

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Self-Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code

Council Housing Management Service

2025-26



Cheshire West
and Chester

Appendix A: Self-assessment form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and it must be reviewed and approved by the landlord's governing body at least annually.

Once approved, landlords must publish the self-assessment as part of the annual complaints performance and service improvement report on their website. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.

Landlords are required to complete the self-assessment in full and support all statements with evidence, with additional commentary as necessary.

We recognise that there may be a small number of circumstances where landlords are unable to meet the requirements, for example, if they do not have a website. In these circumstances, we expect landlords to deliver the intentions of the Code in an alternative way, for example by publishing information in a public area so that it is easily accessible.

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a tenant or group of tenants.'</i>	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 4)	Evidence can be found under Section 5. Definition and legislation of the policy.
1.3	A tenant does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. Whenever a tenant expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 4)	Evidence can be found under Section 5. Definition and legislation of the policy where it is clearly stated that a tenant does not need to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such and it's their decision if the complaint will be raised. The policy also states that complaints submitted by a third party/ representative will be handled in line with the policy.
1.4	Landlords must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint. This must be set out in their complaints policy. A service request is a request from a tenant to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 4)	The Complaints Policy fully aligns to definition. Evidence can be found under Section 5. Definition and legislation of the policy.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.			
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the tenant expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the tenant complains.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 4)	Evidence can be found under Section 5. Definition and legislation. What is a Service Request? The Council will not normally treat service requests as complaints. A service request is a request from a resident requiring action to be taken to put something right, for example a request for a repair, reporting a neighbourhood issue or anti-social behaviour. Service requests are recorded separately from complaints and are monitored and reviewed regularly. Where a tenant expresses dissatisfaction with a service request, a complaint is raised. This does not affect the handling of the service request which would continue to deliver a resolution.
1.6	An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint, though wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to. Where landlords ask for wider feedback about their services, they also must provide details of how tenants can complain.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 6-10)	Where surveys are completed, and a tenant expresses dissatisfaction they are advised how they can make a complaint if they wish. External partners for example, Kwest who undertake the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) are provided with the details of how-to make a complaint so they

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				can share with a tenant if they express, they want to make a complaint. Our Complaints Policy explains how to make a complaint and sets out how a tenant can expect this to be handled. Evidence can be found under Section 6. How the policy will be delivered.

Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.1	Landlords must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. If landlords decide not to accept a complaint they must be able to evidence their reasoning. Each complaint must be considered on its own merits	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 2)	We will consider each complaint on its own merits and consider the individual circumstances. When a complaint is not accepted a record of the explanation given to the tenant setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the Complaints process and their right to take that decision to the Housing Ombudsman. This is recorded on our housing management system. Evidence can be found in our Complaints Policy under 'Exclusions' section.
2.2	A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 2)	There will be exceptional situations when a matter will not be considered a complaint or escalated, and examples are set out in the

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to tenants. Acceptable exclusions include: • The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago. • Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court. • Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.			policy, which we believe are fair and reasonable to tenants. Evidence can be found in our Complaints Policy under 'Exclusions' section. The policy states: • <i>The issue giving rise to the complaint occurring over twelve months ago, however, we will apply discretion to this where there are good reasons to do so.</i> • <i>Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court.</i> • <i>Insurance matters where an insurance claim has been made e.g. damages or personal injury</i> • <i>Closed complaints which have previously been raised and have already been considered under our Complaints Policy.</i> • <i>Where the HOS has already determined the outcome of an investigation.</i>
2.3	Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the tenant becoming aware of the issue, unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 2)	Staff dealing with complaints are trained to identify the timeline of the complaint and if outside of this timescale, they are empowered to apply discretion where appropriate on a case-by-case basis. Our Complaints Policy explains this in full.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.			Evidence can be found under ' Exclusions ' section.
2.4	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the tenant setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the landlord to take on the complaint.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 3)	If we decide not to accept a complaint, an explanation will be provided to the tenant setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Housing Ombudsman. When a complaint is not accepted a record of the explanation given to the tenant is recorded on our housing management system. Evidence can be found in our Complaints Policy under ' Exclusions ' section.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 2)	We will consider each complaint on its own merits and consider the individual circumstances. Evidence can be found in our Complaints Policy under ' Exclusions ' section.

Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
3.1	Landlords must make it easy for tenants to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint. Landlords must	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 5-6 and 13-19)	We are committed to providing excellent customer services, which are fair, equitable and inclusive. As such, we will endeavour to understand and make any reasonable

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of tenants who may need to access the complaints process.		Housing Reasonable Adjustment Statement	adjustments required for customers in line with our Reasonable Adjustment Statement and the Equality Act 2010. Any reasonable adjustment provided will be recorded on our housing management system and kept under active review. The Complaints policy has been reviewed by the Council's Equality and Diversity Team and a full equality analysis has been completed under Appendix 1. The application of the Policy will be monitored to understand the impact on tenants ensuring Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Using the MHCLG guidance we will signpost tenants who tell us they need help to make a complaint to free advice organisations.
3.2	Tenants must be able to raise their complaints in any way and with any member of staff. All staff must be aware of the complaints process and be able to pass details of the complaint to the appropriate person within the landlord.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 6)	The policy details all ways in which tenants and their representatives can report a complaint. Tenants can raise a complaint with any member of staff or appointed contractors. All staff are aware of the complaints process and will pass a complaint to the Complaints team to record and manage. Evidence can be found under Accessibility and awareness section of the complaints policy. Tenants and their representatives can report a complaint in several ways.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				• If they have downloaded the My tenancy + app, they can report a complaint and will be redirected to our website to log the details of your complaint. • Website: Make a formal complaint about the Council • By writing: Cheshire West and Chester Council, Council Housing Management Service, The Portal, Wellington Road, Ellesmere Port, CH65 0BZ. - Phone: 0300 123 7724 • In person: The Portal, Wellington Road, Ellesmere Port.
3.3	High volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative, as they can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that tenants are unable to complain.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 2) Welcome Pack (Page 23)	We have an accessible publicised complaints process. Staff throughout the organisation have been trained to understand that complaints are not to be discouraged and are an opportunity to learn and improve services. Evidence can be found within our complaints policy under Introduction Section. The policy states: <i>“We welcome complaints and actively encourage customers to express their dissatisfaction to us. All expressions of dissatisfaction are a positive opportunity to gather insight that will help us improve our services.”</i>

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				Within our Welcome pack which is provided to tenants at the beginning of their tenancy it also states: <i>“We know we can always do better. By working with you, to listen to your opinions and feelings we will make positive changes, to make sure you feel satisfied with our services and trust us to deliver on promises. We realise that things can occasionally go wrong. If this happens to you and you are unhappy about our service delivery, then we want you to let us know so we can fix it as quickly as possible. On dealing with complaints, we offer and deliver, using this process.”</i>
3.4	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all tenants. This will detail the two-stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy must also be published on the landlord’s website.	Yes	Our documents Cheshire West and Chester Council Complaints Policy (Page 7-9) Welcome Pack (Page 23)	Our Complaints policy is publicised on the website and outlines the two-stage process, timescales and what tenants should expect at each complaint stage. Evidence can be found within our policy under the How the policy will be delivered section. Under the Make a complaint section on our website, it also outlines the full complaint process. Within the welcome pack which is given to tenants at the beginning of their tenancy, it is also highlighted about the complaints process.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 7-9)	Evidence can be found in our Complaints Policy under How the policy will be delivered section Under the Make a complaint section on our website, it also outlines how to contact the housing ombudsman at any time as well as the principles of the Code.
3.6	Landlords must give tenants the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 5)	The policy states tenants can authorise a representative to make a complaint and act on their behalf. This could be a friend, partner, relative or someone from an external organisation. Evidence can be found in our Complaints Policy under Who can make a complaint section.
3.7	Landlords must provide tenants with information on their right to access the Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.	Yes	Make a complaint Complaints Policy (Page 6)	Under the Make a complaint section on our website, it also outlines how to contact the housing ombudsman at any time. Within the complaints policy and all correspondence within the complaint handling process. This is evidenced under the accessibility and awareness section of the policy: The Housing Ombudsman Service can also provide advice and support in relation to complaints under their jurisdiction. The details of how to access their services are provided on our website, in complaint outcome letters if relevant, the link to their

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				website is included here: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk . The Housing Ombudsman Service contact details: Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 1484 Unit D Preston PR2 0ET Telephone: 0300 111 3000 Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk Website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
4.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body (or equivalent). This Code will refer to that person or team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 7-9)	The Council have in place a team with responsibility of complaints management. This includes 2 'Complaints and Compliments Officers' who log, track and respond to Stage 1 complaints as per the Code. Stage 2 Complaints are responded to by Senior managers. The team are led by the Complaints and Office Manager who is highly skilled and trained in Complaint Handling and the Ombudsman's Code of Practice. An appropriate complaints handler is defined in the policy as located in the team responsible for the service, but who has not been involved in the source of the complaint sufficiently to have a conflict of interest.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
4.2	The complaints officer must have access to staff at all levels to facilitate the prompt resolution of complaints. They must also have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.	Yes	Compensation Policy Complaints Policy	All Complaint handlers have the authority to resolve customer dissatisfaction by working collaboratively with colleagues across all service areas. The Compensation Policy provides Complaints handlers with the autonomy to make decisions which can facilitate prompt resolution of complaints, where there is evidence of a service failure.
4.3	Landlords are expected to prioritise complaint handling and a culture of learning from complaints. All relevant staff must be suitably trained in the importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively	Yes	Annual Complaints Performance Report Insight 2025-26 (page 20) Annual Report CHMS 2025-26	We have embedded a culture which sees complaint handling as a priority and seeks to learn from the outcomes of complaints wherever possible. Examples of learning and process changes we have made are accessible on the website from the appendix 4 of the annual performance report. The Complaints and Office Manager also logs all Root causes of service failures on the Business improvement log, and they are responsible for monitoring service improvements through to implementation. We will publish learning from complaints on the website 'You Said, We Listened' and in annual report as per measurements set out in the Tenants Together Charter (TTC). Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) are reported to the Council as part of the monthly

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				Housing Management Contract reporting requirements.

Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.1	Landlords must have a single policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this Code. Tenants must not be treated differently if they complain.	Yes	Complaints Policy Welcome Pack (Page 23)	There is one complaint policy in place to deal with all complaints covered by this code. Tenants are not treated differently should they complain. Within our welcome Pack which is provided to tenants at the start of their tenancy we actively encourage tenants and leaseholders to make a complaint if they are unhappy with a service provided. It states: <i>“We realise that things can occasionally go wrong. If this happens to you and you are unhappy about our service delivery, then we want you to let us know so we can fix it as quickly as possible.”</i>
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and tenants is key to effective complaint handling. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as ‘stage 0’ or	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 4 and 7-9) Welcome Pack (Page 23)	There are no additional stages to the complaint process and staff are trained to seek swift early resolution of complaints in agreement with tenants.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.			Evidence that early resolution is a part of our complaint handling culture can be found in our Complaints Policy under What is a Service Request? Section. Under the Make a complaint section on our website, it also outlines the 2-stage process for complaint handling. Within the welcome pack which is given to tenants at the beginning of their tenancy, it is also highlighted about the complaints process.
5.3	A process with more than two stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as this will make the complaint process unduly long and delay access to the Ombudsman.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 7-9) Welcome Pack (Page 23)	The policy which is published on the website has a two-stage complaints process. Within the welcome pack which is given to tenants at the beginning of their tenancy, it is also highlighted about the complaints process.
5.4	Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Tenants must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.	No		No complaints are dealt with by a third party.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	No		No third parties handle complaints on our behalf.
5.6	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the tenant is seeking. The Code will refer to this as “the complaint definition”. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the tenant must be asked for clarification.	Yes	Complaints Policy (page 7-9)	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, the Council set out our understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the customer is seeking. This is referred to as “the complaint definition”. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, we will ask the customer for clarification. We will be clear about which aspects of the complaint we are, and are not, responsible for investigating and clarifying any areas where this is not clear. Acknowledgement letters issued to complainants at stage 1 set out our understanding of the complaint. Tenants are not required to explain their reasons for requesting Stage 2. We will make reasonable efforts to understand why a tenant remains unhappy as part of its Stage 2 response.
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 7-9)	Where part of a complaint is not the responsibility of CWAC this would be made clear in the acknowledgement and again within any complaint outcome responses.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; b. give the tenant a fair chance to set out their position; c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 7)	Complaint handlers are trained to deal with complaints independently and on their own merits after considering all relevant information. The complaint handler will contact the tenant to give them an opportunity for them to set out their position. Any conflict of interest would be addressed on receipt. This can be evidenced under the Complaint Handling section of our Complaints policy.
5.9	Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the tenant suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 7)	Where it is not possible to respond to the complaint within the timescales set out in the code, agreement is reached with the tenant, and this is recorded on the housing management system. Evidence can be found of this within the complaints policy under the Complaint Handling section. Our policy states: Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this policy, the Council will agree with the customer suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint. A full record will be kept of the complaint, and the outcomes at each stage. This will include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the customer,

