

Feedback and Complaints Policy

Responsible Director:	Steve Holden
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Introduction

This policy applies to all customers across People First (PF), The Well Communities (TWC) and Carer Support West Cumbria (CSWC); throughout this document, we refer to these organisations collectively as 'we'/'Our'.

We believe it should be easy to give feedback or make a complaint to us.

This policy sets out how we will receive, respond to and learn from feedback and complaints. It explains what will happen and what you can expect when you share feedback or raise a complaint.

We are committed to continually improving the services we deliver. We will listen carefully to feedback and complaints, take every opportunity to put things right and use what we learn to drive improvements.

Key timeframes and keeping you updated

We will handle feedback and complaints as quickly as we can and in a fair way. The timeframes below start from the date we receive your complaint (by email, post, phone or in person).

- We will acknowledge written/formal complaints within 5 working days.
- We aim to provide a Stage 2 outcome within 20 working days of receipt. If it is likely to take longer, we will explain why and agree a revised date with you.
- If you request an appeal (Stage 3), we will acknowledge it within 5 working days and we aim to share the appeal outcome within 20 working days of receiving your appeal. If we need more time, we will keep you updated and confirm a new timescale.

Working days mean Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays. If at any point you need information in a different format or extra support to take part in the process, please tell us and we will make reasonable adjustments.

What do we mean by 'feedback'?

- Feedback is information shared to help us improve. Feedback does not necessarily require formal investigation or action.
- You can share feedback with us in whatever way feels easiest for you, including:
 - Speaking to a member of staff or volunteer in person
 - By telephone
 - By email or writing
 - Anonymously, for example by using a feedback form or feedback box at one of our office locations (where available)
- Feedback can be both positive and negative.
- We may review 'negative' feedback to help us understand what happened and to inform good practice and service improvements.

What do we mean by 'complaint'?

- A complaint can be spoken or a written statement, where the complainant wishes the matter to be investigated.
- It can be from anyone who has worked, volunteered, or received support from us, or who has had contact with our services.
- It can be about our work, about a member of staff or volunteer, a trustee, our business, or something we have been involved in.

All Complaints

We will deal with all complaints as quickly as possible. Sometimes it is enough to address a concern informally and agree how to resolve it without a formal investigation. If the issue is more complex, we will follow the formal process set out in this policy. If the complaint is not resolved at Stage 2, it can move to the appeal stage (Stage 3).

Complaints regarding the services provided by any one of our three organisations will be handled solely within that organisation.

This policy is not a legal process. It is not written to consider whether we have been negligent, and it is not part of our disciplinary process.

What this policy does not cover

This policy is for feedback and complaints about our services and how we work. Some matters are covered by different processes, for example: safeguarding concerns (which follow our Safeguarding Policy), requests for information (such as data protection requests), and staff employment matters (such as grievances or disciplinary issues).

If you raise something we cannot deal with under this policy, we will explain why and tell you the best way to take it forward.

- All complaints will be taken seriously and dealt with empathetically.
- All complaints are treated confidentially and in accordance with our GDPR policy. Only the officers dealing with complaints and, where appropriate, will be aware of the complaint.
- We aim to manage complaints fairly and honestly regardless of who makes a complaint.
- We treat all members of the community equally. Where appropriate, every effort will be made to make information available in a different format or language.
- If it is found that one or more operational procedures have failed, the Investigating Officer is responsible for making sure these issues are raised with the Senior Leadership Team and, if appropriate, Trustees to inform change. The Investigating Officer is the person assigned to investigate the complaint (see more detail under Investigating Officer in Stage 2).

Complaints Log

We use a log to record complaints. The log is used to identify potential trends or concerns and is maintained by HR. All complaints logged contain the following information:

- Date of complaint
- Complainant's initials only
- Brief overview of the complaint
- The service/dept which the complaint is about
- Initials of investigating manager
- Outcome of the complaint
- The date the complaint process was completed

Correspondence Log

All correspondence relating to each complaint is securely stored in a correspondence complaints log. The log is maintained by HR.

Action Plan

Any actions/learning undertaken as a result of the complaint are recorded in individual action plans

Complaints information is kept for a period of 7 years following the resolution date.

Supporting people to make comments

If someone would like to make a complaint to us but needs help to do so, we will provide information about services which can provide independent support (for example, Citizens Advice).

Role Alignment Overview

- **HR** – will typically be the HR advisor or HR manager
- **Investigation Officer** – may occupy a managerial role within the organisation
- **Deciding Manager** - may occupy a role within the Senior Leadership Team, such as Head of Service
- **Appeals Manager** – may be appointed at the Director level

Minor/verbal complaints – Stage 1

- When it is appropriate to do so, we feel it is best for front line staff to talk to the person making the complaint and try to find a solution straight away. Staff should talk about the issue with the complainant. Staff should not accept blame, blame others, or make excuses. Staff should acknowledge the complaint and the complainant's feelings and show a willingness to resolve the complaint.
- The staff member should then agree on a course of action for moving forwards with the complainant and clarify this with the complainant. It might be appropriate to put it in writing at this stage.
- It is important to identify in this discussion what it is that the complainant feels would resolve the issue they have raised, and to

address this as far as is appropriate and possible.

- The member of staff should keep their line manager informed of their work with the complainant. The line manager should also inform the HR.
- If the suggested plan of action is not acceptable by the complainant, or the complainant is not satisfied that they have been listened to, or that the appropriate action has taken place, this would then proceed to a Stage 2 complaint.
- If front line staff feel they are unable to resolve the complaint, then they should inform HR with their findings and HR will then allocate to an Investigating Officer.

Written/Formal Complaints – Stage 2

All written complaints should be emailed to HR@wearepeoplefirst.co.uk marked strictly confidential for the attention of HR or by post to the HR, People First, Milbourne Street, Carlisle, CA2 5XB marked strictly confidential.

When HR receives a complaint, it is their job to appoint a named Investigating Officer to manage the complaint. The Investigating Officer would normally be from a different department to which the complaint relates.

HR

Prior to an investigation

- HR will decide who the appropriate Investigating Officer will be and pass the complaint to this person.
- HR will write to the complainant within 5 working days of initial receipt of the complaint. This letter can be sent by email and must include:
 - Confirmation that an Investigating Officer has been appointed, their name and contact details
 - Gain permission, where possible, from the complainant to proceed if the complaint has been made on behalf of someone else – this permission must be in writing.
 - A copy of this policy
- If a member of staff is the subject of the complaint, HR will inform the member of staff's direct line manager within 48 hours of initial receipt of the complaint
- HR will also inform the member of staff who is the subject of the complaint, (if appropriate to do so), within 48 hours of receiving the complaint. If the member of staff wishes to have a colleague appointed as their 'support' during the investigation, HR will appoint a suitable colleague. The 'support' should not be the member of staff's direct line manager. HR will also inform the member of staff the name of the appointed Investigating Officer and explain that they will be contacted directly by them to discuss the complaint in more detail.

Investigating Officer

The Investigation

- The Investigating Officer will contact the complainant and offer an opportunity to meet within 7 days of being appointed the Investigating Officer. This can be done by phone or email. An explanation of the rationale for the meeting and a planned agenda should be provided in advance.
- If it is not clear in the written complaint, it is important to identify with the complainant what it is that they feel would resolve the issue they have raised, and to address this as far as is appropriate and possible.
- Complainants will be informed that they can bring a friend/relation/advocate/ along to any meetings.
- If the complaint is about a member(s) of staff, the Investigating Officer will also offer the opportunity for the member(s) of staff to put forward their account. This can be done by phone or email. An explanation of the rationale for the meeting and a planned agenda should be provided in advance.
- The member of staff will also be informed that they can bring their 'support' or a union representative with them should they wish to do so.
- The Investigating Officer will keep a written record of all meetings, telephone calls and copies of any email communication.
- We aim to complete Stage 2 and provide an outcome within 20 working days of receipt of the complaint. HR and the Investigating Officer will work together to make sure the complaint is progressed promptly.
- If the issues are complex and we need longer than 20 working days, we will contact the complainant (and, where relevant, the member of staff) as soon as possible to explain why and confirm a revised timescale.
- When there are delays, we will keep all parties updated at appropriate intervals, so you know what is happening and what to expect next.
- If the complaint and/or investigation raises any safeguarding concerns then in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy, advice will be sought from the Designated Safeguarding Lead and appropriate action will be taken.
- If the complaint raises a potentially serious matter, advice could be sought from a legal advisor. This must be done in consultation with HR. If legal action is taken, the complaints procedure will be reviewed in line with the advice given.

