

Complaints, comments and compliments policy

Purpose of policy

The purpose of this policy document is to ensure complaints received by Stour Valley and Poole Partnership are dealt with in an efficient manner, that is open, accessible and fair

Why we value feedback as an organisation

The Stour Valley and Poole Partnership provide the Revenues and Benefits services for Borough of Poole, Christchurch Borough Council, East Dorset District Council and North Dorset District Council. The Partnership is fully governed by a Joint Committee and monitored by a Scrutiny Panel represented by members from each Council.

We aim to get it right first time, every time. But if we do something that does not meet your expectations please contact us straight away. A quick conversation is usually all it takes to put things right.

Please also let us know when you receive great service. We will ensure your compliments are registered and employees are given praise for their commitment and customer service.

Ultimately your feedback is valued. We aim to deliver an excellent customer service by providing effective services. If we identify when a process has not been effective we can try to improve our processes and procedures for the future. We aim to publish our feedback results alongside our customer charter.

Roles and responsibilities


Everyone: in the organisation is responsible for listening to what our customers' say, for resolving issues whenever they can.

Service Managers: are responsible for making sure staff know and understand how we handle and respond to customer's feedback. They are also responsible for ensuring complaints are resolved and staff receive feedback when received from customers.

Senior Management Team: are responsible for reviewing this policy and ensuring it is applied across the organisation consistently. They are also responsible for reviewing performance, identifying trends and ensuring improvements (where identified) are implemented.

Development, Information and Asset Officer: is responsible for recording, monitoring and providing regular reports to senior management team on feedback and complaints received.

How to give feedback

 **0345 034 4569 – call our customer access team. Our trained customer service officers can resolve most issues and if not will escalate your enquiry to a manager. We will make an appointment to see you if you wish to discuss in person.**

Complaint handling

Stage one

If you wish to make a formal complaint call us or go to your Councils website. Your complaint will be recorded. Your complaint with any accompanying documents will then be referred to the appropriate manager for investigation and response.

- Your complaint will be acknowledged within 3 working days
- You should expect to receive a response within 15 working days
- If we need longer to provide a full investigation and response you will be informed
- We will provide information on the next stage of our policy

Stage two

If you remain dissatisfied following stage one, you can request for your complaint to be referred to the service manager for a review and response.

- Your Stage 2 Complaint will be acknowledged within 3 working days
- You should expect to receive a response within 20 working days
- If we need longer to provide a full investigation and respond you will be informed

Where a complaint is brought to the attention of an Elected Member details of the outcome of our investigation will be provided to the Council.

Complaints we cannot investigate under this policy

This policy covers the complaints process for the services provided by Stour Valley and Poole Partnership only. For all other council complaints (including Social Services Financial Assessments) please contact your Council.

There are separate processes for appeals or disputes for Council Tax, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Non-Domestic Rates and Discretionary Housing Payments. Full details are included in your Council Tax literature or Benefit decision letters. Please call 0345 034 4569 to request more information.

Making a formal complaint

Use our online forms, email us or write to us:



poole.gov.uk/stourvalleyfeedback for Borough of Poole



dorsetforyou.gov.uk/comments: for Christchurch, East Dorset and North Dorset



svpp@poole.gov.uk



Stour Valley and Poole Partnership, Po Box 722, Poole, BH15 2YE

Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)

If you remain dissatisfied following a stage two response, you have the right to contact the LGO. Once any complaint reaches the LGO the sovereign authority will be informed and will receive a copy of the stage one and two responses.

Local Government Ombudsman:
Tel: 0300 061 0614

PO Box 4771, Coventry, CV4 0EH
Web: www.lgo.org.uk