

Cheltenham Borough Council

Housing Committee – 12 September 2024

Q1 2024/25 Housing Complaints & Compliments Report

Accountable member:

Cabinet Member for Housing & Customer Services, Flo Clucas

Accountable officer:

Caroline Walker, Head of Community Services

Ward(s) affected:

n/a

Key Decision: No

Executive summary:

This report provides an overview of housing related complaints and compliments received during quarter one 2024/25.

In this quarter, seventy-one complaints were received and accepted at stage one of the housing complaints process. Of these, forty-two complaints were upheld, either their entirety or in part, and nineteen were not upheld.

Two cases were upheld at stage two of the complaints process.

Eleven compensation payments, totalling £5,336 have been paid to customers, two thirds of which related to dissatisfaction with repairs and planned maintenance.

The three areas of greatest dissatisfaction are quality of work, poor communication & service delays.

Sixty-three compliments have been received during the quarter, with Repairs (26), Customer Services (7) and Tenancy Management (6) attracting the highest levels of positive customer feedback.

There has been a significant decline in complaints relating to disrepair, from eleven in quarter 4 of 2023/24, to one during this quarter. This reflects the proactive approach taken to address issues of damp, mould and condensation, but also the alternative resolution approach being used to manage these matters directly with our customers.

Reviewing our management of communal spaces and the management of customer contact (customer

service standards have been identified as areas for learning and for service improvement.

Recommendations:

1. That the report and next steps are noted by Housing Committee.
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1. Implications

1.1 Corporate Plan Priorities

This report contributes to the following Corporate Plan Priorities:

- Being a more modern, efficient and financially sustainable council

1.2 Performance management – monitoring and review

Committee will be kept informed quarterly regarding performance in housing complaints.

2 Background

2.1 Complaints data is collected monthly and reported quarterly and annually. This allows for monitoring of areas and levels of customer dissatisfaction as well as the identification of learning and service improvements.

This reporting allows for performance monitoring to ensure that we are compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code in respect of complaint management and response timescales.

3 Reasons for recommendations

3.1 To ensure that committee are kept informed of the volume of housing complaints and dissatisfaction, the service areas experiencing complaints, as well as the areas for learning and service development.

4 Key risks

Failure to comply with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code and the Council complaints policy and manage complaints appropriately may result in a maladministration decision from the Ombudsman, intervention and financial penalty.

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Appendices:

- i. Q1 2024/25 Housing Complaints and Compliments report