

Statement and Responses to Questions

STATEMENT FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC

[Start of public statement]

Chair and Members of the Commission,

I am writing not to raise an individual complaint, but to draw attention to potential systemic governance risks within Housing; particularly in relation to complaints handling, procedural compliance and oversight transparency.

In August 2025, the Regulator of Social Housing identified gaps under the Transparency, Influence and Accountability standard, including enhanced complaints handling and formalised reporting on learning from complaints (*Point A*). In the same meeting, it was recorded that complaints were approximately 75% compliant with response timescales (*Point B*).

In June 2025, this Commission also considered an LGSCO maladministration finding relating to Housing procedural failures, including failure to notify statutory review rights and delays in responding to suitability concerns (*Point C*).

Since then, the corporate complaints function has been moved under the Housing Division itself (*Point D*), and a Regulator of Social Housing Oversight Board has been established reporting to Executive, with an intention to provide updates to Scrutiny (*Point E*).

Taken together, these developments highlight that complaint handling and procedural compliance are not peripheral matters; they are central governance risks.

My concern is not about disagreement with outcomes. It is about structural integrity. Specifically:

- Whether Stage One responses are consistently acknowledged within published timeframes.
- Whether escalation safeguards are sufficiently robust where compliant Stage One responses are not issued.
- Whether complaint investigations maintain visible independence following the structural move of the complaints team under Housing.
- Whether complaint performance data is scrutinised with the same rigour as operational metrics such as fire safety, voids or tenant satisfaction.
- Whether data usage practices in leasehold or enforcement matters are governed by clearly documented policy and oversight.

The minutes from November 2025 also record tenant frustration about difficulty contacting officers. My concern relates to what happens after contact is made; whether escalation pathways, review rights and complaint compliance are functioning as intended, and/or ignored.

Housing is currently operating under significant statutory, financial and regulatory pressure. In that context, procedural integrity, transparent reporting and independent oversight become even more important.

This is not about individual disputes.

It is about ensuring that the governance framework around complaints is as strong as the framework around operational delivery.

Thank you.

[End of public statement]

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

The questions below were submitted alongside the statement, and the Council's responses are provided below each question.

Question 1 Complaint Acknowledgement Compliance

In light of the previously recorded 75% compliance rate with complaint timescales (Point B), what percentage of Housing Stage One complaints in Q4 2025 and Q1 2026 were acknowledged within the published policy timeframe?

How many exceeded 10 working days before acknowledgement?

Answer to Question 1

From October to December 2025, 94.8% of stage one complaints were acknowledged by the Council within five working days. There were eight stage one complaints that exceeded 10 working days before the Council acknowledged them.

Information for March 2026 is not available yet, but for January to February 2026, 98.3% of stage one complaints were acknowledged within five working days and no stage one complaints exceeded 10 working days before acknowledgement.

Question 2 Procedural Escalation Safeguards

Given the June 2025 maladministration findings involving procedural failures (Point C), what formal safeguard now exists to prevent residents from being procedurally blocked from escalating to Stage Two or to the Ombudsman where a compliant Stage One response is not issued?

Answer to Question 2

In the June 2025 maladministration report there were no findings of residents being "procedurally blocked from escalating to Stage Two or to the Ombudsman." In addition, it should be noted that members were satisfied that the LGSCO recommendations from the report had been implemented successfully.

Information on how to escalate complaints is publicly available on our website via the following link: [Give feedback about Leicester City Council | Leicester City Council](#) and is included in relevant correspondence. Complainants are always able to request escalation to stage 2 if they feel the complaint has not been resolved at stage 1. Likewise, they can refer to the appropriate ombudsman where they feel a complaint has not been resolved at stage 2.

Question 3 Independence of Complaint Investigations

Following the structural move of the complaints function under the Housing Division (*Point D*), who independently investigates complaints made about Housing Complaints Officers / Housing Officers themselves, and how is operational separation maintained to avoid perceived internal bias?

Answer to Question 3

Complaints made about staff are dealt with under the Council's HR policies and procedures. This includes (where appropriate) an investigation by an independent manager from outside the service area who is supported and advised by a HR advisor. In addition to this, we have recently created a new position of Complaints Manager to directly oversee the staff within the complaints team to ensure high standards and consistency of the service provided to residents.

Question 4 Data Governance

What written policy governs the Council's use of Companies House or other external data sources in leasehold or enforcement matters, and has this practice been legally reviewed for proportionality and data protection compliance?

Answer to Question 4

There is no formal policy in place, however staff are trained in safe and secure processing of data. Information that is freely in the public domain (such as Companies House information) is available for staff to use and act on where it is in the interest of the Council and / or the Council deems it is in the vital interest of an individual. Where staff are unsure of the legality of such action, they refer it to their manager and where appropriate advice is taken from the Council's Information Governance and Risk Team.

Question 5 Scrutiny Oversight of Complaint Trends

In August 2025, the Regulator identified the need for enhanced complaints handling and formalised reporting on learning from complaints (*Point A*).

The Commission routinely receives performance data on fire safety inspections, tenant satisfaction, void times and homelessness prevention outcomes.

Does the Housing Scrutiny Commission now receive equivalent anonymised performance data on:

- Complaint acknowledgement breaches
- Stage One response timeliness and procedural compliance
- Instances where escalation was delayed due to non-compliant Stage One responses
- Ombudsman findings of maladministration relating to Housing
- Information governance or data protection incidents within Housing Services

If this data is not routinely reported to the Commission, could Members clarify why complaint compliance metrics are not scrutinised in the same way as operational performance indicators?

Answer to Question 5

Annual information on the performance of the complaints service is submitted to the Audit and Governance Committee during August / September. From 2026, this report will also be presented to the Housing Scrutiny Commission to provide additional oversight of complaints handling and performance.