

### COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE: FOR STAFF HANDLING COMPLAINTS

#### **We guarantee customers the following when they complain:**

##### **What happens when you complain?**

- ✓ We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days.
- ✓ Your complaint will be passed to the relevant Corporate Manager. You will be sent a written reply within 10 working days.
- ✓ If your complaint needs further investigation and will not be completed within 10 working days, then you will receive a letter informing you of the progress.
- ✓ You will receive an apology if we have made a mistake.
- ✓ If we were at fault, you will be told what measures are being taken to put things right.

##### **Receiving Complaints:**

You can receive complaints in four ways:

- ✓ In writing
- ✓ Online
- ✓ In person
- ✓ Via the telephone, although it is not encouraged

If you receive a complaint in writing or online, then you follow the usual procedure.

If you receive a complaint in person, then ask the customer to fill out the complaints form.

If you receive a complaint via the telephone, then you inform the customer that they can make a formal complaint by writing to us or by filling in a Complaints form online. However, if they are unable to write in, or do not have access to a computer, then the officer can record their complaint, on their behalf, by filling in a complaints form. The officer should inform the customer that it will be a summary of the complaint. The officer should reread back to the complainant what is written down to check that they are happy with it. The complaint will be dealt with according to the normal procedure.

##### **What to do when you receive a complaint:**

###### Stage 1

When a complaint first comes in, it must be passed to the Customer Service Officer to be logged onto the Anite Complaints system, creating a complaints case number, and a personal identification reference number.

On the day that the complaint is received, the Customer Service Officer will send out an acknowledgement letter to the customer, stating that we have received the complaint, it has been passed to the relevant officer, including their name, and that they will be sent a response within ten working days.

The complaint is then sent to the Corporate Manager of the relevant Service Area, requesting they report back to the Customer Service Officers, when any action is made, in order for them to log it on the Anite system.

If after seven working days, no feedback has been given from the relevant Corporate Manager, then a reminder email must be sent, warning them that they have three working days in which to get the response sent out. If a response is not yet possible as the complaint needs further investigation, then the Corporate Manager needs to send a 'holding letter' in its place, explaining what the delay is, and giving a reasonable time period in which the customer should receive a response.

Once the feedback has been reported back to the Customer Service Officers and a response has been sent to the customer, the details of all internal and external correspondence need inputting on the Anite system and the relevant documents scanned and added to the system for information purposes.

### Stage 2

If the customer is unhappy with the outcome of their complaint, they will contact SCDC again. Again, the complaint should be logged under the same Complaints Case number and the same personal identification number.

The procedure is the same as before and the complaint should now be sent to either the Chief Executive or the Executive Director.

### Stage 3

If the customer is still dissatisfied, then they can complain directly to the Local Government Ombudsman. Leaflets of which should be on display in Reception, or available to send out to customers, via the Customer Service Officers. Alternatively, Customers can contact the LGO on 0207 217 4620 or via [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk).