

Hull City Council – Corporate Customer Feedback Process

Whether we're good, bad or indifferent, we want you to tell us where we are going wrong, as well as when we are doing a good job. The Council takes feedback seriously and is committed to learning from Customer Feedback to improve its services.

Our Customer Feedback Process is compliant with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

This information is also publicised on our website at [Complaints and feedback – Hull](#)

Information about the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and the Complaint Handling Code is available at [Home - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#) The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman can be contacted at any time for help and advice.

How Can I Make a Complaint?

You can submit your corporate feedback about services provided by the Council to us in any of the following ways:

- Online, by completing and submitting the customer feedback form on our website <http://www.hull.gov.uk> Search for "Customer Feedback & Complaints," and click on the link or
At the bottom of the main home page find Council and Democracy and then click on the Customer Feedback and Complaints link.
- By telephoning the Council's Contact Centre on 01482 300 300
- By visiting one of the Council's Customer Service Centres or Information Points
- By writing to: FREEPOST RSJC-KKBE-ABXZ, Customer Feedback Team, PO Box 15, HU1 2AB

We will accept complaints made by a third-party representative. This includes Members of Parliament and local Councillors. We may need to obtain a signed authorisation from you to allow them to act on your behalf.

Compliments

When we receive a compliment, we will acknowledge receipt, make sure this is passed to the right people and ensure that this is recorded on our systems.

Suggestions

We welcome your suggestions as to how we can improve the services that we deliver to you. If you complain about why we do things, and not what we do, we may treat this as a suggestion and not a complaint.

If you want to make a complaint and remain anonymous, we will treat this as a suggestion.

We will acknowledge receipt, make sure this is passed to the right people, ensure this is recorded accordingly on our systems, and if applicable, we will provide you with a response regarding any action we may take because of your suggestion.

Service Requests

If it is the first time you are reporting an issue to us, we may decide to treat this as a service request.

The LGSCO's definition of a Service Request is "a request that the organisation provides or improves a service, fixes a problem or reconsiders a decision"

If you do report a service request, we will acknowledge receipt, make sure this is passed to the right people, ensure this is recorded on our systems, and provide you with a response regarding any action taken.

If you express dissatisfaction with the response to your service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing, we will ensure that a complaint is raised.

Complaints

We have adopted the LGSCO's definition of a complaint. A complaint is defined as:

"An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual or group of individuals."

You do not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. If you express dissatisfaction in any way, we will record a complaint. If you do not want us to do so, please let us know as it does remain your choice.

When dealing with your complaint we will:

- Acknowledge receipt
- Clarify any aspects of the complaint that we are unclear about
- Keep you informed.
- Treat you fairly.
- Look into your case fully and properly.
- When ever we write to you, we will include details of the LGSCO.
- Details of all contacts with you, and information provided by you, will be recorded on our complaints management system.

If you request contact using a specific method of communication, this will be facilitated wherever possible to do so. Please let us know if you require any reasonable adjustments.

You should make us aware of your complaint within 12 months of the incident happening or within 12 months from when you first became aware that you had reason for complaint. If your complaint is received later than this, we may not be able to fully investigate it. We will always take into account if there is a good reason for the delay. Where late complaints cannot be accepted, we will explain why.

Other reasons that we may not consider a complaint include:

- When legal proceedings have started e.g. the matter is being dealt with as a claim. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and particulars of claim, have been filed at court.
- When it relates to matters that have previously been considered under the complaints process and a final response (Stage 2) has been provided.
- Where an alternative review / appeal process or other regulatory body exists, for example the Information Commissioners Office.
- Complaints that are vexatious in nature or the customer refuses to engage with us or behaves in an unacceptable manner.
- Complaints about the conduct of employees will be recorded and will be investigated internally, however, to comply with data protection legislation, the outcome must remain confidential and will not be disclosed to the customer.

If we decide not to accept a complaint, we will provide you with an explanation as to why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process. Where appropriate you will be given details of the LGSCO or other regulatory body. We will comply with any instruction from the LGSCO to enter a complaint into our Complaints Procedure.

We ask that you treat the Council and its employees with dignity and respect when submitting complaints and feedback. We reserve the right to cancel any complaint that contains excessive foul and abusive language. You will be asked to resubmit the complaint.

The Council is committed to providing a fair and reasonable complaints service and to making it as accessible as possible. Any complainants who, through the nature or frequency of their contact with the Council, behave unreasonably and hinder the consideration of their own or other people's cases, will be referred to the Customer Feedback Team Leader who will consider their access options. This will be done on a case-by-case basis.

What happens to my complaint?

Stage 1

- We will acknowledge and record your complaint within 5 working days of receipt.
- We aim to fully investigate the complaint and send a full written response within 10 working days of us sending the acknowledgement letter.

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- If we need more time, we will write to you and let you know. We will explain why we need more time and when you can expect our response. Any extension will be for no more than 10 working days without good reason. We will include details for the LGSCO, who you can approach should we exceed the timescales.
- If we are unable to complete our investigation within the extended timeframe, we will contact you to agree a suitable interval for providing updates.
- If you contact us with any additional, related complaints or comments, we will ensure that these are incorporated into the Stage 1 investigation and response if this has not already 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 will be logged as a new complaint.
- The Stage 1 response letter will tell you what you can do if you remain dissatisfied.
- When you have received our full response, if you are happy or if we do not hear from you within 28 days we will close the complaint.

Stage 2

If you are not happy you can ask for your complaint to be escalated to Stage 2, where it will be reviewed by a senior manager. You do not have to give us any reasons to escalate your complaint, however if you can, it will help us to understand why you remain dissatisfied.

- If you tell us you are unhappy, we will reopen your complaint and record your dissatisfaction.
- We will acknowledge and record your complaint within 5 working days of receipt.
- We aim to fully investigate the complaint and send a full written response within 20 working days of us sending the acknowledgement letter.
- If we need more time, we will write to you and let you know. We will explain why we need more time and when you can expect your response. Any extension will be for no more than 20 working days without good reason. We will include details for the LGSCO, who you can approach should we exceed the timescales.
- If we are unable to complete our investigation within the extended timeframe, we will contact you to agree a suitable interval for providing updates.
- The Stage 2 decision letter will be our final response and will include details of how to escalate your complaint to the LGSCO

All Stage 1 and Stage 2 responses will be provided when the answer to the complaint is known, not when any outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. We will keep you updated with the progress of any outstanding actions.

After the Complaints Process has finished

You can contact the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman to ask them to review your complaint.

The LGSCO investigates most complaints about the Council

The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman:

P O Box 4771, Coventry, CV4 0EH

Tel: 0300 061 0614

Website: www.lgo.org.uk

You can approach the Ombudsman at any time during your complaint for help and advice.