



Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy

Pobl Group

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1. Introduction

Pobl are passionate about providing excellent services and recognise the importance that customer feedback plays in, firstly, ensuring our services meet the needs of our customers and, secondly, that they are continually improved. Feedback can be received in the form of a comment, compliment, or complaint.

A complaint is:

An expression of dissatisfaction or concern about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided, which requires a response.

An initial request for service from Pobl will not be treated as a complaint.

Pobl aims to resolve complaints efficiently and effectively. Any complaints made to the Group will be treated seriously and investigated quickly. We treat complaints in a positive way, it's good that customers can tell us why they are unhappy with our service as it gives us a chance to learn how to do things better in the future. We believe it is important to acknowledge and learn from our mistakes to improve our services.

2. Policy Objectives

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- **Ensure a consistent approach to complaints within agreed timescales.** We aim to deal with complaints quickly and to find a solution to a problem as soon as we become aware of it. Where that isn't possible, we will keep the customer informed of what is happening, and of how long it is likely to take to decide about what action we can, or cannot, take as a result of their concerns.
- **Provide a fair outcome.** We want everyone who complains to feel they have been treated fairly and that their concerns have been properly and thoroughly considered, alongside any other information available.
- **Empower colleagues to identify effective solutions to complaints at first point of contact.** Customer facing colleagues will be able to resolve most complaints as soon as they become aware of them. This 'informal' way of dealing with complaints is intended to make sure that we put things right quickly.
- **Simplify the way that complaints can be made, ensuring accessible options.** We will help customers to feedback their concerns, for example, if they need translation facilities or help to put their complaint in writing, so that everyone has equal access to our complaints process.
- **Enable continuous improvement through complaints and feedback analysis.** We will use complaints to learn about what we can do better, and to improve the way we do things.
- **Encourage a culture of sharing and best practice.** We will actively celebrate compliments and successes to replicate those interactions that customers value.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all colleagues, Non-Executive Directors, Customers, Service Users, Stakeholders, and anyone working on behalf of, or within, Pobl Group.

4. The Policy

The Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy should only be used where the customer is contacting Pobl within 6 months of the issue or incident occurring. In exceptional cases, where a complaint is outside of 6 months, consideration will be given as to whether there are good reasons as to why it should be investigated.

Comments, Compliments and Complaints

4.1 Comments

We value our customers' comments and will use these to continuously improve our services.

4.2 Compliments

We value positive customer feedback and will ensure it is shared with colleagues to recognise great customer service and celebrate successes.

4.3 Informal Complaints

Customer facing colleagues will be able to resolve most complaints as soon as they become aware of them. If that isn't possible, then we encourage people who are still unhappy to tell us and to ask us to look again at what we can do to put things right.

4.4 Formal Complaints

A 'formal' complaint can be made at any time, but customers are encouraged to discuss their complaint with customer facing colleagues in the first instance. A formal complaint can be made verbally, in writing, or in an e-mail, and will be investigated thoroughly to allow us to establish what has happened.

Pobl will endeavour to acknowledge complaints received through appropriate channels within 1 working day.

If there is a simple solution to the complaint, for example, where a request for service has not been completed as it should, we will provide the service.

Pobl will aim to respond to complaints as soon as they can and normally within 20 working days. In some areas of the business we will be able to respond sooner and will make every effort to do so.

Where additional work is required, we will explain why and agree a revised timescale with the customer.

In our response we will explain how and why we came to our conclusions. If we made a mistake or find a fault in our processes, we will explain how we plan to change things to stop this happening again. If we make a mistake, we will apologise for it.

Lessons learnt from complaints will be used to improve service design and delivery.

4.5 Lessons Learnt

Comments, compliments, and complaints help us to improve the services we provide to our customers. Where our customers tell us we did a great job, we will update our processes to reflect this good practice. Similarly, we will learn when our customers tell us we could have performed better and update our processes to ensure the same thing doesn't happen again.

4.6 Ombudsman

Where customers are still unhappy, they can contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales deals with general complaints about public services in Wales, providing a free and impartial service. They will usually, but not always, have expected the person making a complaint to have been through an organisation's complaints process, but they may look into a complaint at any stage if they believe it to be appropriate.

4.7 Recording

All compliments and complaints will be recorded, and monitoring information will be available.

5. Vexatious Complainants

A vexatious complaint is one where the customer's concerns have been investigated and responded to, following Pobl's procedures, but where the customer is still unhappy and continues to make further complaints on the same topic, ignoring apologies or explanations and referrals to appropriate independent bodies.

A customer who subjects colleagues to intimidating or abusive behaviour at any stage of the complaints process may be considered vexatious. Abusive and aggressive behaviour is not tolerated by Pobl. Vexatious complaints will result in restricted contact, contact through a third party or in extreme cases Police involvement, and where appropriate, tenancy action may also be considered.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Executive Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ensure this policy is adopted and in place
Senior Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ensure implementation of the policy▪ Review performance
Complaints Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Record and respond to compliments and informal and formal complaints in line with the policy▪ Summarise lessons learnt
All colleagues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Record and respond to compliments and complaints

7. Review Process

This policy will be monitored, reviewed, and evaluated by the policy owner every three years, or as legislative changes or best practice requires, to ensure it continues to have the impact desired.

8. Other Relevant Policies

- Disciplinary Policy
- Safeguarding Policies
- Ethics and Integrity Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Data Protection Policy