

Complaints and Comments Policy and Procedure

October 2024

Summary

This policy outlines our approach to dealing with complaints and comments. Throughout the policy we refer to residents as the complainant. In practise, anyone who receives a service from PEMB can make a complaint or comment.

We aim to provide a high quality service at all times.

Residents generally accept that on occasion things do go wrong, but expect that something will be done to put them right. We are committed to providing a quick and accessible complaints procedure.

Pembroke Estate Management Board (PEMB) uses complaints to make improvements to services, and reduce the likelihood of the same mistakes being repeated.

We also encourage resident comments and compliments on our services. This also assists us in improving services, and also in providing positive feedback to staff.

We will make the policy available to anyone who requests it.

Definition

A complaint is defined as:

‘Any dissatisfaction with Pembroke Estate Management Board, whether justified or not’. In terms of our complaints policy, this can be:

- A failure of a service that we provide
- A failure to meet expected standards
- The way in which we have handled an incident or request (or not done so)
- Unhelpful staff or contractors
- Incorrect information provided
- Dissatisfaction with a PEMB policy.

The following are not considered to be complaints:

- first request for a service
- first contact to report a fault
- a request for information about or a clearer explanation of our policies
- contact for a further explanation of a decision
- an issue raised where there is a right of appeal or a legal solution.

Policy

PEMB considers resident involvement and satisfaction to be a priority. The majority of PEMB Directors are residents on the estate, who play an active part in day to day and strategic decision making. PEMB has an open access office and there are lots of opportunities for residents to keep in touch and offer feedback. PEMB values resident input which we will use to make sure that we are delivering the services that they want and at a level with which they are satisfied.

PEMB will take every opportunity to ensure that compliments, comments and complaints are used to help us to deliver better services.

Aims and objectives

We will deal with all complaints, promptly, courteously, and in a fair and systematic manner and will achieve this by:

- ensuring that information about how to make a complaint or comment is readily available and well publicised
- making the complaints process easily accessible, simple to understand and use
- handling complaints quickly, within agreed and published timescales
- ensuring that complaints are fully and fairly investigated
- ensuring that they are dealt with in confidence
- keeping residents informed of progress
- providing an effective response, that deals with all points at issue
- ensuring that any action promised to redress the complaint is taken
- providing appropriate redress
- ensuring that information about complaints is used to improve services

How complaints can be made

Residents have individual preferences about how to make their complaint including letters, by completing a form, in person, by telephone or via the Internet.

Residents are encouraged to bring a problem to the attention of the relevant member of staff immediately. This provides us with the opportunity to resolve mistakes or misunderstanding quickly in the course of our day to day management.

Anonymous complaints will be investigated as appropriate, as the anonymous complaint may highlight a problem, which needs to be addressed or raise issues that need to be followed up.

Who can make a complaint

Any individual or group who either receives services from PEMB or is affected by our services can make a complaint.

Fairness

A structured approach will be followed to acknowledge all complaints and verify the details.

1. Clarify the complaint and what outcome is required.
2. Identify whether the complainant requires support to enable the complaint to be made (interpreter, large print, independent support)
3. Check whether the complainant needs any further support to understand the discussion
4. Explain the procedure and discuss what outcome the resident wants.

The investigating staff and/or board member will thoroughly consider the complaint and investigate the matter and ensure a full & timely response is given. We will accept ownership of any service failures and apologise for them. The response should include the decision and the reasons for this decision.

If a complaint is made about a member of staff, it will be investigated by their manager and an appointed Board member. Fairness dictates that the complainant is given an opportunity to answer the complaint and then be kept informed of progress.

Managing the stages of a complaint

We have three stages to our official complaints procedure

Stage 1

We will acknowledge complaints as soon as possible. All complaints should be acknowledged within 2 working days.

Ideally at this stage we aim to provide a full response. However in some cases this will not be possible i.e. those complaints where we need to carry out a more lengthy investigation. We aim to provide a full response on 100% of complaints within 10 working days.

The full response should also advise the resident that if they are still not satisfied with this response, they have further redress through our complaints procedure.

If we are unable to provide a full response within 10 working days, a revised response time which will be notified to the resident.

Stage 2 -Reviewing the complaint

At Stage 2 a background report is provided to a panel of PEMB Board members with a copy of the initial complaint who will provide a response within 20 working days.

The response to the complaint should advise the resident that if they are still not satisfied they have the right to have their complaint heard by the full Board of Directors.

Stage 3 – The Complaints' Panel

The panel of Board members at stage 2 will advise the Board of Directors of the complaint and provide a background report – to be copied to the complainant.

The resident will be invited to attend or make representations to the meeting. The resident can be accompanied by an appropriate and agreed representative if they wish.

The panel will write to the resident within 10 working days of the meeting to confirm the outcome, although a verbal response may be given during the meeting.

Monitoring

Monitoring will be undertaken to ensure that any actions promised to rectify a complaint are completed in a satisfactory manner.

A quarterly report will be presented to the Board of Directors detailing numbers of complaints made, performance against targets, an overview of complaints made, issues identified and resident satisfaction feedback.

Resident Comments and suggestions

Pembroke EMB wants to keep improving its services.

Compliments tell us when a service is provided well. If we are told when we do well we can look at that service to see if we could copy their good practice in other parts of the organisation. It also helps us to provide positive feedback to members of staff who are providing a good service

Comments or suggestions for improvement often come from residents or front line staff, who are the best people to tell us what could be done differently, so that we could be faster, more cost effective or generally provide a better service.

If a change is made to a service as a result of a suggestion the person making that suggestion will be informed.

Equality and Diversity

PEMB recognises that it operates in a community within which there is wide social diversity, and is committed to providing equal opportunities and valuing diversity.

Through the management of our complaints and comments process we aim to treat all residents fairly, and with respect and professionalism regardless of their gender, race, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation and marital status.