

# Comments, Compliments and Complaints Procedure June 2017



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## Complaints, Compliments and Comments Procedure

Basildon Borough Council (BBC) is committed to listening to its customers. The Council welcomes and values complaints, comments and compliments from its customers and service users and will use this feedback to improve our services and culture. The details of the Council's approach are set out in the Council's Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy.

This document sets out our procedure for enacting that Policy, working with customers who would like to make representations, including complaints, about the actions, decisions or services provided by the Council or on the Council's behalf.

### Ways to Provide Feedback

Where possible the Council would like to receive feedback in writing. This allows the Council to respond to each point of feedback in turn and ensure responses are supplied by the relevant trained service specialists.

Comments can be received in a number of ways all of which are set out online on the following webpage; <http://www.basildon.gov.uk/complaints>

- Via the Council website's online form (the preferred method for many customers);  
<https://www5.basildon.gov.uk/forms/commentscomplaints>

Customers can also provide feedback via the following channels;

- By e-mail to the relevant designation
  - Comments - [comments@basildon.gov.uk](mailto:comments@basildon.gov.uk)
  - Compliments – [compliments@basildon.gov.uk](mailto:compliments@basildon.gov.uk)
  - Complaints – [complaints@basildon.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@basildon.gov.uk)
- By telephone, by directly calling **01268 206650**
- In person at the Basildon Centre, by speaking to a Customer Services Advisor who will complete an e-form on their behalf
- In writing, by sending a letter to the Council's address: The Basildon Centre, St. Martin's Square, Basildon, Essex, SS14 1DL

## Submitting a Compliment, Comment or Complaint – Advocacy and Support

Feedback on Council Services can be provided via a third party or representative such as a family member, a designated Ward Councillor or an MP, who are encouraged to complete an online form on the complainant's behalf.

If, for any reason, the commenter or complainant cannot write the comment or complaint themselves, nor has anyone who could write this on their behalf, they can contact the relevant department or service area, or the Customer Services Centre for assistance. The comment, compliment or complaint will be drafted on the person's behalf and read back to them to ensure accuracy. The person would then make their mark, in the presence of a witness, to indicate that they are satisfied with the document being submitted.

Alternatively they can contact the Citizens Advice Bureau for assistance on:

01268 282052 (Basildon, Billericay and Wickford)

Customers with a hearing or speech impairment can contact us using the Text Relay service. Dial 18001 followed by the full telephone number of the service you require.

Comments, compliments and complaints should be submitted within 3 months of the service delivery in order to allow the service area to minimise the impact of any issues relating to the comment, compliment or complaint and to incorporate timely learning outcomes to service delivery provision.

### Definitions and Exclusions

The following definitions will be used in the management of customer feedback to ensure that customers' views are logged correctly:

#### Comment

A comment can be described as an opinion or belief, feedback or remark expressed by a customer. Enquiries or ideas about the availability, delivery or nature of services are welcomed as valuable means to help the Council improve its function. Examples of comments are as follows:

**Positive Comment Example:** "I liked the advice it came at just the right time"

**Negative Comment Example** "Don't assume I know how that process works"

**Neutral Comment Example** "The job done is okay but let me see how long it lasts"

#### Compliment

A compliment is defined as a customer statement of positive recognition or praise for a service or individual. Compliments confirm a positive experience of services, employees and provide insight into what the Council is doing right and what is working well. All customer compliments will be logged on the corporate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to ensure that good service is recognised and rewarded.

**Example:** *"I would like to thank you for the excellent service provided by the Basildon Animal Control Team in helping to locate my missing dog last week. Your staff were very helpful and supportive."*

## **Complaint**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, action or lack of action by Basildon Borough Council or its employees; in connection with any services it has responsibility for, which affects either an individual customer or group of customers. A complaint may be generally defined as an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to a service, one which requires a response.

**Example:** *"I have reported a particular issue on these dates....I received no acknowledgement, no one has got back to me and the matter continues to remain unresolved despite it being urgent. I now wish this to be responded to as a Stage One Complaint."*

The Council identifies a number of basic principles which inform its complaints management approach:

- The majority of complaints arise from a genuine feeling of grievance or concern – all customers have the right to complain, compliment and provide comment, in order to be heard, and have their complaints investigated
- Grievances can become exacerbated if not dealt with sensitively and at the earliest available opportunity
- Complaints can serve to highlight deficiencies in services but often also highlight more efficient ways of doing things, this links to the principles of the Corporate Plan to deliver Value for Money services
- Efficient and effective management of complaints is integral to the way the Council functions
- As there can be confusion around what a customer's expectations might be, Council staff should clarify with the customer whether they are seeking to make a complaint
- The confidentiality of the customer and those persons mentioned (whether staff or others) should be appropriately protected

A complaint may arise as a result of many things relating to service functions such as, but not limited to:

- An unwelcome or disputed decision
- Concern about the quality of appropriateness of a service
- Delay in decision-making or provision in services
- Delivery or non-delivery of services, including complaints procedures
- Quantity, quality, cost or frequency of service
- The attitude or behaviour of staff

## **Receiving Complaints & Agreed Complaint Stages**

The Customer Services Centre will be responsible for receiving and logging formal complaints on the Council's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and sending acknowledgement letters or emails to the complainants. In cases where a complaint involves multiple service areas, a primary contact will be designated on the CRM system and any secondary contacts added will also receive updates on the complaint through CRM.

The Council has the following agreed stages for complaints with exclusions applying as detailed in the accompanying Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy section

### **Stage 0 Complaint**

Prior to a formal complaint being submitted the Council may ask, either verbally or in writing, that with a customer's consent, steps can be taken to address the matter before a formal written complaint is submitted. This may be to quickly put right or resolve an issue without the need for written correspondence which may not be of benefit to the customer who simply wants action taken or the matter swiftly resolved.

In all Stage 0 instances the Complaints will be logged to identify patterns and trends to ensure this feeds learning and improvement in relation to services.

Stage 0 complaints may not always require a written response when remedial action has been taken. The Council may simply take required action to put the issue right, and update the customer either verbally or in writing when this happens.

A customer does not have to have submitted a Stage 0 complaint before submitting a Stage One complaint.

### **Stage 1 Complaint**

A Stage One Complaint should be made in writing following the simple e-form or by supplying information through the 'Ways to Provide Feedback' section set out earlier in this document.

The complaint should include;

- Who the complainant is
- Whether someone is writing the complaint on their behalf
- All relevant information regarding the nature of the complaint
- Any relevant reference numbers or key dates associated with the issue
- An address, email address and/or contact telephone number
- Preferred contact method (the default will be email unless otherwise stated)
- Full details of the complaint and what outcome they would like (e.g apology, works completed, assurance of quicker response times in future, review into processes etc)

After submission a member of the Customer Service Centre will provide an acknowledgment confirming that the complaint has been received, who the matter has been referred to and when a response can be expected.

The complaint will be investigated by a Senior Officer from the relevant service area and a response will be sent to the customer in writing within **10 full working days** from the receipt of the complaint. The service area investigating the complaint must communicate the outcome of the investigation to the complainant and the corporate complaints team. The senior responsible manager will update and close the matter on MD CRM system.

Responses will include:

- Whether the complaint has been upheld or not upheld.
- What has been done to address the issues raised by the complainant, if the Council is found to be at fault
- Details of what the complainant should do if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint. This may include further investigations and/or a face to face meeting to resolve the issues at this stage

If it is not possible to resolve a complaint within the stated timescales, the customer will be kept up to date with the progress of the complaint and informed when they should expect a response. Updates should be given within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint and should not exceed 10 working days between each update.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Stage 1 complaint, they can escalate this to a Stage 2 complaint within 10 working days of the Stage One outcome having been issued to the customer. The request for escalation needs to be made in writing to [complaints@basildon.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@basildon.gov.uk) or any of the 'Ways to Provide Feedback' methods set out earlier in this document. This response should include details as to why the customer is dissatisfied with the response or outcome at Stage One in the process.

## **Stage 2 Formal Complaints**

Stage Two complaints can only relate to matters included in the original Stage 1 complaint and this will be emphasised to the complainant as necessary. Supplementary evidence may be supplied by the Complainant to support the reasons why they are dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage Two.