Deciding Manager

Following the investigation by the Investigation Officer

- Once the findings of the investigation have been completed, they are reported back to HR who will assign a Deciding Manager to the case. The Deciding Manager in consultation with the Investigating officer, will reach a decision as to the outcome of the complaint.
- We aim to confirm the outcome of Stage 2 within 20 working days of receipt of the complaint. If we need more time, we will explain why and confirm a revised timescale.

- If relevant, the SLTM will also inform the member of staff of the outcome, as well as their line manager.
- HR will populate the relevant sections of the action log and pass to the relevant Manager to complete and review.

Making an Appeal – Stage 3

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the decision reached at Stage 2, they can request an appeal (Stage 3) by writing to the Appeal Manager. This requires the complainant to set out their reasons and the grounds for the appeal, and to submit it within 10 working days of receiving the Stage 2 outcome.

When we receive an appeal, we will acknowledge it within 5 working days. The Appeal Manager will then arrange an appeal meeting as soon as practical and aims to complete Stage 3 and confirm the outcome within 20 working days of receiving the appeal. If we need more time, we will explain why and confirm a revised timescale.

Prior to the appeal hearing, the Appeal Manager will review the following paperwork:

- Original letter/email received from complainant
- A copy of all meeting notes recorded during the original investigation
- A copy of this policy
- A copy of the outcome letter sent to the complainant
- Policies or procedures relevant to this the complaint
- Any other relevant guidance

The Appeal Hearing

- The complainant will be invited by the Appeal Manager to attend the appeal hearing at a given date, time, and location.
- The complainant will be informed by the Appeal Manager that they can bring a friend/relation/advocate.
- If the complaint is regarding a member of staff, they may also be invited by the Appeal Manager to attend the appeal hearing should the Appeal Manager feel they need clarification on a particular point. The member of staff will also be informed that they can bring their support or a union representative with them should they wish to do so.

The Appeal Manager will confirm the outcome of the appeal panel in writing. Wherever possible, this will be within the Stage 3 timescale set out above.

The Appeal Manager may include other Advisors if they feel it would be appropriate to help them with the review and decision.

Retention of Documents

All documents will be securely stored in line with our Data Protection Policy and our data retention schedule. Unless there is a lawful reason to keep information for longer, complaints records will normally be kept for 7 years after the complaint is closed, and then securely destroyed.

The appeal panel's decision is the final stage of our internal process. As a charity, we do not have a single external complaints regulator for our services. If your support is funded or commissioned, we can tell you whether there is a separate funder/commissioner feedback route you can use.

Unreasonable Complaints

We are committed to providing a professional, welcoming and fair service to everyone who comes to us for support. This policy explains how we support people who may sometimes behave in ways that are challenging, persistent or unreasonable, while also protecting our staff and volunteers.

We want everyone to feel heard and respected, and we recognise that people displaying persistent behaviours may have real concerns that deserve attention. At the same time, staff and volunteers should never have to tolerate behaviour that is abusive, threatening or offensive. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include:

- Using abusive or offensive language in person, on the phone or in writing.
- Sending multiple emails, calls, texts or voicemails.

We will take steps to respond fairly and safely in these situations. This policy helps staff and volunteers understand what to do, when to escalate, and where to seek support, ensuring that everyone is treated equitably and with respect.

