



# **Formal Complaints Policy and Procedure**

## Document Control Sheet

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## **Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

Gateway is committed to providing high quality, efficient and effective services in all areas of operation to all residents but we recognise that sometimes people may be dissatisfied with our services and/or that we have not treated you fairly and that you may wish to formally complain. We acknowledge the learning opportunity presented by complaints to allow us the opportunity to put things right.

### **2. Definition**

We consider a complaint to be your expressed view that we have failed to perform or deliver a service that you can reasonably expect Gateway or an agency or person acting on behalf of Gateway to provide. For example, this might be an expressed dissatisfaction about a policy, action, lack of action, or service standard provided either directly or indirectly by Gateway.

### **3. Scope**

This policy and procedure includes formal complaints from Tenants, Leaseholders, Residents and anyone affected by Gateway operations.

### **4. Policy Statement**

The complaints system is designed to give us the opportunity to put things right quickly, effectively and efficiently and learn.

### **5. Principles**

- Complaints will be investigated seriously, objectively and promptly.
- We will endeavour to resolve complaints ourselves without the need for external intervention.
- Complaints will be investigated at each stage by a new member of staff. Staff will not investigate complaints about their own actions.
- At each stage of the complaint process we will aim to resolve the complaint and to prevent it escalating.
- We will clearly explain how a complaint can be progressed to the next stage if a person remains dissatisfied.
- We will regularly review complaint resolutions and endeavour to learn and improve services as a result of complaints received.
- We will assess our services by the number of times complaints are made about the same issue, among other subjects.

### **6. Multiple Complaints and Petitions**

A number of people making an identical or similar complaint may be treated as one complaint.

Petitions will be treated a single lodgement registered under the lead petitioner.

7. **Invalid Complaints Subjects**

- Repairs which have not been previously reported unless items that it was reasonable to expect should have been noticed e.g. on an estate inspection or by a scheme manager.
- Repairs which are either not completed or partially completed but still within published completion timescales (for example, if our timescales say that we have to do a repair within seven days, you cannot complain that it hasn't been done until that time limit has passed).
- Residents chasing non urgent repairs for the first time within the 30 days completion period.
- People reporting harassment (a separate procedure exists).
- People reporting anti-social behaviour or neighbour disputes and concerns of residents (a separate procedure exists).
- Requests for accommodation, mutual exchange or transfer.
- Requests for advice or information.
- Complaints about staff while they are not at work or fulfilling a Gateway function (this could be an employment matter and dealt with as a disciplinary matter).

8. **Legal Action**

The complaints procedure will not be used while legal action or whilst part legal investigations encompassing the same subject or closely related subjects is underway, as the legal process takes precedence. We will usually defer beginning or suspend a complaint investigation immediately legal action is underway, either by Gateway or against Gateway.

9. **Advocates**

We welcome the use of advocates or third parties to support a complainant. However, we do not accept the use of lawyers or paid advocates as this is then a litigation process and excluded from our Complaints procedure.

10. **Multi-agency complaints**

If a complaint involves more than one service provider, we will only investigate our involvement in the complaint. We may occasionally decide to act as an advocate on behalf of the complainant with another service provider, but we are under no obligation to do so e.g. where the council has failed to remove an abandoned vehicle from a street.

11. **Mediation**

In appropriate cases we may suggest, arrange and pay for mediation between ourselves and a complainant, in order to resolve a complaint.

If mediation is agreed then the Complaint will be closed based on the planned mediation and may be escalated if the mediation fails.

12. **Timeliness of Complaint**

A complaint must be made (arrive) to Gateway within three months of the event being complained about.

13. **Learning**

Complaints will be monitored and reviewed with the aim of learning in order to improve services.

## Procedure

1. **Registering a Complaint**

We will accept Complaints made by:

- The Complaint standard form available in reception, by post/email, on website.
- Telephone.
- 24 hour English voicemail service.
- Letter.
- Direct email.
- Website Form.
- Personal visit to Gateway Offices.

**E-mail**

Complaints can be sent to [complaints@gatewayhousing.org.uk](mailto:complaints@gatewayhousing.org.uk).

**Website Form**

Complaints can be submitted via the form on the Gateway website which go to [complaints@gatewayhousing.org.uk](mailto:complaints@gatewayhousing.org.uk)

**Personal Callers**

Complainants may request to meet the Policy and Performance Officer or in their absence the Line Manager of the service to discuss and formulate a potential complaint.

