

Hillingdon Council's 'governing body's response to the annual Housing complaints and service improvement report 2024/25'

I can confirm that the Residents' Services Select Committee are deeply committed to ensuring that the Council's Self-Assessment against the Complaint Handling Code and the Annual Complaints Review receive thorough scrutiny and challenge. The Committee understand how important it is to enhance the customer experience for our tenants.

During the Select Committee meeting on 22nd April 2025 it was positive for Committee Members to learn that the Landlord Service is actively working on several initiatives including an ambitious restructure to increase the number of front-line Housing Officers (and reduce the ratio of staff to property managed) as part of improving the landlord and tenant relationship in addition to the engagement of a dedicated staff member to accelerate work on learning from complaints and resolving underlying and recurring issues. The Committee noted that the Service has also procured a new complaints management system which will support work on data analysis and help to drive improvements and better outcomes for tenants.

The Committee heard on 22nd April that; listening to tenant's concerns, responding promptly, and learning from the feedback received are critical to the ongoing journey of improvement across the Landlord Service. As reflected in the minutes of the meeting, it was positive to hear that the Service is actively engaging with tenants, sharing information on complaints and demonstrating that outcomes are influencing the way services are delivered. It can be seen that the approach to learning from complaints is continuing to evolve. The Committee noted that tenants have rightly said that they want to see improvements in the depth and breadth of complaints data shared with them. The Committee heard that the Service is well placed to meet this expectation and that the voice of our tenants matters in that it shapes efforts to increase customer satisfaction and meet statutory and regulatory responsibilities.

The 2024 / 2025 Annual Complaints & Service Improvement Report encapsulates the complaint handling performance of the Landlord Service. The outcomes from the annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling code were also noted by the Select Committee. Given that both reports had been considered by the Landlord Service governance structure, the Committee found and recognised them as a true and accurate reflection of the council's complaint handling and the lessons learnt.

The Committee did note on 22nd April that there were performance challenges in complaint handling during 2024/25 and that the Service recognises that complaints performance was below both the standard we expect and our tenants deserve. Whilst there was a slight improvement in the proportion of respondents who reported [via the annual Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey] that they were satisfied with the Council's approach to complaint handling from 23.5% to 25.4% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, improvement in complaint response performance remains a priority for the year ahead. As reflected in the minutes of the meeting, in addition to improving levels of satisfaction and response times, it is clear that the Service also recognises the need to reduce the number of complaint extensions granted and the proportion of complaints which move from stage 1 to stage 2. The Committee heard that these

areas of focus are well embedded in improvement plans for 2025/26 and will be underpinned by staff training.

A full account of the Residents' Services Select Committee meeting held on 22nd April 2025 can be found in the minutes on the Council's website.

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Cllr Steve Tuckwell
Cabinet Member Planning, Housing and Growth