Please read this policy alongside our Safeguarding Policy, Data Protection Policy and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Our aims in this policy are to:

- Recognise that people who show persistent or challenging behaviours may have real concerns that deserve attention.
- Make sure we respond in a fair and consistent way.
- Help staff and volunteers spot when someone's behaviour becomes unreasonable.
- Ensure staff and volunteers feel confident handling these situations or know where to turn for support if needed.

DEFINITIONS

We recognise that people may sometimes behave in ways that are challenging, persistent or difficult.

This section explains what we mean by these terms and helps staff distinguish between someone who is being difficult and someone who is being unreasonably persistent or vexatious.

Difficult Customers

A difficult customer may raise concerns or questions that take extra time or attention. Their behaviour might seem challenging or outside usual social norms, but the goal of helping them is achievable. Staff should continue to offer support wherever possible, while balancing their own wellbeing and the smooth running of services.

Unreasonable or Unreasonably Persistent Complainants

Sometimes, a person's behaviour can become excessive or create significant stress. We refer to these situations as dealing with *unreasonable or unreasonably persistent complainants*.

It's important to note:

- Raising genuine questions or concerns does not make someone unreasonable.
- Challenging a complaint outcome once or more than once does not automatically make someone unreasonable.

Vexatious Complainants

We sometimes use the term *vexatious* to describe behaviour where repeated or persistent contact about a complaint makes it difficult for us to deal effectively with that complaint (or the complaints of others). We focus on the impact of the behaviour, not assumptions about a person's intent.

The Local Government Ombudsman defines vexatious complainants as people whose frequent or persistent contact with a service prevents that service from dealing effectively with their complaints or the complaints of others.

Features of an Unreasonably Persistent or Vexatious Complainant

An unreasonably persistent or vexatious customer may demonstrate some of the following behaviours (this list is not exhaustive and having one feature alone does **not** automatically mean someone is vexatious):

- Making complaints without sufficient grounds or refusing to specify the reasons for the complaint.
- Refusing to co-operate with the complaints procedure while still wanting the complaint resolved.
- Refusing to accept that an issue is outside our remit or powers.

- Insisting on handling the complaint in ways incompatible with the complaints procedure or good practice.
- Making groundless complaints about the staff handling their complaint or trying to have staff replaced.
- Contacting us excessively, by any means, regarding a specific complaint or complaints.
- Repeatedly requesting meetings with staff at offices, homes, or neutral locations.
- Making persistent or unreasonable demands or expecting immediate responses to numerous, frequent, or complex communications.
- Behaving unreasonably on the phone, such as shouting or not allowing staff to speak.
- Harassing, verbally abusing, intimidating, or threatening staff, including using foul, offensive or racist language.
- Raising new or unrelated issues while a complaint is being addressed.
- Introducing trivial or irrelevant information and expecting it to be considered.
- Changing the basis of the complaint without reasonable justification.
- Denying statements made earlier in the process.
- Recording meetings or conversations without prior consent.
- Refusing to accept the outcome of the complaint, repeatedly arguing or denying that an adequate response has been given.
- Making the same complaint repeatedly, sometimes with minor changes, and insisting it should be treated as a new complaint.
- Persistently approaching us despite being told it is unrealistic for legal, policy or other valid reasons.
- Refusing to accept documented evidence as factual.
- Complaining about historic or irreversible decisions or incidents.
- Combining some or all of the above behaviours.

Responding to a vexatious customer

Every situation is different, so the guidance below may not apply in every case. Dealing with an unreasonable or vexatious customer can be stressful and staff may not always find it easy to communicate everything that needs to be said. The most important thing is that staff feel confident in handling the situation or, if it is particularly stressful, know that immediate support is available.

Initial Contact or Early Signs of Difficult Behaviour

- When a customer first displays behaviours which challenge, address it firmly but fairly.
- If the customer questions what we can or cannot do, explain our remit clearly and explore other ways to help, such as signposting to services or rescheduling an appointment.
- Where appropriate, refer to the contract letter or agreement.
- Politely ask the customer to stop shouting or swearing, explaining that the call may need to be terminated if the behaviour continues.

