



## **Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report 2023/24**

### **Report Author**

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### **Purpose of Report**

To present Cabinet with the 2023/24 Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report which the Council is required to publish and submit to the Housing Ombudsman

### **Recommendations**

**That Cabinet provide feedback on the 2023/24 Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report for submission to the Housing Ombudsman.**

### **Decision Information**

Is this a Key Decision? No

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? No

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Housing

Which wards are impacted? (All Wards);

## 1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

### ***Finance and Procurement***

1.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

*Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer*

### ***Legal and Governance***

1.2 There is a requirement for this report to be presented to Cabinet so that the Housing Ombudsman can be assured that the report is a true reflection of the Council's complaints handling process.

*Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer*

## 2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. The purpose of this report is to present Cabinet with the 2023/24 Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report which is a mandatory requirement of the updated Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
- 2.2. In 2023/24 the Housing Directorate received 284 Stage 1 complaints compared with 371 in 2022/23. The number of complaints escalated to Stage 2 in 2023/24 was 39 compared with 21 in 2022/23. There has been a positive reduction in the total number of complaints received which is reflective of the continuous service improvements Housing strives to achieve.
- 2.3. The first section of the annual report provides information regarding:
  - The Council's complaints process
  - The number of Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints received
  - The average time taken to close complaints
  - Whether a complaint was upheld or not
  - The root cause for complaints
  - Summary information taken from the Housing Ombudsman Landlord Performance Report which is attached at Appendix 2

- 2.4. A key point to note is that the Council can only provide root cause information for 129 of the complaints received in 2023/24. The corporate complaints system, Meritec, is being updated to change the 'root cause' field for complaints to a mandatory field. This will ensure that going forwards all service areas within the Council will be able to analyse all complaints, identify trends and actions that need to be taken to avoid repeat complaints being received about the same issue.
- 2.5. Once the Meritec system has been updated the Housing team will receive all of the Housing complaints received during 2024/25 to ensure that the 'root case' field is populated.
- 2.6. The second section of the report focuses on the learning the Council has taken from the complaints it has received and the service improvements that have been made as a result of customer feedback. This is essential to ensure the Council does not continue to receive complaints on recurring issues.

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1. Key areas for Cabinet to consider are the complaints data that has been provided reflects the complaints handling process which the Council has in place.
- 3.2. That Cabinet are assured that the service improvements being implemented will reduce the number of complaints received on recurring issues.

### **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1 To not present the report to Cabinet for their feedback.

### **5. Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 5.1 To provide Cabinet with the opportunity to provide feedback on the 2023/24 Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report prior to submission to the Housing Ombudsman

### **6. Appendices**

- 6.1 Appendix 1 – Draft Annual Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report 2023/24
- 6.2 Appendix 2 - Housing Ombudsman Landlord Performance Report