remedy Policy will be owned and maintained by the Section 106 Monitoring Officer in collaboration with s151 Finance Officer and in consultation with the appropriate business areas.
- Directors are responsible for ensuring appropriate records are maintained and linked processes are followed:
  - ❖ Remedy decisions and their authorisation chain
  - ❖ Learning outcomes and the service improvements those outcomes informed
  - ❖ Return of records to the council's designated complaint coordination and Ombudsman Services link

### 4.2 Remedy Principals

The council will ensure responses to injustice arising from maladministration or poor service demonstrate its values in action. A response will

- Acknowledge and apologise for poor service, maladministration or injustice where identified and if possible, return the complainant and any others affected in the same way to the position they would have been in if it had not occurred.
- Be sensitive to the customer's individual circumstances and consider a remedy which takes those into account while managing their expectations in a professional manner.
- Be open about how remedy decisions are reached and keep clear and accurate records of remedies offered including authorisation in line with directorate's delegated authority.
- Ensure remedy decisions are proportionate to the injustice and treat people without bias, discrimination or unlawfulness.
- Record and use lessons learnt to improve services ensuring maladministration or poor service is addressed and not repeated.

### 4.3 Remedy Decisions

The complainant should be offered a remedy that returns them to the position they would have been in should the maladministration or poor service leading to injustice or hardship not occurred.

If that is not possible, the remedy should compensate for the injustice or hardship appropriately and should also be offered to others who have suffered injustice or hardship as a result of the same maladministration or poor service.

Wherever an injustice has occurred the complainant must receive both an assurance that lessons have been learnt an explanation of changes made to prevent maladministration or poor service being repeated.

Remedy decisions should be based on the specific and individual circumstances for which they are compensating, and consideration should be given to the appropriateness of non-financial and financial remedy.

## Non-financial remedies

- an apology, explanation, and acknowledgement of responsibility given in the matter suitable to the needs of the customer ie: written; telephone or face to face format.
- remedial action, which may include reviewing or changing a decision on the service given to an individual complainant; revising published material; revising procedures to prevent the same thing happening again; training or supervising staff; or any combination of these.

## Financial remedies

Financial compensation for direct or indirect financial loss, loss of opportunity, inconvenience, distress, or any combination of these must have regard to remedy guidance offered by the appropriate Ombudsman Service and internal procedure.

- compensation for financial loss must have regard to how much the complainant has demonstrably lost or what extra costs they have incurred.
- financial compensation for inconvenience or distress should consider the impact on the individual, for example:
  - ❖ the circumstances contributed to ill health
  - ❖ the circumstances lead to prolonged or aggravated injustice or hardship
  - ❖ the length of time taken to resolve a dispute or complaint
  - ❖ the trouble the individual was put to in pursuing the dispute or complaint.
  - ❖ costs that the complainant incurred in pursuing the complaint
  - ❖ any inconvenience, distress or both resulting from poor complaint handling

## 4.4 Financial Remedy

Financial Remedies will be benchmarked against the relevant Ombudsman Services remedy guidance.

- Financial remedy offers require supporting documentation to include 'Financial Remedy Consideration' form (**appendix A**). This form must be appropriately authorised.
- Decision maker will use the Financial Remedy Offer form (**appendix B**).
- Designated Complaints handler to raise a payment against cost centre provided on Financial Remedy Consideration form.
- Management of the cost centre remains responsibility of service offering remedy.

## 5.0 Next steps

5.1 It is false economy and poor administrative practice to deal with complaints only as they arise and to fail to correct the cause of the problem. Learning from complaints, and offering timely and effective remedies, gives the best outcome in terms of cost effectiveness and customer service – benefiting the service provider, the complainant and the taxpayer. The council will utilise learning from complaints to improve services and seek to demonstrate the improvements.

5.2 Services to be supported to develop internal processes in response to the policy.

5.3 This policy will be reviewed bi-annually commencing 2 years from publish date.

## 6.0 Glossary of terms

Use this section to give definitions to any words that require explanation – especially if this is a public document. If you can't avoid jargon or technical terms, this is the place to explain them.

Term	Definition
Remedy	Putting right injustice arising from maladministration or poor service

## 7.0 Appendix



Appendix A to NNC  
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Appendix A



Appendix B to NNC  
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Appendix B