

Customer Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy

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Links associated with this document

Link
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
Housing Ombudsman Service
North Northamptonshire Council Equality Policy and Strategy

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1.0 Introduction / foreword

1.1 North Northamptonshire council supports thousands of residents every year and welcomes feedback on the services it provides; feedback is key in helping the council develop and improve the services it offers. We are committed to delivering our services to a high standard and are guided by our values:

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

We want residents to share their ideas and opinions. Let us know when we're doing things well so we continue to do so, tell us when things have gone wrong so we can put things right and share ideas on how we can do things better. Feedback helps us learn and do things better.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This policy sets out how we will respond to comments, compliments, and complaints.

2.2 This policy does not apply to everything we do. Some decisions and services are out of scope of this policy because they fall under statutory regulations or other policies including:

- Complaints about the conduct of Senior Officers are dealt with by the Chief Executive Officer
- Complaints about the conduct of the Chief Executive Officer are dealt with by the Monitoring Officer
- Complaints about the conduct of a Councillor are dealt with by the Monitoring Officer

2.3 Other matters out of scope of this policy include:

- Appeals – decisions subject to appeals
 - planning application decisions
 - school admission/exclusion decisions
 - housing benefit decisions
 - statutory homeless reviews requested under section 202 of the Housing Act 1996
 - homeless application reviews requested under part 6 of the Housing Act 1996
- Parking fines and penalty charge notices
- Fixed penalty charges
- Recharge fees for repairs
- Planning consultation responses
- Expressions of dissatisfaction made through a survey.
- Matters under consideration by courts or tribunals
- Matters subject to legal action
- Matters for insurance claims
- Matters not related to the actions or decisions of the council or anybody acting on its behalf
- Political comments
- Matters raised by Members of Parliament (MPs) are responded to directly
- Matters raised by Councillors are responded to directly
- Matters raised by employees which fall under internal policy
- Matters subject to internal disciplinary or grievance procedures
- HR Recruitment complaints
- Complaints about matters which occurred more than 12 months earlier
- Complaints already concluded under this policy
- Complaints on matters which an Ombudsman Service has concluded no fault to the council

2.4 Complaints about some matters fall under different processes.

- Complaints about Children and Young People’s Services are dealt with under the process detailed at Appendix A
- Complaints about Adult Social Care are dealt with under the process detailed at Appendix B

3.0 Policy outcomes

3.1 This policy supports the council’s key commitment to delivering modern public services. From time to time there are occasions when our service falls short of expectations. This policy will explain how to provide feedback and what we will do when things have gone wrong.

4.0 Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy

What is feedback and how it can be made

4.1 A comment is feedback about a service or a suggestion about how we can improve it or do it differently.

4.2 A compliment is feedback when you think we’ve done something well.

4.3 A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of actions by the organization, its staff, or those acting on behalf of the organization; it may affect an individual or group of individuals.

4.4 A service request is a request requiring action to be taken to put something right. It will not be treated as a complaint although it will be recorded and monitored. Action to address a service request will not stop if a complaint is raised while action is still ongoing.

4.5 Comments, compliments and complaints may be made on someone else’s behalf with their written consent.

4.6 Anonymous comments, compliments or complaints may be made however, we may not be able to respond to them and a complaint may not be able to be investigated without enough information to search our records.

4.7 Please contact us as soon as practically possible about the matter you wish to raise.

4.8 Comments, compliments, complaints, service requests may be made in a variety of methods to ensure accessibility. The quickest way to give feedback is to complete our [online feedback form](#). You can also [contact us](#) by telephone, in writing or in person. We will ask if adjustments are required and if so will endeavour to ensure all reasonable adjustments are made.

How complaints will be handled

4.9.1 Your complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt. If further information is required you will be contacted. Ombudsman Services details will be provided with the acknowledgment.

4.9.2 The complaint will be investigated by a senior officer of the service complained about.

4.9.3 A response will be provided within 10 working days of the date your complaint was acknowledged.

4.9.4 If a response cannot be provided within 10 working days you will be contacted with an explanation and updated with a date for resolution.

