

Governing Body Response to the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report

At the Cabinet meeting on Friday 27 June 2025 the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning presented the Annual Housing Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for scrutiny and challenge, which included a self-assessment carried out against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code for 2024/25. Following this the Leader of the Council read to Cabinet the Governing Body's formal response for approval. The approved response is set out below:

“Cabinet welcomes the Annual Housing Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report, including self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code presented by Councillor Baker in his role as Portfolio Holder for Housing & Planning and member responsible for Housing related complaints.

We would like to thank Councillor Baker for taking on this role and his commitment to it over the past year. We know that he has an eye for detail and is keen to deliver the best services for our tenants. His drive, scrutiny of data and chairmanship of the Housing Improvement has, we are sure, led to some of the improvements presented in the report. The service has also introduced a raft of new policies, with more to come. Complaints are an important part of the delivery of our housing landlord function. Genuine complaints, constructively made, can highlight areas where our services can be improved and provide opportunities to question our approach.

Cabinet is pleased to see an improvement in complaint response times. If we are to take complaints seriously, we must ensure that we respond within published timescales. It would be good to see a year-on-year improvement in response times. Satisfaction with our approach to complaint handling, as measured through the annual tenant satisfaction survey, has also improved when compared to the 2023/24 survey response. We feel this is a good indication that the service is getting things right but, along with Councillor Baker, we would like to see a further improvement on this satisfaction rate and would like Councillor Baker to explore how this can be improved with representatives of the Tenants Panel and officers.

With involvement from the Tenants Panel we would like to hear more about service improvements and learning from complaints. The setting up of a Tenants Panel sub-group to explore this in more detail is welcomed. In particular, are there particular themes to complaints that we can understand better?

The self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code is an important document that Councillor Baker has had input to. Overall Cabinet endorses the self-assessment but would like to see more detail on complaint themes and trends in future reports.”