**Home Visits**

If a complainant finds visiting the office difficult, a Home Visit will be arranged.

2. **Timeliness of a Complaint**

2.1 A complaint must be made within three months of the date of the event being complained about, or the last time a complainant contacted Gateway about the issue, or from when the complainant became aware of the issue.

2.2 If we decide to refuse to investigate a complaint for timeliness reasons, a letter (usually in place of the acknowledgment letter and rejecting the complaint) will be sent to the complainant explaining the reason for the decision and the "complaint letter" will be treated as correspondence.

### 3. **Help with Making a Complaint**

We will work with complainants offering whatever assistance is needed to utilise the service. This assistance may involve arranging:

- Translations
- Interpreting
- Alternative formats – recorded, large print text, Braille etc
- Home visits
- Sending Complaints Form and a copy of leaflet 11 – “How to make a complaint”.

### 4. **Advocates**

Advocates or third parties may support a complainant. This person may be, a friend, relative, carer, Councillor, Citizens Advice Bureau, Social Worker, MPs, Doctor.

We do not accept legal professionals as advocates, or people who are being paid to carry out the role by the complainant, as this then becomes a litigation process and is excluded from the complaints system.

We will ask Complainants to sign an Advocacy Disclosure Agreement (giving the advocate permission to act on the complainants behalf).

#### **Appendix 1: Advocacy Disclosure Agreement.**

### 5. **Overview of the Complaints Process**

The complaint process has three internal stages and a right of appeal to an independent body (usually the Housing Ombudsman Service) as a fourth and final stage.

- **Stage 1:** Respondent, the Policy and Performance Officer.
- **Stage 2:** Respondent, the line manager of the team or service being complained about.
- **Stage 3:** Respondent, a panel comprising a Gateway Board member, Resident Representative and either the Chief Executive or a Director who has no previous involvement in earlier stages.
- **Stage 4:** Respondent, The Housing Ombudsman Service.

There are alternative independent bodies which may, in certain circumstances, undertake the final stage.

#### **Appendix 2: Other External bodies with Relevant Jurisdiction.**

### 6. **Acknowledging Complaints**

Complaints will be acknowledged by letter or email within 2 working days of receipt, **excluding the day of receipt.**

The acknowledgement letter will confirm:

- the date of receipt;

- reference the stage of the complaint;
- the subject areas of complaint;
- the target date for a response to be posted by (not received by);
- who will be leading the investigation by name and title;
- give a control reference number to aid tracing.

## 7. **Timescales**

We will always endeavour to resolve a complaint while we investigate how the complaint arose.

<b>Stage of Complaint</b>	<b>Maximum timescale from date of receipt of complaint (full working days).</b>
Stage 1 (Policy & Performance Officer)	10 working days
Stage 2 (Line Manager)	15 working days
Stage 3 (Panel)	50 working days from date of receipt of complaint to date of panel.

## 8. **Failure to Achieve Target Times.**

If a complaint is going to take longer to investigate than originally anticipated, we will write again (as soon as we know it is going to overrun) to explain the delay and the new expected completion date. We will also inform the complainant by phone or email.

## 9. **Appealing against Complaint Investigation Findings – Escalating to the Next Stage**

9.1 If a complainant decides to appeal (elevating the complaint to the next stage within the procedure) following any stage, they have one month (31 days including weekends and non working days) to lodge the appeal.

9.2 The date by which an appeal must be registered by a complainant will be in the standard conclusion paragraphs of each response letter.

The exception to this is the Ombudsman or independent stage, where the complainant has one year following the final internal decision to complain to the Housing Ombudsman Service (timescales for other bodies vary).

### 9.3 **Clarification**

If a complainant is dissatisfied with some of a response or seeks clarification on one or more points the complaint will not be escalated to the next stage.

All correspondence relating to the complaint will be attached to the electronic file in Contact Manager.

## 10. Options for Redress when a Complaint is Upheld

- 10.1
- Apologising.
  - Providing information or/and explanation.
  - Revising or introducing a policy/ies.
  - Implementing or improving an existing procedure/s.
  - Introducing a new service.
  - Explaining how a decision was made.
  - Refunding the complainant.
  - Paying the complainant's costs: the financial reimbursement for any loss sustained by the complainant, which will return them to the position they would have been in.
  - Making an apologetic gesture such as sending flowers.
  - Completing additional work beyond what is required: e.g. decorating a room where it is the complainant's responsibility.
  - Financial compensation (refer to Compensation Policy and Procedure for guidance on amount and circumstance).