4.9.5 If further related matters are raised about the complaint while it is still being investigated, these will be incorporated and responded to unless it would unreasonably delay the response.

4.9.6 Our response to you will set out the issues investigated, the background to the case, the evidence used in assessing the case, the reasons for the findings or decisions made.

4.9.7 If you remain dissatisfied with the response you can ask for your complaint to be looked at again; this should be done immediately or as soon as reasonably practical.

What happens if you ask for the complaint to be looked at again

4.10.1 Your request will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt. If further information is required you will be contacted.

4.10.2 The complaint will be investigated by a different senior officer i.e. a service manager.

4.10.3 A response will be provided within 20 working days of the date your request was acknowledged.

4.10.4 If a response cannot be provided within 20 working days you will be advised why and when it will be provided.

4.10.5 Our response to you will set out the issues investigated, the background to the case, the evidence used in assessing the case, the reasons for the findings or decisions made.

4.10.6 This response once provided to you, concludes the council's complaint procedure.

4.10.7 If you remain dissatisfied with the response you have received you can raise the matter with the appropriate Ombudsman Service; this should be done immediately or as soon as reasonably practical.

4.10.8 You can complain directly to the appropriate Ombudsman Service within 12 months. Their details will be provided at the time the initial complaint is acknowledged.

Unacceptable Behaviour

4.11.1 We appreciate that sometimes upset can cause people to act of character in unacceptable ways; we will always aim to deal with feedback including complaints empathetically. However, sometimes behaviours can cross the lines of what is acceptable and these unacceptable behaviours will be managed under the council's Unacceptable Customer Behaviour Policy which can be found [here](#).

5.0 Considerations

5.1 Consultation

There are no consultation requirements associated with this review and update to policy.

5.2 Equality Implications

The equality implications have been considered. An equality screening assessment has been completed and there are no equality implications arising from this policy.

This policy is compliant with the NNC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and supports the council's equality strategy; Equality Screening Assessment completed.

This policy ensures accessibility and reasonable adjustments are considered. This policy will be publicly available in a clear and accessible format.

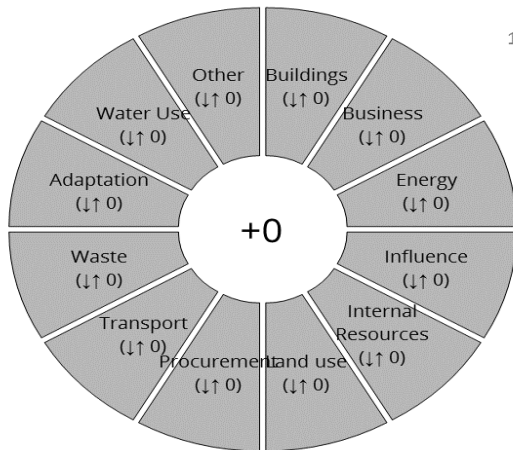
5.3 Health Assessments and inequalities

This policy is compliant with the NNC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and supports the council's equality strategy; Equality Screening Assessment completed.

After consideration, there are no health implications arising from this procedure.

5.4 Climate Impact

- The climate implications have been considered. After consideration, there are no climate implications arising from this procedure.



North Northamptonshire Council has committed to being a carbon neutral organisation by 2030, 5 yrs & 6 mos away.

5.5 Community Impact

After consideration, there are no community implications arising from this procedure.

5.6 Crime and Disorder Impact

After consideration, there are no crime and disorder implications arising from this procedure.

5.7 Data Protection Implications

- After consideration, there are no data protection implications arising from this procedure. Full details on how the council handle's personal data can be found on our [data protection and privacy information page](#).

5.8 Legal and Governance

- After consideration, there are no legal implications arising from this procedure.

5.9 Resources and Financial

- After consideration, there are no financial and / or resource implications arising from this procedure.

5.10 Risk

- After consideration, there are no significant risks, positive or adverse arising from this procedure.

Appendices

Appendix A



NCT in Partnership
with WNC_Children

Appendix B



Adult Social Care
Complaints Process

Appendix C



ESA 2024
NNC-Comments, Coi

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