Recognising and Responding to Vexatious Behaviour

- If staff feel that a customer's behaviour has become vexatious, they should communicate this clearly, warning that continued behaviour may result in being treated as unreasonable, abusive or vexatious.
- Any staff member dealing with a potentially vexatious complainant must refer the matter to their line manager, who will conduct a risk assessment to determine whether this policy should be applied and raise to SLT for approval.
- All interactions with the customer should be clearly recorded, and staff should seek supervision and support to debrief after difficult encounters.

Additional Considerations

- Consider the customer's health and any conditions (e.g., dementia, learning disabilities, Autism, or mental health conditions such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or personality disorders) that may affect behaviour and implement reasonable adjustments before applying restrictions.
- In urgent situations where the line manager is unavailable, staff should escalate to a member of the senior leadership team.
- If behaviour is extreme or poses an immediate risk to staff safety, other options may be necessary, including contacting the police or taking legal action. In these cases, we may act without prior warning.

Maintaining Communication and Relationships

- It is vital to continue attempting to maintain effective communication and a positive relationship with the complainant.
- Applying the unreasonable or vexatious designation should always be a last resort. Staff should explore all other options to manage the situation and ensure the complaint is addressed such as using the contract letter to outline boundaries and expectations.

Options for dealing with vexatious customers

All actions should be agreed with your line manager and can be used alone or in combination, depending on the situation and whether a complaint is ongoing or completed.

Options include:

- **Contract letter:** Set out responsibilities for us and the customer. If terms are broken, further action may follow. Send the letter early and request it be signed and returned.
- **Change of key worker:** Assign a different key worker if a change in personnel may improve the relationship. This is not a criticism of the original worker.
- **Restrict contact:** Limit meetings or communication channels, e.g., one-hour meetings every two weeks.
- **Single-point contact:** Limit contact to one staff member (with a named deputy if absent), while maintaining at least one channel of communication.

- **Closure letter:** Notify the customer in writing that we have fully addressed their issues and that continuing contact serves no useful purpose. State that they are being treated as a habitual or vexatious complainant and that we do not intend to respond further.
- **Service withdrawal:** In extreme cases, senior management may decide to withdraw service. Any restriction must be proportionate and appropriate.

If the customer challenges any restriction or withdrawal, the issue should be handled through the complaints procedure.

When service has been restricted or withdrawn

Before restricting or withdrawing service, the SLT must ensure that due process has been followed and that nothing further can be done under our remit and this policy. The Department Director is responsible for overseeing the following, in liaison with the relevant team manager or CEO:

- Inform funders/commissioners that the organisation is now managing a vexatious customer.
- Letter to the customer explaining the action taken, why we cannot provide further support, their rights and how to make a complaint through the internal complaints procedure.
- Inform staff about the withdrawal of service, the reasons, associated risks and details of the internal escalation plan.

Note: If a customer displays aggressive or threatening behaviour, future assistance and information about complaints may be withheld for staff safety. In these exceptional cases, it is also not advisable to transfer the risk to another provider.

Making staff aware

Staff should be informed when a customer has been designated as vexatious, following customer confidentiality guidelines. Staff should be advised as follows:

By Telephone:

- Identify the caller as the vexatious customer.
- Explain that the customer has received a letter confirming the withdrawal of service, and there is nothing further to add.
- Remain calm and respectful at all times but disengage from the call if necessary.

By Correspondence:

- Forward all future correspondence to the nominated SLT member.
- Report any adverse incidents immediately to the Department Director, or in their absence, the CEO.

Future contacts

If a customer who has previously had service withdrawn makes a new complaint, it will be handled through the **complaints procedure**.

- The investigator, in full consultation with the Department Director, will decide whether any previous restrictions remain appropriate and necessary.
- We will not ignore genuine service requests or complaints; each case will be reviewed fairly and on its merits.
- A review will take place after 6 months to determine whether the policy should still apply to the individual.

