

North Hertfordshire District Council

Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy



The Council is committed to providing excellent services to the residents of North Hertfordshire in accordance with our vision to improve the quality of life for everyone. The Council's strategic priorities which underpin this vision are to: 'provide high quality services that put people first', 'provide value for money by running our services more efficiently', and 'to promote the economic, environmental and social well being of the district'.

Putting people first is the reason we take comments, compliments and complaints very seriously. The Council is committed to providing an excellent comments, compliments and complaints procedure to ensure that we are listening and responding to any issues that our customers have. This commitment also recognizes that our customers themselves have identified 'having an efficient and effective complaints procedure and following it' as our most important customer care standard. By committing to this we will also ensure that all statutory, legal and regulatory requirements arising are satisfied.

We will produce a plan each year, approved by senior managers and Members that states the key aims and objectives of our comments, compliments and complaints procedure. To assist us in achieving these aims we have introduced the British Standard CMSAS 86:2000 (Complaints Management System Assessment Specification). Registration in line with this standard will provide third party endorsement and auditing of how we implement and run our procedure. Through the standard we will continually identify opportunities for improvement and any need for staff training. We will also provide a best practice framework to assist all staff to respond to issues quickly, including the provision of guides and training courses for all.

We will survey our customers each year to evaluate how we are performing and learn from our mistakes. This will also ensure that we have feedback regarding the accessibility of our comments, compliments and complaints procedure ensuring that we enable easy access to all groups and individuals in a way to suit their needs without discrimination, prejudice or bias.

We are committed to achieving high performance and our targets of 100% of comments, compliments and complaints acknowledged in 4 working days and completion of 80% of comment compliments and complaints within 10 working days.

We promise to continue to improve our service to our customers by treating our comments, compliments and complaints positively and learning from our mistakes. To ensure that this is achieved each service area will review its comments, compliments and complaints on a monthly basis and all comments, compliments and complaints will be reviewed and reported to the Council's Management Board and Performance And Review Committee.

John T Campbell
Chief Executive

Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy Version 1.0 - Issued March 2004