The Customer Services team will be responsible for receiving and logging Stage 2 formal complaints on CRM system and sending acknowledgement letters or emails to the complainant(s).

A member of Senior Management relevant to the section to which the complaint relates will then investigate the Stage 2 complaint. A response will be sent to the customer in writing within **10 working days** from the receipt of the complaint. The Officer who dealt with the stage 1 complaint will not respond to a stage 2 complaint but may be asked to provide information for ongoing investigations.

If it is not possible to resolve a complaint within these timescales, the customer will be kept up to date with the progress of the complaint by the Senior Manager and informed when they should expect a response. Information should be given within 10 working days and should not exceed 10 working days between each update. The Senior Manager will update and close the case on MD CRM system.

Responses will include:

- Whether the complaint has been upheld or not upheld.
- What has been done to address the issues raised by the complainant, if the Council is found to be at fault
- Details of what the complainant should do if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint.

The service area investigating the complaint must communicate the outcome of the investigation to the complainant and the corporate complaints team. The senior responsible manager will update and close the matter on MD CRM system.

### **After Stage Two Complaint**

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Stage 2 complaint, they can request progression to Stage 3. The complainant must write to the Corporate Complaints Team within 10 working days of the receipt of the Stage Two response letter. The request for escalation needs to be made in writing to [complaints@basildon.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@basildon.gov.uk) or any of the 'Ways to Provide Feedback' methods set out earlier in this document. This response should include details as to why the customer is dissatisfied with the response or outcome at Stage Two in the process.

The next Stage of the process directly relates to the subject matter of the complaint.

For all Council tenant or Leaseholder related complaints please see Appendix 2 (enclosed). For all Regulatory Services complaints please see Appendix 3 (enclosed). For all other Council services the following Stage 3 Managerial Review process applies:

### **Stage 3 Managerial Review**

The Manager of Customer Services, or if the complaint relates to Customer Services an alternative designated Senior Manager, will undertake a Stage 3 Managerial Review at this point. A Stage 3 Managerial Review will involve investigating the complaint, speaking to relevant service managers, reviewing whether the complaints process has been adequately followed and reviewing evidence from the Complainant and making recommendations for resolution, where possible. A meeting between the complainant and the Manager of Customer Services will normally be arranged to discuss the details of the complaint (when the complainant is able to accommodate this within a reasonable timescale) and at such meetings a member of the relevant section to which the complaint relates will also be invited to attend to discuss the matter, providing the complainant is happy for them to do so. The Independent Manager will issue a response in relation to the outcome of the review within 10 working days of the meeting with the complainant taking place. Where no meeting takes place response will



be issued within 10 full working days from the date of receipt of the request to escalate to a Stage 3 review.

A Managerial Review will be granted if:

- The written request was received from the complainant within 10 working days of completion of the Stage 2 complaint;
- The written request states why the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation into the complaint;
- The decision was not made in accordance with the Council's policy, procedure and standards

Based on the information gathered, the Manager of Customer Services or the independent Service Manager will decide upon the outcome of the review. If it is felt that the investigation cannot be completed within the allotted timeframe, for example because it is not possible to interview a key member of staff due to sickness or annual leave, a holding letter will be sent to the complainant advising them that their response will be delayed. The complainant will be kept up to date with the progress until the outcome is determined.

Responses to complainants should include as a minimum:

- Whether the review has been upheld or not upheld
- A review as to whether the Complaints Policy and Procedure has been adequately followed at each stage
- What has been done to address the issues raised by the complainant, if the Council is found to be at fault
- Details of what the complainant should do if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the review and reference the Local Government Ombudsman service

If the complaint is upheld the Customer Service Manager will confer with the Service Department(s) and Service Manager(s) and decide what appropriate action will be taken, and where learning from the complaint can be applied in future.

The Customer Service Manager will make arrangements to update and close the matter on MD CRM.

### **Local Government Ombudsman Service**

If a complainant is still dissatisfied with the way that the Customer Service Manager or independent Service Manager came to a decision, they can contact the Local Government Ombudsman Service.

The Local Government Ombudsman Service will not accept a complaint that has not been through all stages of the complaints procedure.