Record keeping

Accurate records are essential for consistency and transparency. Staff should:

- Keep notes of all contact and update the database.
- Record customer details, dates of restrictions, and actions taken.
- Inform relevant staff about restrictions or withdrawal of service.
- Provide information under the Data Protection Act if requested, including why the customer is considered vexatious.
- The Hub will keep a central record of all instances of the policy being applied.

Equalities impact statement

The number of complainants who fall into this category is small. Careful monitoring ensures that this policy is applied fairly, consistently and without discrimination, and reasonable adjustments are put in place where appropriate.

Roles and responsibilities

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

- Liaise with the Appeal Manager on appeals from customers.
- Liaise with Commissioners if asked to review decisions on withdrawal or restriction of service.
- Ensure overall accountability for the policy and its implementation.

SLT

- Oversee the application of the policy and ensure it is applied consistently and fairly.
- Work with Managers and Team Leaders to determine appropriate actions for vexatious or unreasonably persistent customers.
- Monitor restrictions or withdrawal of service and liaise with Commissioners as needed.
- Review feedback from customers, frontline staff and Managers to inform any updates to the policy.
- Keep the CEO informed on overall policy effectiveness and trends.

Managers / Team Leaders

- Ensure they are fully familiar with this policy and its practical application.
- Conduct risk assessments when required and provide guidance on managing vexatious or persistent customers.
- Support and identify training needs for frontline staff.
- Liaise with Directors and SLT on decisions regarding withdrawal or restriction of service.
- Keep case files and databases accurate and up to date, remembering that customers can request copies.
- Communicate clearly with staff about customers whose service has been restricted or withdrawn to avoid unintentional support.
- Allow opportunities for customers to improve behaviour where it is safe to do so.

Staff and Volunteers

- Be familiar with this policy and follow guidance when dealing with difficult, unreasonable or vexatious customers.
- Record all interactions clearly and update the case file or database as required.
- Seek guidance and support from Managers or Team Leaders when needed including wellbeing support.
- Maintain professional, calm and respectful communication at all times.
- Follow escalation procedures and refer to Managers or Team Leaders when behaviour becomes unreasonably persistent or vexatious.

Appendix 1

Acknowledgement of Complaint Template Letter

Dear [Complainant Name],

Re: Acknowledgement of Complaint – Reference [Complaint Reference Number]

Thank you for getting in touch on [date of complaint]. I'm sorry to hear you've had reason to complain. This letter confirms we've received your complaint and logged it under the reference number above.

We will look into your complaint in line with our complaints procedure. The person leading the investigation is:

Investigating Officer: [Name]

Job Title: [Title]

Department: [Department]

Contact Details: [Telephone / Email]

The Investigating Officer will review the information you have provided and may contact you if we need any further details or clarification. We aim to respond to you by [expected timeframe]. If we need more time, we will explain why and keep you updated. If you need this information in a different format, or you would like support to take part in the process, please let us know and we will do our best to help.

When you contact us about this matter, please quote the reference number above so we can respond as quickly as possible.

Thank you for bringing this to our attention. Your feedback helps us understand what happened and improve our services.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix 2

Outcome of Investigation Template Letter

Dear [Complainant Name],

Re: Outcome of Complaint – Reference [Complaint Reference Number]

Thank you for your complaint dated [date of complaint]. We understand that raising a complaint can feel difficult and we appreciate you taking the time to tell us what happened. This letter sets out the outcome of our investigation into the issues you raised.

Investigation

Your complaint was investigated by:

Investigating Officer: [Name]

Job Title: [Title]

Department: [Department]

The investigation considered the information you provided, along with relevant records and policies and any other enquiries needed to reach a fair outcome.

If you need this letter in a different format, or you would like support to understand or respond to it, please let us know and we will do our best to help.

Findings

Following our investigation, we have concluded that:

- ☐ The complaint is upheld
- ☐ The complaint is partially upheld
- ☐ The complaint is not upheld

Summary of findings:

[In plain language, explain what we found. Where possible, address each main point of the complaint so it is easy to follow.]

