

Self-assessment against the requirements of the Code

Chesterfield Borough Council's self-assessment against the Local Government Ombudsman Code, April 2025

This self-assessment has been completed and shared in accordance with the organisation's governance arrangements as part of the complaints performance and service improvement report.

Code section	Action	Do we follow the Code: Yes/No	Explanations and Commentary
1: Definition of a service request and complaint	We recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint, and these are defined in our policies and procedures.	Yes	Link to complaints policy webpage Our policy clearly defines the difference between a complaint and a service request. If a complaint is deemed to be a service request, the customer is notified with clear reference to the policy.

Code section	Action	Do we follow the Code: Yes/No	Explanations and Commentary
2: Exclusions	Our complaints policy sets out circumstances where we would not consider a complaint. These are reasonable and do not deny individuals access to redress.	Yes	<p>Link to complaints policy webpage</p> <p>Our policy contains a clear list of exclusions. The circumstances under which we will not consider as a complaint are clearly set out in the Complaints Policy and are fair and reasonable. Exclusions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A request for service • Any issue where legal procedures have already started • Any issue which has previously been fully investigated at Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the complaints procedure • Criminal activity will be referred to the police <p>We also maintain an unreasonable Complaints policy here.</p>

Code section	Action	Do we follow the Code: Yes/No	Explanations and Commentary
3: Accessibility and awareness	We provide different channels through which individuals can make complaints. These are accessible and we can make reasonable adjustments where necessary	Yes	<p>Link to complaints policy webpage Customers can complain via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online form on the website • MyChesterfield account • By phone • By letter • Via an authorised independent advocate or third party • In person at a council premise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly to a council employee <p>An Equality Impact Assessment is carried out on all our policies to combat any negative impact. The CBC Equality and Diversity Policy sets out our approach to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and reasonable adjustments are referred to in the policy</p>

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4: Complaint handling resources	We have designated, sufficient resource assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling. Complaints are viewed as a core service and resourced accordingly.	Yes	The customer services team are responsible for handling LGO complaints, maintaining the complaints system and liaising with the Local Government Ombudsman. The Complaints Policy refers to them as the Complaints Officer. The complaints team have access to staff at all levels. Complaints are administered by the complaints team who distribute them to the relevant Service Areas who will investigate and handle the complaint. They have the authority and autonomy to resolve disputes – or access to Managers who do.
5: The complaint handling process	We have a single policy for dealing with complaints covered by the Code and individuals are given the option of raising a complaint where they express dissatisfaction that meets the definition of the complaint in our policy.	Yes	Link to complaints policy webpage A single corporate complaints policy is in place covering all complaints and customers are given the option to raise a complaint if they are dissatisfied.
6: Complaints stages (Stage 1)	We process stage 1 complaints in line with timescales and processes set out in the Code.	Yes	Our current policy is aligned with the timescales set out in the LGO code. We measure performance against this standard. In 2024-25 81% of complaints were managed within the timescales set out in the policy.
6: Complaints stages (Stage 2)	We process stage 2 complaints in line with timescales and processes set out in the Code.	Yes	Our current policy is aligned with the timescales set out in the LGO code. In 2024-25 65% of complaints were managed within the timescales set out in the policy.

Code section	Action	Do we follow the Code: Yes/No	Explanations and Commentary
7: Putting things right	When something has gone wrong we take action to put things right.	Yes	Where, after investigation, a complaint is upheld, either in part or in full, we will respond to the customer and acknowledge where we have gone wrong, what actions we have already taken and any further proposed resolutions.
8: Performance reporting and self-assessment	We produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge which includes a self-assessment against the Code.	Yes	The self-assessment is published on our website alongside our annual review of complaints. This data also includes the LGO annual report for Chesterfield Borough Council.
9: Scrutiny & Oversight	We have appropriate senior leadership and governance oversight of the complaints process and performance.	Yes	The senior leader with responsibility for complaints under the remit of the LGO is the Service Director, Digital, HR and Customer Services. The member with responsibility for complaints under the remit of the LGO is the Cabinet Member for Customers and Business Transformation.