Further information can be found online: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

The Local Government Ombudsman can be contacted at:

The Local Government Ombudsman  
PO Box 4771  
Coventry  
CV4 0EH

Telephone: 0300 061 0614

Fax: 024 7682 0001

### **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) Breaches of the Code of Conduct
- d) Criminal Investigations

If the complaint raises issues that concern safeguarding, abuse, or criminal activities we reserve the right to forward the complaint to the appropriate agencies.

### **Exclusions**

Further information in relation to what can and cannot be complained, commented or complimented on are detailed in the accompanying Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy section 5.11-5.21.

### **Procedure**

Overall corporate responsibility for complaints will sit with Customer Services, which will be responsible for reviewing all customer contact in relation to complaints and monitoring and analysing complaints on an ongoing basis to ensure that complaints are used effectively to drive service improvement. However, the service area which the complaint relates to will be responsible for investigating complaints, communicating the outcome of the investigation to the corporate complaints team and ensuring that corporate timescales for responding to complaints are met.

### **Monitoring, Reporting and Analysing Complaints**

Complaints and service failure trends will be monitored, analysed and reported on by the Performance, Workforce Planning and Complaints Handling team within Customer Services.

This information is invaluable in allowing teams to identify any specific strengths and weaknesses within their service area, measuring customer satisfaction with services and most importantly using feedback to improve customer focus and deliver better services.

Managers should be looking to constantly improve services to customers. The complaint analysis should act as an additional tool to the performance management framework so that performance improvements remain at the forefront of every team's agenda.

## **Reporting and Analysis**

### Internal Reporting

Internal reports will be compiled and analysed on a monthly basis by the centralised complaints team within Customer Services and send to relevant manager(s) and Heads of Service(s) and CDT as appropriate to help drive service improvement and build awareness.

### External Reporting

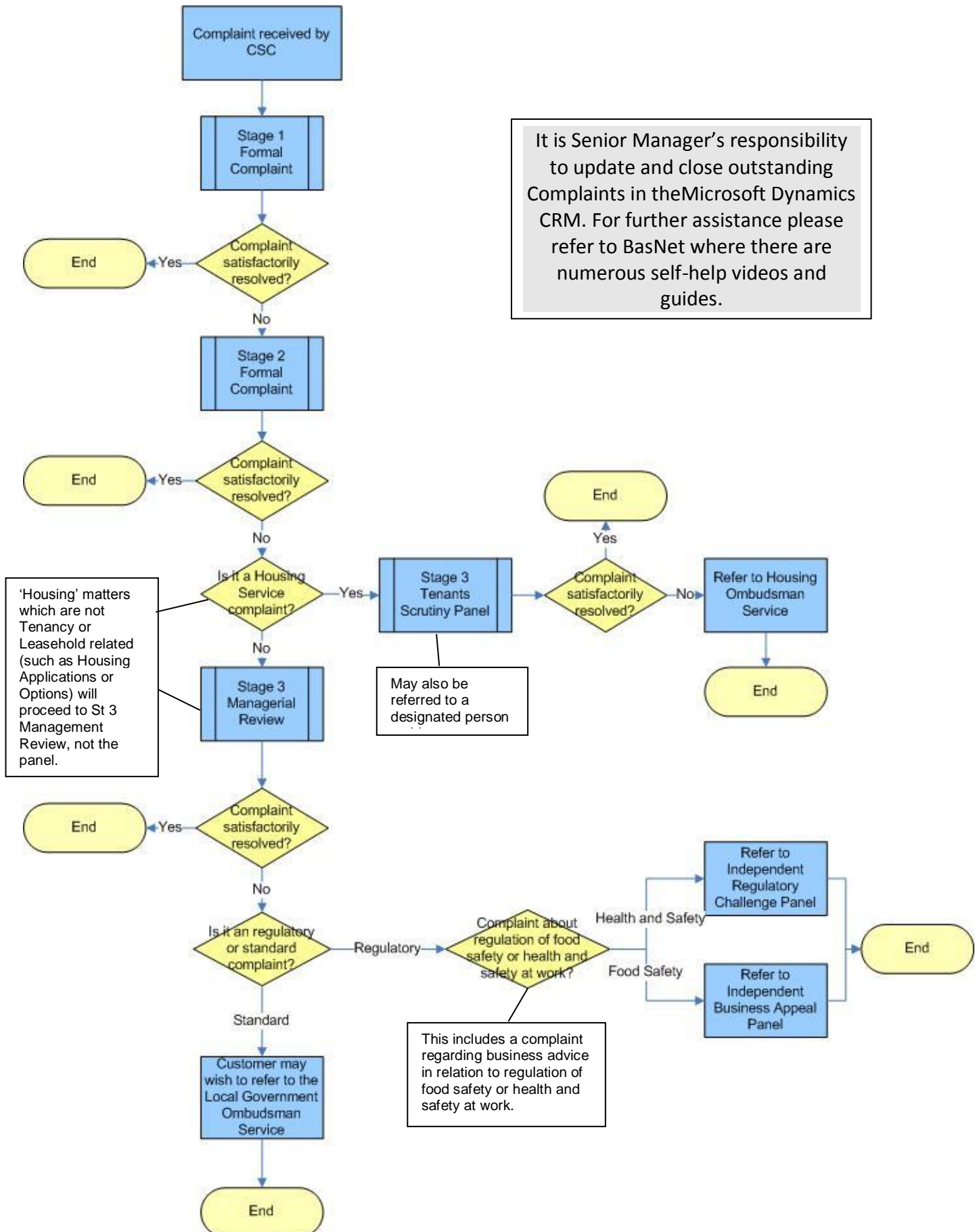
External reports will also be prepared to ensure that the Council learn from complaints and use them to drive service improvement.