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				correspondence with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.
5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for tenants where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any disabilities a tenant has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 10-12) Housing Reasonable Adjustment Statement	We are committed to providing excellent customer services, which are fair, equitable and inclusive. As such, we will endeavour to understand and make any reasonable adjustments required for customers in line with our Reasonable Adjustment Statement and the Equality Act 2010. We record reasonable adjustments agreed on the complaint case file held on our housing management system. A reasonable adjustment could include: • Departing from usual practice, if staff find that the current position places a tenant at substantial disadvantage, for instance by allowing more time than usual for someone to respond or provide information. • Providing specialist equipment or additional support, such as a sign language interpreter for a meeting or event. • Making sure buildings do not present obstacles for disabled people, for instance by providing a lift or ground level meeting rooms; • A physical alteration to one of our premises, for example, fitting a lift, wide doors, or a ramp.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				• A change to Council policies, procedures or services, for example, a comfort or rest break in a meeting or extension of time limits (where lawful to do so). • An adjustment to how staff communicates with tenants to meet their specific needs. For example, providing information in alternative formats. During any type of contact, staff may ask tenants/leaseholders if they have any needs, and tenants/leaseholders are also encouraged to state their needs whenever possible. For example, when making a complaint the complaint handler triaging the complaint will ask the tenant if they have a preferred contact method and any additional support or adjustments they may need. The reasonable adjustment statement is published on our website but also on complaint acknowledgement and outcome letters sent to complainants.
5.11	Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 2-3)	Evidence can be found in our Complaints Policy under ' Exclusions ' section. If the Council decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation will be provided in letter format to the customer setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.			for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Housing Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may advise the Council to investigate the complaint.
5.12	A full record must be kept of the complaint, and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the tenant, correspondence with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.	Yes	Complaints Policy	Complaints are logged within the Housing Management system on QL Complaints case management module. Complaints are recorded in full. All cases contain - case number, date received, details of complainant and all contact records with the complainant and other relevant parties
5.13	Landlords must have processes in place to ensure a complaint can be remedied at any stage of its complaints process. Landlords must ensure appropriate remedies can be provided at any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation.	Yes	Compensation Policy Complaints Policy (Page 9-10)	Staff have been trained to work with tenants to identify a resolution to their complaint. This resolution can be provided at any stage in the complaint process. We would not expect a tenant to have to escalate their complaint to achieve the resolution. Any remedy will reflect the impact on the customer because of any fault identified and take account of the guidance issued by the HOS. The remedy offer will clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the customer where

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				appropriate. Any remedy proposed will be followed through to completion.
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from tenants and/or their representatives. Landlords must be able to evidence reasons for putting any restrictions in place and must keep restrictions under regular review.	Yes	Unacceptable Behaviour Policy	An Unacceptable Behaviour Policy is in place to manage this behaviour. We will keep accurate records on our housing management system which will detail any unacceptable behaviour as well as information on any decisions or actions that we have taken. Any restrictions placed on a customer will be reviewed after an agreed period – usually six months. A review period will not exceed 12 months from the date of the restriction(s) being applied. If the customer's behaviour is seen to have improved at the point of the review, consideration will be given to lifting some or all the restrictions. A decision to lift the restrictions will be made by a Senior Manager. The customer will be informed of the decision in writing, or other accessible formats if required. If the behaviour has not improved, the customer will be informed of the reasons why the restrictions remain in place, and a further review date will be agreed.
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be	Yes	Unacceptable Behaviour Policy	Vulnerabilities are accounted for in any service adjustment and a culture of person-

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.		Equality and diversity Policies	centred practice and decision making is enabled by our strategy framework: • Equity, Diversion and Inclusion strategy • Tenant Voice strategy • Wellbeing strategy We have a set of clear values that drive our culture, behaviours, and activities. Role modelling these values will support us to achieve our Vision and Missions. Our THRIVE (Teamwork, Honesty, Respect, Innovation, Value for Money, Empowerment)- values help remind us of our public service ethos and guide everything we do. Staff undertake mandatory training on the Equality Act 2010 and EDI on an ongoing basis.

Section 6: Complaints Stages

Stage 1

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.1	Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can	Yes	Complaints Policy	When a new complaint is received it is triaged by the Complaints officer and the

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation. Landlords must consider factors such as the complexity of the complaint and whether the tenant is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the tenant.			tenant contacted to discuss the detail of the complaint, any desired outcomes as well as any vulnerabilities or reasonable adjustments that need to be put into place. At this point those complaints which can be provided with an early response or those which require further investigation are identified.
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received</u> .	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 8)	Complainants are contacted within 5 working days of the complaint being received. This allows details of the complaint definition and preferred resolution to be clarified. An acknowledgement is given confirming these details. Evidence can be found within the complaints Policy under the Complaint Handling section. This is also published under the Make a complaint section of the website. We record on our Housing Management system QL the received date and the acknowledged date. This is monitored for compliance and reported on weekly. Reports are also provided to the Council Housing Management Board, the Complaints Panel (both of which consist of lead councillors and tenant board

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				members) and to senior officers at the Council.
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 8)	Complaints are responded to within 10 working days of being acknowledged. This is monitored for compliance and reported on weekly. Reports are also provided to the Council Housing Management Board, the Complaints Panel (both of which consist of lead councillors and tenant board members) and to senior officers at the Council. Evidence can be found within the complaints Policy under the Complaint Handling section. This is also published under the Make a complaint section of the website.
6.4	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the tenant of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the tenant.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 8-9)	Staff handling complaints have been trained that extensions should be the exception and only where there is a good reason. Extensions have Complaints and Office Manager before they are applied. No complaint will be extended without contact being made with the complainant to explain the reasons. This is then recorded by adding it as an action on the case management system. Evidence can be found within the complaints Policy under the Complaint Handling section.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.5	When an organisation informs a tenant about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 8-9)	Investigating officers are trained to share the Ombudsman details when extending a complaint timescale. All letter templates include details for the Ombudsman, as does the Complaints Policy.
6.6	A complaint response must be provided to the tenant when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the tenant.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 8)	Staff handling complaints have been trained that they should provide a response to the complaint as soon as possible, without waiting for the resolution to be delivered, in line with the code. Outstanding actions that for part of the resolution of a complaint are monitored and only closed once the tenant has confirmed by call and email that they are satisfied. Evidence can be found within the complaints Policy under the Complaint Handling section.
6.7	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 8-9)	Staff handling complaints have been trained to cover all points raised within a complaint and provide a reason for any decisions given. Where appropriate relevant policies, law and good practice are referenced. The policy states: <i>“The written complaint responses to the customer at the completion of each stage will be in clear, plain language and include:</i> • <i>the complaint stage.</i>

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				• <i>the complaint definition;</i> • <i>the decision on the complaint;</i> • <i>the reasons for any decisions made;</i> • <i>the details of any remedy offered to put things right;</i> • <i>details of any outstanding actions; and</i> • <i>details of how to escalate the matter to Stage 2 /HOS if the individual is not satisfied with the response.”</i>
6.8	Where tenants raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related and the stage 1 response has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 8)	Staff responsible for complaint handling receive training to ensure they understand these requirements. Evidence can be found within the complaints Policy under the Complaint Handling section.
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the tenant at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made;	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 8)	All letters are sent by a dedicated Complaint Handling team who ensure they meet the required criteria, as set out in the Ombudsman’s Code. We also use a letter template for the stage 1 response to ensure these details are provided in stage 1 responses.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.			

Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.10	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the tenant's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be progressed to stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.	Yes	Welcome Pack (Page 23) Complaints Policy (Page 7-9)	Where a tenant expresses that the resolution given at stage 1 is not to their satisfaction, the complaint is escalated to stage 2, and this is logged on our Housing management system. These escalations are handled by the Complaints team, recording any reason for refusal and notifying the tenant in line with the code. Evidence can be found in our Complaints Policy under Complaint Handling section. This is also published under the Make a complaint section of the website. Within the welcome pack which is given to tenants at the beginning of their tenancy, it

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				is also highlighted about the complaints process
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 7-9)	Escalations are acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt. Acknowledgement includes definition of the complaint. Evidence can be found in our Complaints Policy under Complaint Handling section. This is also published under the Make a complaint section of the website.
6.12	Tenants must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a tenant remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 7-9)	An explanation of the reasons why a tenant wishes to escalate are not a requirement for escalation. The staff member who is assigned the stage 2 complaint will contact the tenant to discuss and understand the issues as part of the process. Evidence can be found in our Complaints Policy under Complaint Handling section.
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 8)	Stage 2 complaints are handled by a senior manager with no prior involvement in the case. Evidence can be found under the Complaint handling section. The policy states: <i>"The Stage 2 investigation is not conducted by the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1"</i>
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 9)	Stage 2 complaints have a timescale to respond set at 20 working days, in line with the code. The focus is to review whether

