

Governing Body Response to the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report and Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment 2025/2026

The governing body has reviewed and scrutinised the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report 2025/2026 and the accompanying self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. Through this process, assurance has been sought on the effectiveness of complaint handling arrangements, compliance with the Code, complaint performance, learning from complaints and the delivery of service improvements arising from resident feedback. The governing body is satisfied that appropriate policies, procedures, governance arrangements and resources are in place and that the Council remains compliant with the requirements of the Complaint Handling Code.

In carrying out its scrutiny role, the governing body considered complaint performance data, themes and trends, resident feedback, complaint outcomes and the findings of the annual self-assessment. Particular focus was given to how learning from complaints is translated into service improvements and how performance is monitored and challenged through existing governance arrangements. The governing body has provided appropriate challenge and assurance to ensure that complaint handling remains resident-focused and supports continuous improvement across the landlord service.

The governing body recognises a number of positive outcomes during the year, including continued compliance with the Complaint Handling Code, effective performance monitoring, strong governance arrangements and an organisational culture that views complaints as an important source of customer insight and learning. The improvements made following the recent compliance review are welcomed, and ongoing staff development, quality assurance and learning activities continue to strengthen complaint handling practices.

No significant compliance risks were identified through the self-assessment process. However, the governing body recognises the importance of maintaining a strong culture of learning and accountability. As a result, complaint trends, emerging risks and service improvement actions will continue to be reviewed through regular performance reporting, with further resident scrutiny being developed to strengthen challenge and oversight.

The governing body remains committed to ensuring complaints are handled fairly, empathetically and promptly, that residents' voices are heard, and that learning from complaints continues to inform service improvements and deliver better outcomes for residents. We would also like to extend our thanks to the Housing Landlord and wider Complaints Team who work alongside our tenants and partner contractors to ensure complaints are dealt with promptly.

Judith Derbyshire

Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety, on behalf of Westmorland and Furness Cabinet Members