These reports will be shared with Members, customers and relevant senior officers and will include information on:

- Positive resolution of complaints
- Opportunities for service improvement
- How we have used complaints to analyse trends and improve services

## **Appendix 1: Complaints Procedure - Stage 1 Onwards**

(For Standard, Regulatory and Housing Services Complaints)



## **Appendix 2: Council tenant or Leaseholder related complaints**

Housing Services will follow the Corporate Complaints Procedure for Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints.

The following is the Stage 3 process for all Council tenant or Leaseholder related complaints ;

If a complainant wishes to escalate their enquiry to stage 3, they must contact the Complaints Section in Customer Services within 10 working days of the receipt of the Stage Two response letter. The request for escalation needs to be made in writing to or any of the 'Ways to Provide Feedback' methods set out earlier in this document. This complainant should include details as to why the customer is dissatisfied with the response or outcome at Stage Two in the process.

If for any reason the complainant cannot write the appeal themselves nor has anyone who could write on their behalf, they can contact the Customer Services Centre for assistance. Stage 3 can be made orally using advocacy through the Customer Services Centre.

A request for a Stage 3 will be logged by the Customer Services Centre who will inform the Housing Business Support Team who will investigate and provide an acknowledgement within 1 working day of receipt.

The Housing Business Support Team will then investigate stage 3 complaints relating to and on behalf of Housing and Community Services.

### **Housing Business Support Services**

Any complaint escalated to a stage 3 relating to Housing Tenancy or Leaseholders will be acknowledged, managed and monitored by the Housing Business Support Team. Housing Business Support carry out investigations, monitor performance and facilitate service improvements for Housing & Community Services.

Stage 3 Complaints Process for Housing & Community Services:

1. Complaint is logged by Customer Service Centre and sent to Business Support Services for acknowledgement within 24 hours.
2. Housing Business Support will investigate the complaint, gather the relevant information and refer the complaint to an independent Housing Manager for review
3. Following the independent Housing Managerial Review, Business Support will refer the complaint to an independent, designated body or person
4. The independent designated body or person will make recommendations and respond to Business Support Services who will inform the complainant of the outcome.

## **Independent Housing Managerial Review**

Business Support Services will provide all related documentation to an independent housing manager not related to the service area that the complaint refers to. Stage 3 complaints relating to Housing Services will be investigated by an independent senior manager before being referred to a Designated Panel or Designated Person for an independent review.

A stage 3 complaint will be subject to an independent Housing Manager review and will be granted if:

- The escalation request was received from the complainant within 10 working days of completion of the Stage 2 complaint;
- The written request states why the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation into the complaint and what they think should be done to correct the situation;
- The investigation was not conducted properly & fairly;
- The decision was not made in accordance with Housing Services policy, procedure and standards;
- The complainant has suffered in accordance with Basildon Borough Council's Housing Services Compensation Policy.

A Stage 3 would not be upheld or escalated if a complainant were requesting that the Housing Services should act outside of its own policies and procedures. Alternatively, a Stage 3 may be justified if Housing Services has refused a request for a service where discretion could have been exercised.

If the complaint is determined not to have met stage 3 criteria, a letter will be sent within 20 working days from escalation by Housing Business Support Services to the complainant explaining why it does not meet the criteria.

Following the Independent Managerial Review and based on the information gathered, the Independent Housing Manager or the independent Service Manager will decide upon the outcome of the review and refer to the designated panel or person. Business Support Services will inform the complainant of the outcome and that their "case" is being referred to a designated panel for review.

### **What is a "Designated Panel or Designated Person?"**

From April 2012 the Government introduced a separate Independent Housing Ombudsman to deal with housing complaints only. The Independent Housing Ombudsman recommend that each local authority adopt an independent and designated "Body" as best practice. This could be a panel of local tenants and leaseholders or a person, such as a local MP or Councillor. The Panel or person will review the stage 3 complaint before it is referred to the Housing Ombudsman. Basildon Council have followed the best practice guidance provided by the Housing Ombudsman and have appointed an elected, designated panel of tenants and leaseholders living in the borough who will act on behalf of

tenants and leaseholders who make a stage 3 formal complaint about Housing Services. This panel is called the Tenants Scrutiny Panel, or TSP.

Landlords, in this instance Basildon Council, do not have to set up Tenant Scrutiny Panels but they are expected to support the formation and activities if their tenants want them and have a stage within their complaints process for an independent review. The Council have chosen the TSP as their preferred designated body for independent reviews of stage 3 complaints.

### **The Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP) – Designated Panel**

The TSP act as an independent body to scrutinise and challenge, where necessary, complaints which have been escalated to a Stage 3 of the complaints process. The panel are not able to change an outcome of a complaint where the decision made was in line with the Council's policies and procedures however they can make recommendations and suggestions for resolution. The TSP will respond directly to Business Support Services with their recommendations.

To be effective the Tenant Scrutiny Panel must be 'recognised' by the landlord as a designated person. Basildon Council's TSP are registered with the Housing Ombudsman as a designated body.

The Business Support Team will investigate the complaint and all relating correspondence and arrange for the Tenant Scrutiny to meet within 20 working days of the escalation. The panel will be provided with an evidence pack from the Business Support Team to support the complaint. Following this a written response will be sent from the Head of Housing Services within a further 20 working days from when the panel meeting took place informing the complainant of the outcome.

### **What if I don't want my complaint reviewed by the TSP?**

The Council's preferred designated body is the TSP. All complaints will be referred to the panel for review unless the complainant requests an independent designated person.

### **Who can be a "Designated Person?"**

A 'designated person' can be an MP or local Councillor. The complainant must inform the Council that they wish to appoint a designated person instead of the TSP when they are informed that their stage 3 complaint is being referred to the TSP. Complaints that are reviewed by a designated person will not go to TSP as well. Complainants must inform Business Support Services within **24 hours of receipt** of the acknowledgement of their intention to appoint a designated person instead of TSP. The MP or Councillor will be informed that they have been appointed as designated person **by the complainant** and the MP or Councillor must contact the Council directly.

## What does the designated person do?

A designated person will help resolve the complaint in one of two ways; they can try and resolve the complaint themselves or they can refer the complaint straight to the Ombudsman. If they refuse to do either, the complainant can contact the Ombudsman directly.

The designated person can try to put things right in whichever way they think may work best. If the problem is still not resolved following the intervention of the designated person, either they or the complainant can refer the complaint to the Ombudsman.

Complaints to the Ombudsman do not have to be referred by a designated person, but if they are not there must be at least **8 weeks** from the end of the landlord's complaint process before the Ombudsman can consider the case.