Outcome and Actions

As a result of our findings, the following action(s) have been taken or will be taken to put things right and help us improve:

- [Action taken / planned]
- [Timescales, if applicable]
- [Any remedy, apology, or service improvement]

Where appropriate:

We are sorry for any inconvenience or distress this situation may have caused.

Next Steps / Right to Appeal

If you are unhappy with this outcome, you can ask us to review it through our appeal process (Stage 3). To do this, please write to:

[Appeals Contact / Department]

[Address]

Please submit your appeal within **10 working days** of the date of this letter and explain clearly the reasons for your request (for example, what you feel we have missed or what you disagree with).

If we do not hear from you within this time frame, we will normally consider this matter closed.

Thank you again for raising your concerns with us. Your feedback helps us learn and improve.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix 3

Appeal Outcome Template Letter

Dear [Appellant Name],

Re: Outcome of Appeal – Complaint Reference [Complaint Reference Number]

Thank you for your appeal dated [date of appeal], submitted in response to the outcome of your complaint.

We have now completed a review of your appeal in accordance with our complaints procedure.

Appeal Review

Your appeal was reviewed by:

Appeal Officer / Panel: [Name or Panel]

Job Title / Role: [Title]

Department / Organisation: [Department]

The appeal review considered:

- Your original complaint
- The outcome of the initial investigation
- The grounds of appeal you submitted
- Relevant records, evidence, and policies

Appeal Decision

Following careful consideration, the appeal decision is as follows:

☐ Appeal upheld

☐ Appeal partially upheld

☐ Appeal not upheld]

Reason for decision:

[Provide a clear explanation addressing the grounds of appeal and why the decision has or has not changed.]

Final Outcome

As a result of the appeal review:

[State whether the original decision is upheld, amended, or overturned.]

Where applicable, the following actions will be taken:

- [Action / remedy / service improvement]
- [Timescales]

If appropriate:

We apologise for any inconvenience or distress caused.

Closure of Complaint

This letter represents the final stage of our complaints process, and the matter is now considered closed.

If you remain dissatisfied, you can share further feedback with us about this process. If your support is funded or commissioned, we can also tell you whether there is a separate funder/commissioner feedback route available to you.

Thank you for taking the time to raise your concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix 4

Tick-list for Investigation Meetings

Investigation Meeting Tick-List – Complaint Reference [_____]

Date / Time: []

Location / Platform: []

Investigating Officer: []

Attendees & Roles: []

Support / Representation: [_____]

1. Introduction

- ☐ Purpose of meeting explained
- ☐ Confidentiality / fairness explained
- ☐ Participant acknowledgment received
- ☐ Duration of meeting explained

2. Complaint Summary

- ☐ Complaint summarized by Investigating Officer
- ☐ Participant confirms understanding
- ☐ Participant clarifies or corrects facts

3. Participant Response to Complaint Points

Complaint Point Response Obtained? Evidence / Witnesses Mentioned?

- | | | |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Point 1 | ☐ Yes ☐ No | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| Point 2 | ☐ Yes ☐ No | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| Point 3 | ☐ Yes ☐ No | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| Additional points | ☐ Yes ☐ No | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
-

4. Additional Context / Information

- ☐ Participant provides background / context
 - ☐ Any relevant prior events recorded
-

5. Questions from Investigating Officer

- ☐ Key clarifications asked
 - ☐ Responses recorded
 - ☐ Any discrepancies noted
-

6. Next Steps / Actions

Action	Responsible	Deadline	Completed?
Action 1	[_____]	[_____]	☐ Yes ☐ No
Action 2	[_____]	[_____]	☐ Yes ☐ No
Action 3	[_____]	[_____]	☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Meeting Closure

- ☐ Key points summarized
- ☐ Time meeting ended: [_____]
- ☐ Participant acknowledges understanding (Name/Signature)
- ☐ Investigating Officer signs (Name/Signature)