

St Helens Council Supporting People **Compliments & Complaints Policy**

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document sets out St Helens Supporting People's Compliments and Complaints Policy for handling compliments and complaints regarding housing support services funded under St Helens Council's Supporting People Programme.
- 1.2. The policy has been developed to align with the St Helens Council Corporate Complaints Policy and Procedure, St Helens Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures, St Helens Council Adult Social Care and Health Complaints Policy and Procedure and St Helens Council Comprehensive Equality Policy and does not seek to supersede any of these documents.
- 1.3. The policy also aligns with the contractual obligations outlined in the St Helens Supporting People Contract document.
- 1.4. The Supporting People team is committed to using feedback from clients and wider stakeholders as a basis for assessing client satisfaction and reviewing shaping and improving quality of services accordingly.

2. Policy Purpose

- 2.1. The aims and objectives of the Supporting People Compliments and Complaints Policy are:
 - (i) To ensure complaints relating to the delivery of St Helens Council's Supporting People programme are dealt with in a timely and efficient manner.
 - (ii) To monitor compliments and complaints and to ensure that the outcomes feed into the review, improvement and shaping of services within St Helens Council's Supporting People Programme.

3. Policy

3.1. Definitions

3.1.1. Within the scope of this policy a compliment is defined as:

“an expression of satisfaction by any member of the public or other St Helens Council Departments, however made, with any aspect of a service delivered by or on behalf of St Helens Council’s Supporting People Programme.”

3.1.2. Conversely, a complaint is defined as:

“an expression of dissatisfaction by any member(s) of the public or other St Helens Council Departments, however made, about the action or lack of action of St Helens Council Supporting People Team, or the standard of a service provided by or on behalf of St Helens Council’s Supporting People Programme.”

Issues relating to allegations or concerns made via the St Helens Multi-agency Safeguarding Policy are not covered within this policy and must be dealt with outside of the provider’s complaints system.

- 3.2. The Complaints Policy will be considered as part of the accreditation, contract monitoring and review processes.
- 3.3. With the exception of any complaints regarding safeguarding issues, if clients, staff or stakeholders wish to raise a compliment or make a complaint about any aspect of service delivery, including their individual support worker, this must be made initially to the Supporting People Provider in accordance with the support providers complaint’s policy and procedures.
- 3.4. Clients making a complaint will continue to receive a high standard of support and will not be discriminated against regardless of the nature of the complaint.
- 3.5. If the complainant is not happy with the outcome of the provider’s complaints procedures, after the full process has been exhausted, they may be directed to St Helens Council’s Supporting People Team.

3.6. The Supporting People team can be contacted as follows:

Supporting People Team,
Ground Floor, St Helens Town Hall
Victoria Square
St Helens
WA10 1HP

Tel: 01744 671608

Email: supportingpeople@sthelens.gov.uk

3.7. Handling Compliments and Complaints

- 3.7.1. Complaints will be acknowledged in writing within five working days of receipt by St Helens Council' Supporting People Team, indicating the name of the officer investigating the complaint.
- 3.7.2. A full reply including the outcome of the investigation and any action to be taken is to be provided in writing to the complainant within ten days from receipt of the complaint.
- 3.7.3. If for any reason this process is to exceed the timescales above, the client will be kept up to date with any progress and given reasons as to why the response is delayed.

4. Appeals

- 4.1. Any Complaints regarding the Supporting People Team or the administration of services should be managed through the Corporate Complaints Procedure.
- 4.2. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation they can appeal the outcome of the complaint to the Service Manager who will respond within ten days of receiving the appeal.
- 4.3. If the complaint cannot be dealt with within this timeframe, a letter will be sent to the complainant explaining the reason for the delay and the timescale for a response.
- 4.4. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the Service Manager's response they can appeal to St Helens Council's Supporting

People Accountable Officer. A response will be provided to the complainant within ten days.

5. Ombudsman Service

- 5.1. At any time during the course of an investigation by the Council, a complainant may refer their complaint to the Local Ombudsman. However, the Ombudsman will normally give the Council the opportunity to resolve the complaint via their internal procedure first unless the nature of the complaint is felt to warrant immediate intervention.

The Local Government Ombudsman for St Helens is as follows:

Local Government Ombudsman
PO Box 4771
Coventry
CV4 0EH

Tel: 0300 061 0614

Website: <http://www.lgo.org.uk>

If you have a Safeguarding concern please contact at St Helens Council on **01744-67 66 00** or visit the website at:
<https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/social-care-health/adults/safeguarding-adults/>

6. Accessibility of the Policy

- 6.1. The Compliments and Complaints Policy and Advice Leaflet will be available:
- 6.1.1. On the Council's website, www.sthelens.gov.uk
 - 6.1.2. At all Council reception points
 - 6.1.3. From all libraries
 - 6.1.4. From all providers of all Supporting People services, and
 - 6.1.5. From the Supporting People Team on **01744 671 608** or via email on **supportingpeople@sthelens.gov.uk**
 - 6.1.6. From the Council's Contact Centre on **01744 456 789**
- 6.2. Documentation can be made available in other languages and formats upon request to the Supporting People Team.

7. Compliments and Complaints Monitoring

- 7.1. The Supporting People Team will monitor compliments and complaints and review this quarterly in order to closely monitor progress of complaints.
- 7.2. Compliments will be communicated to the relevant member of staff and their manager. Compliments may also have a positive impact on future service development.
- 7.3. Performance monitoring will form part of St Helens Council's Supporting People Performance Report, which is presented to the Supporting People Commissioning Body on a six monthly basis.

8. Confidentiality

- 8.1. Any complaints processed through the procedure will be dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of information Act.

9. Equality and Diversity

- 9.1. Compliments and complaints will be analysed by age, gender, disability and race to ascertain that no group is being unfairly disadvantaged as part of service monitoring.



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