

Report for: Cabinet – 20th October 2026

Item number: 10

Title: Annual Feedback and Resolutions Report 2025/26

Report authorised by: Jess Crowe, Corporate Director of Culture, Strategy and Communities

Lead Officer: Kirsten Webb, Feedback and Resolutions Manager

Ward(s) affected: N/A

Report for Key/ Non-Key Decision: Non-key

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1. This report provides a comprehensive overview of the feedback received by the council between April 2025 and March 2026, including complaints, compliments and other feedback from residents, businesses, Members and partners. It highlights our performance and sets out how this feedback has shaped our actions and contributed to meaningful service improvements.
- 1.2. The report also includes our annual self-assessment submissions to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS).
- 1.3. Feedback plays a vital role in helping Haringey listen to residents and enhance the services we deliver. A strong feedback process enables the council to respond promptly and effectively. As such, this report also details the steps we've taken to improve how we handle complaints and enquiries from Councillors (Member Enquiries), ensuring residents have a better experience when sharing their views and that the council can make the most of the insights received.
- 1.4. The Report also invites Cabinet to scrutinise and challenge each of the appendices and the Council's performance to feed into the Governing Body's Statement to be submitted to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

- 2.1. Our Council faces a significant challenge when it comes to complaints. For the third year in a row, we've had the highest rate of Local Government Ombudsman-upheld complaints per resident of any council in England. Across all services, nearly two thirds of Stage 1 complaints and more than half of Stage 2 complaints are upheld across all services.
- 2.2. This represents a failure to adequately support our residents. As a new administration, we inherited this unacceptable situation. And we bring the political will to prioritise tackling it with the urgency it demands. We know that Council

officers share our concerns, and we are working together to bring about the action needed.

- 2.3. The issue is not in the numbers of complaints per se; indeed, increases can also be taken to mean that residents feel more able to raise issues with the council. The problem lies in the fact that too many residents experience unacceptable delays or insufficient responses and that they are not leading to tangible improvements in services.
- 2.4. Housing is a particular challenge, with more than half (53%) of complaints in 2025/26 related to services within the directorate. We saw 86% of complaints upheld by the Housing Ombudsman Service last year and, although this is an improvement from 95% the previous year, it remains unacceptably high. We are encouraged by the efforts of the team to address this through the Housing Complaints Improvement Sub-Plan.
- 2.5. This report also includes our annual self-assessment submissions to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman Service. These documents set out how our policies meet the standards set by their respective codes of practice. However, we also know our performance does not match the ambition set within these policies, and we have also made sure this is fully captured in the assessments. Including these as part of this report also provides extra opportunity for further scrutiny and challenge from Cabinet. We will ensure any additional feedback from Cabinet is reflected in our final submissions.
- 2.6. The resident experience, including how we manage complaints, is a Council priority, reflected in the Corporate Delivery Plan, and a personal one for me. It is critical that we view complaints improvement measures within a holistic picture of where we are not meeting minimum standards rightly expected of us by our residents. To this end, we are also addressing years of underinvestment in Customer Services to support residents with accessing the information and support they need in a timely and effective manner. This will take some time, but I am confident that we will be able to reduce the frustration of many residents and members, through better 'front-door' services and the commitment to 'getting it right first time.'
- 2.7. We will be keeping a close eye on the delivery of the Complaints Improvement Plan, ensuring residents and Members can hold us to account on this. We aim to see real progress in the Feedback and Resolutions Report for 2026/27.

3. **Recommendations**

- 3.1. It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 3.1.1. Note the 2025/26 Annual Feedback and Resolutions Report at Appendix A.

- 3.1.2. Note the Housing Ombudsman Service Annual Self-Assessment at Appendix F and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Self-Assessment at Appendix G.
- 3.1.3. Note the Complaints Improvement Plan at Appendix D, and Housing Service Sub Improvement plan at Appendix E, which set out the council's plan for addressing the issues identified in the Annual Report and Self Assessments.
- 3.1.4. Delegate authority to the Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC) to finalise a Governing Body Statement for submission to the Housing Ombudsman Service, reflecting and taking account of Cabinet's consideration and discussion of this report and appendices.

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1. In alignment with the statutory requirements set out by the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, it is essential that the governing body maintains oversight of complaint performance. Presenting this report to Cabinet ensures transparency, accountability, and strategic governance in relation to our complaint handling processes. It enables Cabinet to assess organisational responsiveness, identify areas for improvement, and ensure that service delivery remains resident-focused and compliant with regulatory expectations.
- 4.2. In addition, the council is also required to submit annual self-assessments to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman Service, showing how these have been reviewed, and the risks and issues identified will be addressed.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1. Publishing an Annual Feedback and Resolutions review is a requirement, so no alternative options have been considered.