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
			Welcome Pack (Page 23)	the stage 1 complaint was fully dealt with in line with the policy and therefore the code. This will provide a review of the complaint to inform learning. Evidence can be found in our Complaints Policy under Complaint Handling section as well as on our website under Make a complaint. This is also highlighted within the welcome pack which is given to tenants at the beginning of their tenancy.
6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the tenant of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the tenant.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 9)	Where a stage 2 complaint is particularly complex and will require an extension, this is discussed with the complainant and an extension agreed. An extension beyond 20 working days would be for exceptional circumstances only. An action on the case management system is added once agreed. This action is recorded to ensure an audit trail of agreement and contact made. Evidence can be found in our Complaints Policy under Complaint Handling section.
6.16	When an organisation informs a tenant about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 6)	All letter templates which are used by Complaint handlers include details for the Ombudsman, as does the Complaints and Compliments Policy under the Accessibility and awareness section
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the tenant when the answer to the	Yes	Complaints Policy	Staff handling complaints have been trained that they should provide a response

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the tenant.		(Page 9)	to the complaint as soon as possible, without waiting for the resolution to be delivered. Outstanding actions that for part of the resolution of a complaint are added as an action on our Housing management system and are monitored routinely with appropriate updates provided to the tenant. The action is only closed once the tenant has confirmed that they are satisfied by call and email.
6.18	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 9)	Staff handling complaints have been trained to cover all points raised within a complaint and provide a reason for any decisions given. Where appropriate relevant policies, law and good practice are referenced. This is evidence under the Complaint handling section of our policy. It states: <i>“The response will address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate. The written complaint response to the customer at the completion of Stage 2 will be in clear, plain language and include:</i> <i>• the complaint stage</i> <i>• the complaint definition</i> <i>• the decision on the complaint</i> <i>• the reasons for any decisions made</i>

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				• the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions • details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.”
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the tenant at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: - the complaint stage; - the complaint definition; - the decision on the complaint; - the reasons for any decisions made; - the details of any remedy offered to put things right; - details of any outstanding actions; and - details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 9)	We use a letter template for the stage 2 responses to ensure these details are provided in the response. All letters are sent by a dedicated Complaint Handling team who ensure they meet the required criteria, as set out in the Ombudsman’s Code. This is also evidenced in the Complaint handling section of our policy It states: <i>“The response will address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate. The written complaint response to the customer at the completion of Stage 2 will be in clear, plain language and include:</i> • the complaint stage • the complaint definition • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				• details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.”
6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord’s final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 9)	On receipt of a stage 2 complaint the complaint handler will coordinate input with appropriate staff members to provide a comprehensive complaint response and resolve the issues. Evidence can be found in our Complaints Policy under Complaint Handling section. When a stage 2 escalation is raised, before Stage 2 complaint response is issued, we hold a review meeting with the investigating team, the relevant Senior Manager and the stage 1 complaints officer, the Complaints and Office Manager and any other relevant colleagues. This ensures thoroughness and reasonableness of this final response.

Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 9)	Stage1 & 2 responses always set out actions which have been taken and/or will be taken to resolve the issue. Where something has gone wrong this will be acknowledged in the response along with

