



SUPPORTING PEOPLE COMPLAINTS POLICY

Housing related support services are provided under contract between the council and Support Providers. Each Provider must have an accessible complaints policy and must support its service users to employ the policy on request.

Service Users who have a complaint to make must use their Provider's complaint system, which will have a number of stages to ensure fairness.

It is recognised that it may be worrying and/or stressful and/or confusing for a Service User to complain about the organisation and/or individual upon which they rely for support. Therefore:

- It must be made clear to the complainant (Service User or advocate) that their complaint(s), will not adversely affect the type or level of support, which s/he receives.
- If a Service User wishes to make a complaint about an individual Support Worker, this must be made to the Worker's Manager, not the Worker himself or herself. If the Support Worker and Manager is one and the same, the Provider must allow the Service User to complain to a third party and have an agreed process for doing this.
- If a Service User wishes to make a complaint about any other aspects of service delivery, this must be made according to the Providers' complaints system.
- If a Service User wishes to make a complaint about abuse, under the Councils 'No Secrets' policy this may be done outside of the Providers' complaints system.

The Supporting People Team

The Supporting People Team will log all complaints received and provide summary reports to the Core Strategy Development Group and to the Commissioning Body.

The Team will signpost service users to sources of support and advocacy wherever possible.

The Supporting People Team will monitor and review all services, including the complaints policy and procedure and how complaints have been actioned.

Investigation

The Supporting People Team will investigate a complaint only if:

- The Service User has first exhausted the Provider's complaints system, then formally requests the Supporting People Team to become involved;
- And/or,
- The Service User has a complaint about the person(s) who delivers the service who is/are also the manager/owner and it is inappropriate to complain to them;
- And/or,
- The allegation is so serious as to require immediate action. That is, a risk of serious harm or detriment to the Health, Safety and well-being of Service Users.

Stage One

If the Supporting People Team investigates a complaint, the process that it will follow is:

- Obtain the Service User's permission to discuss the complaint with the Provider.
- Check the complaint has been dealt with according to the Provider's policy.
- Check the Supporting People contract has been followed.
- Check the service has been provided to best practice standards.
- Carry out any necessary further investigation, including interviews.
- Record the action taken in a File Note under the Provider.
- Advise the Provider, Service User and Supporting People Manager of the investigation outcome.

Stage Two

If the Service User or complainant is unhappy with the investigation result, s/he may take her/his complaint to the Supporting People Manager for resolution.

Stage Three

If the Service User or complainant is still unhappy, s/he may take her/his complaint to the Commissioning Body for adjudication.

Service Users will be supported to appeal to the Commissioning Body, if they so wish.

Complaints About the Supporting People Team

Complaints about the conduct of Supporting People Team members will be subject to the Council's Corporate Complaints Policy.

Complaints should be made to the Supporting People Manager about the services provided by the SP Team.

If the Service User or complainant is dissatisfied, or, if the complaint is about the Supporting People Manager, s/he may take their complaint to the Head of Strategic Services, Neighbourhood and Housing Services.

If the Service User or complainant remains dissatisfied, s/he may take her/his complaint to the Ombudsman and/or to the Chief Executive of Bristol City Council.

The Local Government Ombudsman

If the Service User's Provider is not a Registered Social Landlord and the Commissioning Body's adjudication, following appeal, does not resolve the complaint, s/he may contact the Local Government Ombudsman relevant to Bristol, for advice and support in resolving her/his complaint:

Jerry White
Local Government Ombudsman
The Oaks No. 2
Westwood Way
Westwood Business Park
Coventry CV4 8JB
Tel: 0247 682 0000

Pre-complaint advice line: 0845 602 1983

The Housing Ombudsman Service

If the Service User's Provider is a Registered Social Landlord, once its complaints system has been exhausted, the Service User may contact the Housing Ombudsman at any point, for advice and support in resolving her/his complaint:

Housing Ombudsman
Norman House
105 – 109 Strand
London WC2 0AA
Tel: 0207 836 3630 or 0845 712 5973

COMPLAINTS FLOW CHART