### 10.2 Compensation

Financial payments may be defined as goodwill payments with no admission of liability resulting from failure to provide a service. Payments designated as goodwill gestures will not set a precedent for future actions.

If there is a concern that legal action may follow the closing letter, it should be marked "Without Prejudice" on the top right hand side (thus excluding the letter from use as evidence in legal proceedings).

If a financial payment is the appropriate redress, it should be paid to the complainant as soon as possible.

Payments will not be "offered" (with the expectation that the complainant has the option of "accepting" the payment) as this gives an indication that the amount is open to negotiation.

## 11. Complaint Conclusion (Closing) Letter

- 11.1 At the conclusion of every complaint investigation, a letter in precise and concise language will be sent to the complainant which will include:
- How the investigation was conducted (who the investigating officer contacted, or spoke to, or did)
  - Set out where differences exist between the complainant and our version of events.
  - The investigating officer's conclusions, which will usually be set out in the same order as the issues being investigated in the complaint acknowledgement letter. We will apologise if published standards have not been met.
  - Whether each element of the complaint is Upheld, Partially Upheld or Not Upheld.
  - Any overall conclusions that can be drawn from the investigation.

- two standard closing paragraphs explaining what the next stage of the complaints procedure is should the complainant be dissatisfied with the letter (Appendix 3).

- 11.2 All Complaints responses will answer all the issues complained about...constituent parts of a complaint will not be responded to separately.

## 12. **Detailed Description of the Three Stages of the Internal Procedure**

### 12.1 **Stage 1 – Policy and Performance Officer**

The Policy and Performance Officer will liaise with the Line Manager responsible for the service being complained about and is responsible for preparing the response for Stage One.

The Policy and Performance Officer will complete the response through Contact Manager and complete the necessary record.

The Policy and Performance Officer can ask other staff to investigate Stage One but may not involve the person complained about as investigator.

The investigation conclusion letter will be signed off by the Policy and Performance Officer.

If a complaint involves more than one department, the Policy and Performance Officer will liaise with the relevant lead officers/directors. The Policy and Performance Officer will facilitate ensuring all parts of the complaint are answered.

If a complaint is going to take longer to investigate than originally predicted the Policy and Performance Officer should write a letter informing the complainant of proposed timescale and register the letter in Contact Manager.

Any actions promised in a response to a complaint must be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and have a Target Date (SMART).

If a complainant responds to a letter requiring clarification, it is unnecessary to escalate the complaint to the next stage, a confirmation letter will be sent and response within 10 working days (this is included in the process within Contact Manager).

### 13.2 **Stage 2 – Line Manager**

The complaint will be investigated by the Line Manager of the service complained about unless the complaint is about them in which case the Director of the service will be lead investigator.

The Line Manager is expected to carry out a more in depth analysis of the circumstances that led to the complaint being escalated.

The investigating Line Manager may need to meet with the complainant to fully understand the issues involved in the complaint. This meeting should occur at a time and place that are convenient for the complainant.

### **13.3 Stage 3 - The Panel Stage**

13.3.1 The complainant will be invited to meet with a Panel comprising a Gateway Board member, Chief Executive or Director and a representative of Gateway Residents.  
The Panel will be regarded as quorate providing at least two members are present.  
The Director on the Panel will not be a Director who has been involved at an earlier stage but they may give evidence to the Panel.

13.3.2 The Policy and Performance Officer will arrange for the panel to be held at a time and place convenient to staff and the complainant, usually between Monday and Friday, in the evening.

13.3.3 The Policy and Performance Officer will confirm by letter or email (at least 15 working days in advance) of the Panel to the Complainant the date of the Panel.

Included in the letter will be:

- A brief summary of the subject matter to be considered.
- Date, time, location, and access arrangements for the panel.
- Make up of Panel including names, posts and role.
- Names, post and role of other officers present.
- An invitation to submit paperwork in advance and how this should be done.
- Summary position in relation to advocates.
- That the Panel will proceed in the Complainants absence unless notified at least 2 working days prior to the panel.
- That minutes and decision/outcome of the meeting will be posted within 10 working days of the panel meeting: Appendix 4.