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	intends to take, to put things right. These can include: • Apologising; • Acknowledging where things have gone wrong; • Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons; • Taking action if there has been delay; • Reconsidering or changing a decision; • Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum; • Providing a financial remedy; • Changing policies, procedures or practices.			an apology. This is evidenced under the Putting things right of our policy. Our complaints policy states: <i>“Where something has gone wrong the Council will acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. This can happen at any stage of the process, without the need for escalation.</i> <i>Any remedy will reflect the impact on the customer as a result of any fault identified and take account of the guidance issued by the HOS. The remedy offer will clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the customer where appropriate. Any remedy proposed will be followed through to completion. Any financial remedy will be offered in conjunction with our Compensation Policy.”</i>
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the tenant as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	Compensation Policy Complaints Policy (Page 9)	The Compensation Policy sets out clear guidance for staff to ensure any remedy offered fairly reflect the impact the situation has had on the tenant. In certain circumstances the Council recognise that paying compensation is a fair and proportionate redress. The amount will be informed by the duration of a problem, extent or severity of any service failure and impact.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				Our complaints policy also highlights under the putting things right section: <i>“Any remedy will reflect the impact on the customer as a result of any fault identified and take account of the guidance issued by the HOS. The remedy offer will clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the customer where appropriate. Any remedy proposed will be followed through to completion. Any financial remedy will be offered in conjunction with our Compensation Policy”</i>
7.3	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the tenant where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	Compensation Policy (Page 7) Complaints Policy (Page 7-9)	Stage 1 & 2 responses set out the remedy and the timescale in which this will happen. The compensation policy states: <i>“In applying this policy, we will manage customers’ expectations and ensure that we do not cause unfairness to others. We will also ensure that any remedy we offer clearly sets out what will happen with a clear timeframe (in agreement with the customer where appropriate). It is the responsibility of the complaints handler to ensure that what is agreed is delivered.”</i> Outstanding actions that for part of the resolution of a complaint are monitored and only closed once the tenant has confirmed by call and email that they are satisfied.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
				Evidence can be found within the complaints Policy under the Complaint Handling section.
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Compensation Policy (Page 8)	When deciding on a remedy the Housing Ombudsman guidance will be considered. Under the Assessing a compensation claim section of the policy it states: <i>“All offers of compensation will be awarded in line with Housing Ombudsman Service Remedies guidance, this ensures we are applying the policy appropriately and consistently”.</i>

Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include: a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements.	Yes	Annual Complaints Performance Report Insight 2025-26 Complaints Policy (Page 10)	All required information is contained within our Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Report. Under the Self-assessment, compliance and reporting section of the complaints policy its states: <i>“We will produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report. This report, alongside our Council Housing Management Board, is</i>

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	b. a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept; c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; e. any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.			<i>published in the complaints section of our website. The Housing Ombudsman requires that we self-assess against its Complaint Handling Code 'the Code' each year. We must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures. If we are unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber incident, we will inform the Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be affected and publish this on our website. We will include a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code."</i> Complaints are recorded through the housing management system and reported to teams and managers across the Council Housing Management Service. There will be continuous monitoring of complaints insight using intelligence gleaned from complaint's. Reports will be shared with Service managers, Complaints Panel, and other Council departments as deemed required. The Complaint Panel will undertake regular reviews of complaint management.
8.2	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must	Yes	Annual Complaints	This report will be presented to Service managers, the Complaints Panel and the

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	be reported to the landlord's governing body (or equivalent) and published on the on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.		Performance Report Insight 2025-26 Complaints Policy (Page 10)	Council Housing Management Board both of which have councillors and tenants on them. This report will be signed off by the Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning who is also chair of the Council Housing Management Board.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 10)	Under the Self-assessment, compliance and reporting section of the complaints policy its states: <i>"We will produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report. This report, alongside our Council Housing Management Board, is published in the complaints section of our website. The Housing Ombudsman requires that we self-assess against its Complaint Handling Code 'the Code' each year. We must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures. If we are unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber incident, we will inform the Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be affected and publish this on our website. We will include a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code."</i>

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes		If requested a review will be carried out. A determination review is always conducted, to ensure we are learning from any findings highlighted by the Ombudsman, and this is presented to the Senior managers, the complaints panel and Council Housing Management Board.
8.5	If a landlord is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber incident, they must inform the Ombudsman, provide information to tenants who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.	Yes		would be taken. We are aware of the requirement to 'self refer' in the event of a breach of compliance. If such circumstances were to occur these actions. Should tenants be affected, all media channels and face-to-face locations will be used to convey messages.

Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.1	Landlords must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.	Yes	Annual Complaints Performance Report Insight 2025-26	As part of every complaint investigation, consideration is given to lessons learned and opportunities for service improvement. Complaint outcomes are recorded and

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
			Complaints Policy (Page 10)	analysed to identify trends and themes that help inform ongoing service development. Complaint performance, learning, trends and improvement actions are reviewed by the Complaints Panel, comprising Tenant Board Members and Council representatives, and are reported to the Council Housing Management Board. Any improvement actions or risks identified through complaints will be highlighted to the Board to ensure appropriate oversight and action. Learning from complaints and the improvements made as a result will be shared through our " You Said, We Listened " updates on the website and in our annual report, as set out in the Tenants Together Charter (TTC) .
9.2	A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve disputes. Landlords must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.	Yes	Annual Complaints Performance Report Insight 2025-26 Annual Report CHMS 2025-26 Complaints Policy	The outcomes of complaints are used as a key source of intelligence for improving services. Where the outcome of a complaint identifies an improvement, implementation of this is monitored via a Business Improvement Plan. All positive changes are reported Complaints Panel to the Council Housing Management Board and the as part of the quarterly report

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
			(Page 10)	
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as tenants' panels, staff and relevant committees.	Yes	Annual Complaints Performance Report Insight 2025-26 Annual Report CHMS 2025-26 Complaints Policy (Page 10)	Complaint insight data, including outcomes, trends and themes identified across service areas, is reported to the Complaints Panel for review and scrutiny by tenant panel members. Where appropriate, Service Managers attend the panel to provide context, respond to questions and support discussions on learning and service improvement opportunities. Learning from complaints forms the basis of 'You Said, We Listened' in annual report as per measurements set out in the Tenants Together Charter (TTC) .
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 10)	The senior lead person is a senior manager who is accountable for complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision. Currently, this is the Performance Lead.
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 10)	The Chair of the Council Housing Complaints Panel is the Member Responsible for Complaints.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').			
9.6	The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight on the landlord's complaint handling performance. This person must have access to suitable information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.	Yes	Complaints Policy (Page 10)	The Member Responsible for Complaints is a member of the Council Housing Management Board and the Chair of the Complaints Panel, so they receive regular Complaint performance, learning, trends and improvement actions. They have
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.	Yes		As above a Complaint Handling Summary Report is provided to the Council Housing Management Board and the Complaints Panel that covers all the requirements. Meetings / reviews outside of this will be conducted by relevant Strategic Lead and MRC, as required.
9.8	Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint	Yes	People and Culture Strategy	We have a set of clear values that drive our culture, behaviours, and activities. Role

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
	handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to: 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.			modelling these values will support us to achieve our Vision and Missions. Our THRIVE (Teamwork, Honesty, Respect, Innovation, Value for Money, Empowerment)- values help remind us of our public service ethos and guide everything we do. All this contributes to our culture and ensures we meet the complaint handling objectives as described.

Statement from the Council Housing Management Board

As a Board, we are passionate about putting the needs of our tenants at the heart of everything we do. We want the services we provide to be responsive, accessible and focused on delivering positive outcomes for our tenants and communities.

We strive to get things right first time. However, we recognise that there are occasions when we do not meet the standards we set ourselves, and when this happens, we want tenants to tell us. Complaints and feedback provide valuable insight into the tenant experience and play an important role in helping us improve our services.

During 2025-26, we have seen the benefits of the additional resources supported by the Board to strengthen our complaints service. We adopted a phased approach to improvement, with Phase 1 focusing on enhancing our case management arrangements. This has enabled us to improve oversight of cases, streamline processes and significantly improve complaint

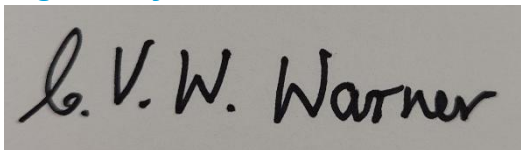
response times. These improvements have strengthened our compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and helped us provide a more consistent and efficient experience for tenants.

Building on these foundations, Phase 2 focuses on strengthening how we learn from complaints and tenant feedback. By enhancing our ability to identify trends, understand root causes and share learning across the organisation, we can implement preventative actions that reduce the likelihood of issues recurring. This will help ensure that complaints continue to drive meaningful service improvements and support our ambition of delivering excellent services to our tenants.

We remain committed to using complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve. By listening to our tenants and acting on the lessons learned, we continue to strengthen our services and deliver better outcomes. This annual report highlights the key learning and service improvements implemented during the year as a result of complaints and tenant feedback. Further examples of how we have listened to and acted on the views of our tenants can also be found within our Together with Tenants Charter Annual Report.

Our ambition is to ensure that every tenant receives high-quality housing management services that meet their needs and expectations. We are committed to providing good-quality homes, supporting safe and secure communities, and continually improving the services we deliver so that our tenants receive the service they deserve.

Sign off by Chair of the Council Housing Management Board

A handwritten signature in black ink on a grey rectangular background. The signature reads "C. V. W. Warner" in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Councillor Christine Warner

**Chair of the Council Housing Management Board and
Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning.**