The law says that when the designated person refers a complaint to the Ombudsman, it must be in writing.

The designated person can request all information and documentation relating to the case and will then follow the stage 3 review process below.

### Stage 3 Review Process

The Business Support Team will investigate the complaint and all relating correspondence and arrange for the Tenant Scrutiny to meet within 20 working days of the escalation or send the pack to the designated person, a local MP or councillor.

If referred to the TSP, the panel will be provided with an evidence pack from the Business Support Team to support the complaint. Following this a written response will be sent from the Head of Housing Services within a further 20 working days from when the panel meeting took place informing the complainant of the outcome.

If a designated person reviews the complaint, the complainant will be informed of the outcome of the review **within 10 working days and by the designated person**. The designated person will inform the Council of its suggestions and recommendations directly.

Responses to complainants should be provided by the TSP or the designated person directly and should include as a minimum:

- Whether the review has been upheld or not upheld
- A review as to whether the Complaints Policy and Procedure has been adequately followed at each stage
- What has been done to address the issues raised by the complainant, if the Council is found to be at fault



- Details of what the complainant should do if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the review and reference the Local Government Ombudsman service

If it is felt that the investigation cannot be completed within the allotted timeframe, for example because it is not possible to interview a key member of staff due to sickness or annual leave, a holding letter will be sent to the complainant advising them that their response will be delayed. The complainant will be kept up to date with the progress until the outcome is determined.

If the complaint is upheld the Designated Panel or Person will confer with the Head of Housing and Community Services through the Business Support Team and decide what appropriate action will be taken, and where learning from the complaint can be applied in future.

#### **Stage 4 The Independent Housing Ombudsman Service**

If a complainant is still dissatisfied with the way that the designated person or the Tenants Scrutiny Panel came to a decision, they can contact The Housing Ombudsman Service. Further information is available from The Business Support Services Team at [businesssupportservices.gov.uk](http://businesssupportservices.gov.uk) or 01268 208163

The Housing Ombudsman Service will not accept a complaint that has not been through a designated person or Tenants Scrutiny Panel unless a period of more than 8 weeks has lapsed.

The Housing Ombudsman Service can be contacted at:

The Housing Ombudsman Service  
81 Aldwych  
London  
WC2B 4HN

Telephone  
0300 111 3000

Fax  
0300 111 3000

Email  
[info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

On receipt of a request from the Housing Ombudsman Service, the Business Support Team in Housing Services will make the necessary arrangements to respond to requests for relevant information and correspondence.

### **Appendix 3: Regulatory Services**

From April 2014 the Regulators' Code came into statutory effect under the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006. It provides a framework for how regulators should engage with those they regulate. The regulatory services of the Council includes: environmental health, pollution control, pest control, licensing, food safety, health and safety and animal licensing.

The Council must have due regard to the Code in developing the principles and policies which guide its regulatory activities.

Regulatory complaints will continue to follow the Corporate Complaints Procedure for Stages 1-3. In respect of complaints relating to advice or action under food safety or health and safety legislation, Stage 4 will refer to the Independent Business Appeal Panel (Food Safety) and Independent Regulatory Challenge Panel (Health and Safety).

#### **Stage 4 Independent Regulatory Challenge Panel / Independent Business Appeal Panel**

For issues regarding Health and Safety at Work or Food Safety, there are two independent panels [Independent Regulatory Challenge Panel (Health and Safety) or Independent Business Appeal Panel (Food Safety)] for any concerns or complaints.

If a complainant is still dissatisfied with the way that the Customer Service Manager or relevant Service Manager came to a decision, they can contact the Independent Regulatory Challenge Panel / Independent Business Appeal Panel.

The Independent Regulatory Challenge Panel and Independent Business Appeal Panel will not accept a complaint that has not been through all stages of the complaints procedure, or if your concerns relate to service of legal notice(s) or prosecution action. In such cases, there are established appeal processes through the employment tribunals or the courts.

The Independent Regulatory Challenge Panel can be contacted at:

Web: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/contactchallengepanel.htm>

The Independent Business Appeal Panel can be contacted at:

E-mail: [BusinessAppealsPanel@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:BusinessAppealsPanel@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)