#### **13.3.4 Summary Report**

Before the Panel meeting the Policy and Performance Officer will prepare a complaint briefing paper.  
This acts as a "terms of reference" document, describing the issues in the complaint and the actions taken to date. It will be written objectively, and any areas of disagreement will be highlighted.  
The briefing paper will be posted to the Complainant and Panel at least 10 working days prior to the panel date.

#### **13.3.5 The complaint briefing document will contain:**

- Complainants name and address.
- Property Description (e.g. 1 bed ground floor flat).
- Tenancy Commencement date.
- Stage 1 complaint receipt date, summary and response summary.

- Stage 2 complaint receipt date, summary and response summary
- Stage 3 complaint receipt date and summary.
- Gateway's current stance.
- Relevant questions for the panel to consider.
- A chronology of events (including complaints and responses and key evidence as appendices, where available).
- Any expert opinions sought (legal, ombudsman precedents etc).
- A copy of Complaints Policy and Procedure.

### 13.3.6 **The Panel Meeting**

The Complainant can decide to attend the panel or not, and whether to present their case to the Panel or not.

The Complainant can be accompanied, or ask an advocate to act on their behalf (Advocacy...Procedure paragraph 2.1 above).

The Panel should be seen as an enquiry rather than a trial.

The Policy and Performance Officer will arrange for relevant staff to be requested or instructed to attend.

#### **The panel sequence of events is:**

- A. The complainant presents their case (the complainant may request, or the panel choose, for staff to be absent for this section if appropriate).
- B. A member of staff will then present Gateway's position.
- C. The panel will then question the complainant and staff about the case.
- D. The staff (giving evidence) and complainant will then leave the room allowing the panel to discuss privately the complaint.
- E. The panel meeting, decision and rationale for decision will be minuted for sharing with the Complainant.
- F. In addition, the Panel's discussion will be minuted for recording purposes, but not included in the minutes sent to the Complainant.
- G. The panel inform the complainant immediately of their decision or send it later in writing.

This process may be varied by the panel providing equity and confidentiality are protected.

### 13.3.7 **The Decision**

The panel will decide if Gateway has:

- Followed its own policies and procedures.
- Acted fairly.
- Acted sensitively to the complainants needs.
- Acted appropriately.

If the panel decides Gateway acted inappropriately, it should consider suitable recompense for the complainant. The Panel's decision is final and binding upon Gateway.

### 13.3.8 **Agreeing the Decision**

The Policy and Performance Officer will circulate draft notes of the meeting and a draft response letter to the Panel Chair within 5 working days of the Panel.

If the Panel determine otherwise the draft notes and letter can be circulated to other members of the panel for consultation.

The Panel Chair will confirm the content of the letter and minutes.

Once agreed, the letter will be signed by the Chair of the Panel, or on their behalf by another Panel member.

### 13.3.9 **Informing the Complainant**

The Complainant will be written to within 10 working days of the meeting.

Enclosed with the stage three letter to the complainant will be a copy of the minutes.

The letter will include how to refer the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman and their address.

In the case of the Housing Ombudsman Service, the complainant has a maximum of 1 year from the date of the letter from the Panel Chair to complain to the Ombudsman, but is encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

We will also ensure that any actions decided upon by the Panel are implemented.

### 13.4 **Stage 4 - External Appeal Stage**

In most cases, the external appeal stage of the complaints process is the Housing Ombudsman Service.

In cases about housing related support services in sheltered housing or hostels people may choose to escalate to the Supporting People Team.

In cases regarding residential care people may choose to complain to the Commission for Social Care Inspection.