6. Background information

- 6.1. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) introduced new, aligned Complaint Handling Codes, which came into effect on 1 April 2024. These codes require (in the case of the HOS) and encourage (in the case of the LGSCO) local authorities and landlords to demonstrate how they comply with the codes and how they are learning from feedback throughout the year. This is evidenced through the publication of our annual self-assessment reports which must be made publicly available. The 2026/27 self-assessments are included as appendices for Cabinet's consideration.
- 6.2. These self-assessments have been reviewed by relevant officers and the council's designated Member Responsible for Complaints. The areas for improvement identified through these reviews form the basis of the complaints improvement plans included as appendices to this report.

- 6.3. Feedback plays a vital role in improving services in Haringey, particularly in delivering on our commitments to get the basics right and to learn from our mistakes. The service improvements outlined in this report reflect our progress toward these goals, including efforts to meaningfully incorporate resident perspectives into service design.
- 6.4. We also recognise that valuable feedback is not limited to formal complaints and suggestions. A significant amount is gathered through other channels—such as proactive collaboration with residents and partners, day-to-day interactions in frontline services, and communications across various platforms. This includes consultations and engagement activities facilitated through the Haringey Engagement Hub. A key part of our journey is learning from the full spectrum of feedback we receive from residents and businesses, regardless of how it is shared.
- 6.5. The Council is clear that complaint handling performance is not yet where it needs to be and has not consistently met the standards residents should expect. During 2025/26, complaint volumes increased across most complaint types and, while performance varies across services, particular challenges remain in the timeliness and consistency of Housing complaint handling and in the level of maladministration identified by both Ombudsman. The Council is committed to being open and transparent about these challenges, while also recognising areas where progress is being made.
- 6.6. Our focus is on ensuring that learning from complaints, resident feedback and Ombudsman findings translates into sustained improvement, both in how complaints are handled and in the services that give rise to them. The Complaints Improvement Plan 2026-2028, supported by the dedicated Housing Complaints Improvement Sub-Plan, provides the framework for this work, alongside strengthened governance, performance oversight and organisational learning. Together, these arrangements are intended to improve the timeliness, quality and consistency of complaint handling and, importantly, deliver a better experience for residents when things go wrong.
7. **Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan High Level Strategic outcomes**
- 7.1. Theme 1 - Resident experience and enabling success - *we will ensure residents have an excellent experience when accessing our services and we will develop inclusive public participation, where residents have genuine opportunities to have a say in decisions that affect them. This theme also captures significant enabling work happening behind the scenes to ensure all Council officers have the support, tools and infrastructure they need to work effectively and provide residents with a high-quality service.*
8. **Carbon and Climate Change**
- 8.1. N/A
9. **Statutory Officers comments Finance, Procurement, Legal and Equalities**
- 9.1. **Finance**

9.1.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the contents of this report.

9.2. **Procurement**

9.2.1. Strategic Procurement notes the contents of this report and confirms that there are no procurement related issues that would prevent the provision of this update and associated recommendations to Cabinet.

9.3. **Legal and Governance [Robin Levett – Principal Projects Lawyer]**

9.3.1. The Director of Legal and Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

9.3.2. The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code came into force on the 1 April 2024. Councils, as social landlords, are now required to follow the requirements set out in the Code. The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 places a duty on the Housing Ombudsman to monitor compliance with the statutory Complaint Handling Code.

9.3.3. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) is an independent body responsible for investigating complaints made against a public body where it is alleged that there has been maladministration causing injustice. Under the Local Government Act 1974, the LGSCO has the power to investigate complaints against the Council where there has been maladministration causing injustice, a failure to provide a service that it was the Council's function to provide and there was a total failure to provide such a service. The Ombudsman is the final stage in the complaints process, where an individual has been through the council's complaints process and remains dissatisfied with the outcome.

9.3.4. Complaints in respect of Children Social Care are governed by the Children Act 1989 and The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 and is supported by statutory guidance 'Getting the Best from Complaints'. In respect of Adult Social Care, complaints are governed by the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009.

9.4. **Equality**

9.4.1. The council has a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

9.4.2. The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and

sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

9.4.3. Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

9.4.4. This report is an annual review of performance and does not include any decisions that would have equalities implications.

10. **Use of Appendices**

10.1. Appendices included are:

Appendix A: Annual Feedback and Resolutions Report 2025/26

Appendix B: Complaints and Compliments data tables

Appendix C: Member Enquiry data tables

Appendix D: Haringey Council Complaints Improvement Plan – 2026-2028

Appendix E: Housing Services Complaints Improvement Sub Plan

Appendix F: Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment

Appendix G: Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Self-Assessment

11. **Background papers**

11.1. None