

Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Policy

Current Policies & Processes

November 2019

Policy name:	Complaints Compliments and Suggestions Policy
Policy number:	AT14
Replaces:	ATCIO Complaints Compliments and Suggestions Policy March 2018
Adoption date:	November 2019
Next Review date:	November 2021

The Healthwatch Tameside service is one of the Action Together family of services. Action Together is the accountable organisation for Healthwatch Tameside. This policy therefore applies to the Healthwatch Tameside service.

1. Policy statement

Action Together aims to offer a range of high-quality services and products to voluntary and community groups in Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside. Action Together aims to encourage suggestions as to how its services could be improved, and proactively seeks and welcomes feedback from users - whether positive or negative.

Any complaint about any aspect of the organisation will be taken seriously and processed according to agreed procedures, set out below. Compliments and positive feedback will be used by Action Together to reflect on its successes, and may be used to promote the work and impact of the organisation.

Users and potential users of Action Together services will be provided with information about how to make a complaint.

2. Complaints procedure

In the first instance, complaints should be set out in writing and addressed to the Chief Executive of Action Together.

The letter will be acknowledged by the Chief Executive, normally within five working days of receiving it.

The Chief Executive will be informed of all of the circumstances surrounding the complaint, by the line manager of any member of staff referenced in the complaint, having followed the interview procedure detailed below. The Chief Executive will reach a decision regarding the complaint and will send a response to the complainant within 28 working days of first receiving the letter of complaint.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response and decision, or feels unable to address the complaint to the Chief Executive in the first instance, they may write to the Chair of the Board of Action Together.

The Chair will acknowledge receipt of the letter within eight working days where possible.

Where the complaint is directed in the first instance to the Chair, the Chair will investigate the circumstances and follow the procedure outlined above.

Where the complainant has appealed to the Chair for a review of the response to the complaint, an investigation will be carried out by the Chair or another member of the Board acting on their behalf.

The Chair will aim to produce a decision, which is final, and to notify the complainant of their conclusions within 15 working days of receiving the letter, together with a clear explanation of the reasons for reaching them.

All complaints received, will be logged along with their response and internal action taken in a central complaints area.

If the complaint relates to a specific member of staff, the line manager will interview the staff member and will make notes of the meeting which will be filed in the individual's personnel file along with a copy of the original complaint. Should the line manager feel the complaint was sufficiently severe that disciplinary action is warranted then they must follow the Disciplinary Procedures as set out in Action Together's Disciplinary and Capability Policy AT7.

The number and nature of complaints will be reported in the Chief Executive's quarterly Board report and the Board may request further details as necessary.

3. Compliments and suggestions

All positive feedback (letters / email etc) received will be collated and kept by the HR Officer. The Chief Executive will be made aware by line managers of any specific praise or feedback about an individual member of staff or volunteer, and if appropriate will ensure that this is fed back to the individual concerned.

Quotes from feedback received may be used to promote the organisation, for example through website, newsletter and annual report.

Action Together will seek ways for its service users to suggest improvements to its services, and will promote and encourage this feedback, for example at events, on its website and in its annual report. Suggestions will be collated by the Chief Executive or relevant service manager, and used in the planning process.

Compliments and suggestions will be monitored, and information from this will be fed in to the planning process as appropriate.