Details of all relevant bodies are listed in Appendix 2.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Advocacy Disclosure Agreement (Formal Complaint)**

I hereby request that Gateway Housing Association releases information to

Name of Organisation/Individual:

Address of Organisation/Individual:

In order to investigate my complaint dated:

Name (print):

Signature:

Address:

Date:

## **Appendix 2**

### **External Bodies with Relevant Jurisdiction**

#### **1. Housing Ombudsman Service**

Phone: 0845 712 5973  
0300 111 3000  
Write: Housing Ombudsman Service  
81 Aldwych  
London, WC2B 4HN  
Email: [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)  
Website: [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)  
Fax: 020 7831 1942  
Minicom: 020 7404 7092

#### **2. Supporting People**

If a complaint is about housing related support services at a Gateway sheltered scheme the complainant has the right to complain to the Supporting People Team at Tower Hamlets Council (for all other sheltered schemes). They can be contacted at:

Phone: 020 7364 7021  
Write: The Supporting People Team  
London Borough of Tower Hamlets  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Mulberry Place (AH)  
5 Clove Crescent  
London  
E14 2BG  
Email: [supportingpeople@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:supportingpeople@towerhamlets.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk)

#### **3. Care Quality Commission.**

Residents receiving social care at residential care homes owned by Gateway may make a complaint at any time about their care.

Phone: 03000-616161  
Write: Care Quality Commission  
Finsbury Tower  
103-105 Bunhill Row

London  
EC1Y 8TG  
Email: [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk)

This can be done at any stage of the process, but we encourage residents to complete our processes first.

#### 4. **Residential Property Tribunal Service**

The Residential Property Tribunal Service is a public body that can decide on many Rent and Leasehold disputes. This service can be contacted at:

Phone: 0845 600 3178  
Fax: 020 7637 1250  
Website [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

##### This website covers:

Appeal to a property tribunal about a council order, notice or licence  
Appealing if refused the 'Right to Buy' your home  
Settling leasehold disputes – Leasehold Valuation Tribunal  
Settling rent disputes – Rent Assessment Committee

The service comprises:-

#### 4.1 **Leasehold Valuation Tribunal (LVT)**

Leaseholders and shared owners may also choose at any time to take complaints to a Leasehold Valuation Tribunal. As this is a quasi-judicial body, the complaints process will cease as soon as we receive notice that this is what the complainant is doing.

LVTs can:

- decide the price to be paid when a leaseholder wants to buy (enfranchise), extend or renew the lease of their home and the value cannot be agreed with the leaseholder;
- vary estate management schemes under the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993;
- adjudicate in disputes about the right of first refusal procedure (which gives leaseholders the right of first refusal to buy the freehold when the landlord wishes to sell it) and the compulsory acquisition of the landlord's interest in blocks of flats;
- decide liability for payment of service charges and can settle disputes about the landlord's choice of insurer;
- decide applications on dispensation of service charge consultation requirements, administration charges, the right to manage, the appointment of managers, the variation of leases and estate charges.

#### 4.2 **Rent Assessment Panels (RAPs)**

Some Gateway tenants may have the right to take some (but not all) complaints about rent to a Rent Assessment Panel. As this is a quasi-judicial body, the complaints process will cease as soon as we receive notice that this is what the complainant is doing. Further investigation is required to see if this is likely to affect any Gateway tenants.

RAPs can decide the following types of dispute:

- When a landlord or tenant of a regulated tenancy has objected to the rent assessed by The Rent Service (formerly the Rent Officer), the case will be referred by the Rent Service to the RAP to determine the fair rent;
- A tenant with an assured tenancy may apply to the RAP for a determination on an open market rent for the property if their landlord tells them they plan to increase the rent by serving them with the form, "Landlord's notice proposing a new rent under an Assured Periodic Tenancy or Agricultural Occupancy";
- A tenant with an assured short hold tenancy can apply within the first six months of their tenancy. Thereafter they can apply if their landlord tells them they plan to increase the rent by serving them with the form, "Landlord's notice proposing a new rent under an Assured Periodic Tenancy or Agricultural Occupancy";
- Where a fixed term assured or assured short hold tenancy has ended and the landlord or tenant has served a notice proposing new terms for the statutory periodic tenancy which has automatically risen, the recipient of the notice can ask the RAP can determine new terms and any rent adjustment for the statutory periodic tenancy.
- RAP's can also become involved where a long lease at a low rent that is governed by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 has expired. More information about this type of cases is contained at Annex B of the detailed Guidance Note "Rent Assessment Committees: Market Rents".

