

Annexe 2

How Waverley's complaints policy reflects the principles identified by the Local Government Ombudsman for an effective complaints procedure

Ombudsman's principles	How these are reflected in WBC's complaints procedure
Accessibility	<p>Waverley's complaints procedure is well publicised on the Council's website, and printed leaflets are available for those customers who do not have access to the internet. Customers may submit their complaints via the website.</p> <p>Staff can easily access information on good practice in complaints handling via the intranet, and the induction training provided for new members of staff includes a short presentation on how Waverley deals with complaints.</p>
Communication	<p>All customer complaints are acknowledged within 3 working days. The outcome of complaints is recorded, including lessons learned and any action taken to rectify problems. However, more work needs to be done on ensuring that there is effective communication between the Council's staff and its contractors.</p>
Timeliness	<p>All complaints are acknowledged within 3 working days, and officers dealing with complaints aim to send a detailed response to the complainant within 10 working days. Any complaint which goes through each level of the complaints procedure will almost certainly be resolved within 12 weeks as recommended by the Ombudsman.</p>
Fairness	<p>Training provided to staff on complaints handling is aimed at ensuring that all are clear about their roles and responsibilities in dealing with complaints. Complaints at Levels 2 and 3 are investigated by officers who have not had any involvement in the issues being complained about.</p>
Credibility	<p>The complaints procedure is managed by the Corporate Complaints Officer who works outside the Service areas and is able to challenge information provided by those who have been involved in the issues being complained about. All Heads of Service receive a weekly report of complaints involving their services, and the progress of investigations.</p>
Accountability	<p>Every effort is made to ensure that information is provided to complainants in a clear and open way, and that any decisions are properly and promptly implemented. Response timescales are kept under review. Due to the limitations of the Sharepoint complaints database, it is currently not possible to monitor customers' satisfaction levels.</p> <p>The policy is kept under regular review through annual reports to elected Members and the submission of quarterly reports on performance in complaints handling to the Corporate Management Team.</p>