The contact details for the London Rent Assessment Panel are:

Phone: 0845 600 3178  
Write: London Rent Assessment Panel  
Residential Property Tribunal Service  
10 Alfred Place  
London  
WC1E 7LR  
Fax: 0207 637 1250  
Website: [www.justice.gov.uk/guidance/courts-and-tribunals/tribunals/residential-property/index.htm](http://www.justice.gov.uk/guidance/courts-and-tribunals/tribunals/residential-property/index.htm)

#### 5. **Residential Property Tribunal (RPT)**

A Residential Property Tribunal can determine an appeal by a tenant from a decision by a Housing Association to deny the Right to Buy their home on the grounds that the property is particularly suitable for

occupation by elderly persons (under paragraph 11 of Schedule 5 to the Housing Act 1985). The RPT has no jurisdiction if the Right to Buy has been denied on any other grounds. As this is a quasi-judicial body, the complaints process will cease as soon as we receive notice that this is what the complainant is doing.

More information on Residential Property Tribunals can be found at [www.rpts.gov.uk/our\\_services/rtba.htm](http://www.rpts.gov.uk/our_services/rtba.htm)

6. **NHBC and Zurich Building Guarantee Claims on new build properties.**

In certain circumstances a complainant may make a claim about structural defects in a new build property (up to 10 years after it was built) to the NHBC or Zurich Building Guarantee schemes (depending on which insurance scheme covers their property). Zurich has now ceased involvement in the scheme for new business. In most cases we would expect them to claim to GATEWAY first, and we would expect them to be the property owner (or shared owner).

More information on the NHBC scheme can be found here:

<http://www.nhbc.co.uk/WarrantiesandCover.htm>

More information on the Zurich Building Guarantee can be found here:

<http://www.zurich.co.uk/buildingguarantee/homeowners/thinkyouhaveaclaim.htm>

These are insurance investigations, so the complaints process can theoretically continue in this case (though we would usually ask the plaintiff to agree to suspend our investigation pending the finding of the insurance claim).

**End of Appendix 2**



Gateway Housing Association  
409-413 Mile End Road, London E3 4PB  
Tel 020 8709 4300 Fax 020 8709 4400  
enquiries@gatewayhousing.org.uk  
www.gatewayhousing.org.uk

### **Appendix 3**

Dear .....,

#### **Complaint Stage One - Housing Maintenance.**

Our (job title), (name), has investigated your complaint received (date) in respect of the following issues:-

#### **Detail of letter**

I hope you are satisfied with this response. If you are not satisfied, you should move onto stage two of our formal complaints procedure by writing to our Chief Executive by (date 31 calendar days later) saying why you are not satisfied.

If you wish to take independent advice on this matter, you can contact the Citizen's Advice Bureau, a solicitor or a law Centre.

Yours sincerely

Name  
Job Title  
Direct Phone Number

## **Appendix 4**

### **Private and Confidential**

Ref: [Number]

[Name]  
[Address]

[Date]

Dear [name],

### **Complaint, Stage 3, Panel Hearing. [Date, Time]**

To confirm our agreement regarding the Stage 3 Complaints Panel meeting.

[Complaint Subject titles being considered...]

[Location and access arrangements]

[Make up of Panel including names, posts and role]

[Names, post and role of other officers to be present at panel]

### **Paperwork**

The papers attached are private and confidential and are being sent only to the Panel members and yourself.

If you wish to submit evidence yourself, please forward it to me by [date one week before panel hearing].

### **Advocates**

You may bring along a person to advocate on your behalf. However, we do not recognise as advocates people who are lawyers or paid to advocate, as we then regard this as a legal dispute rather than a Complaint.

### **Presentation**

You will be able to present your case and question people in attendance.

**Attendance**

It would be helpful if you would confirm if you will be attending the Panel and if you will be accompanied or not.

Should I not hear from you or you do confirm your attendance and then do not attend, the Panel will proceed in your absence unless you notify me at least 2 days prior to the panel date, except in exceptional circumstances.

**Appendices**

The appendices are numbered on the top right hand side, the first page of any appendix is labelled Appendix and then the number, and subsequent pages have just the appendix number.

**Attendance**

I will be in attendance presenting the Complaint Briefing Paper and advising the panel throughout. We will have a note taker in attendance.

We will also have [name and job title] of people attending.

**Decision**

The minutes and decision of the Panel will be posted to you within 10 working days of the panel meeting.

I enclose papers for your hearing including a copy of the Complaints Policy and Procedure.

If you have any concerns; please do not hesitate to give me a ring.

Yours sincerely

Name

Post

Direct Phone Number

Enclosed:

Complaint Briefing Paper

Appendices