



**AMBER VALLEY
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- **Complaints**
- **Compliments**
- **Queries**
- **Suggestions**

Customer Comments Procedure (customer copy)
Version 2002
(Ammended January 2008)

1. What is a Customer Comments Procedure?

A Customer Comments Procedure is a systematic method used by organisations for receiving, recording and responding to comments and complaints made by their customers. For the purposes of this system, Customers are our external customers. Separate arrangements exist for internal issues. Customer Comments procedures also ensure that the valuable management information which is generated from customer feedback is used in a positive way to improve the effectiveness of our organisation.

The Council has used this definition of a 'customer comment'

“Any information received from a customer which the council would find useful in assessing the performance and standard of its services or identifying areas for improvement.”

A customer comment could be a:

Complaint	Any expression of dissatisfaction about a service
Compliment	An expression of praise about a service received
Query	A question other than an ordinary request for service
Suggestion	An idea for improving what the Council does

2. Why do we need a Customer Comments Procedure?

A Customer Comments Procedure provides the Council with a number of opportunities:

- By providing a way for customers to express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with services, policies and decisions of the Council, and by suggesting areas for improvement, customers are able to have increased participation in local government
- Valuable management information can be gained from customer feedback regarding the effectiveness of services provided, policies implemented and decisions taken
- Improved communication between the Council and the people it serves
- By actively encouraging the customer to comment, the Customer Comments Procedure supports the image of a local authority that is prepared to listen and which has respect for the wants and needs of its public
- Complaints and other comments are regularly received access the authority in a variety of ways. A Customer Comments Procedure ensures a consistent approach in dealing with them.

3. What are the aims and objectives of the Customer Comments procedures?

The aims of the Customer Comments Procedure are to ensure that:

- Customer comments are dealt with promptly, efficiently, courteously and systematically
- Customer comments are treated confidentially and fairly
- Customers are kept informed of the progress and outcome of their comments
- Customer comments are recorded and monitored periodically with the aim of improving services

4. What can you expect from our Customer Comments System?

That we:

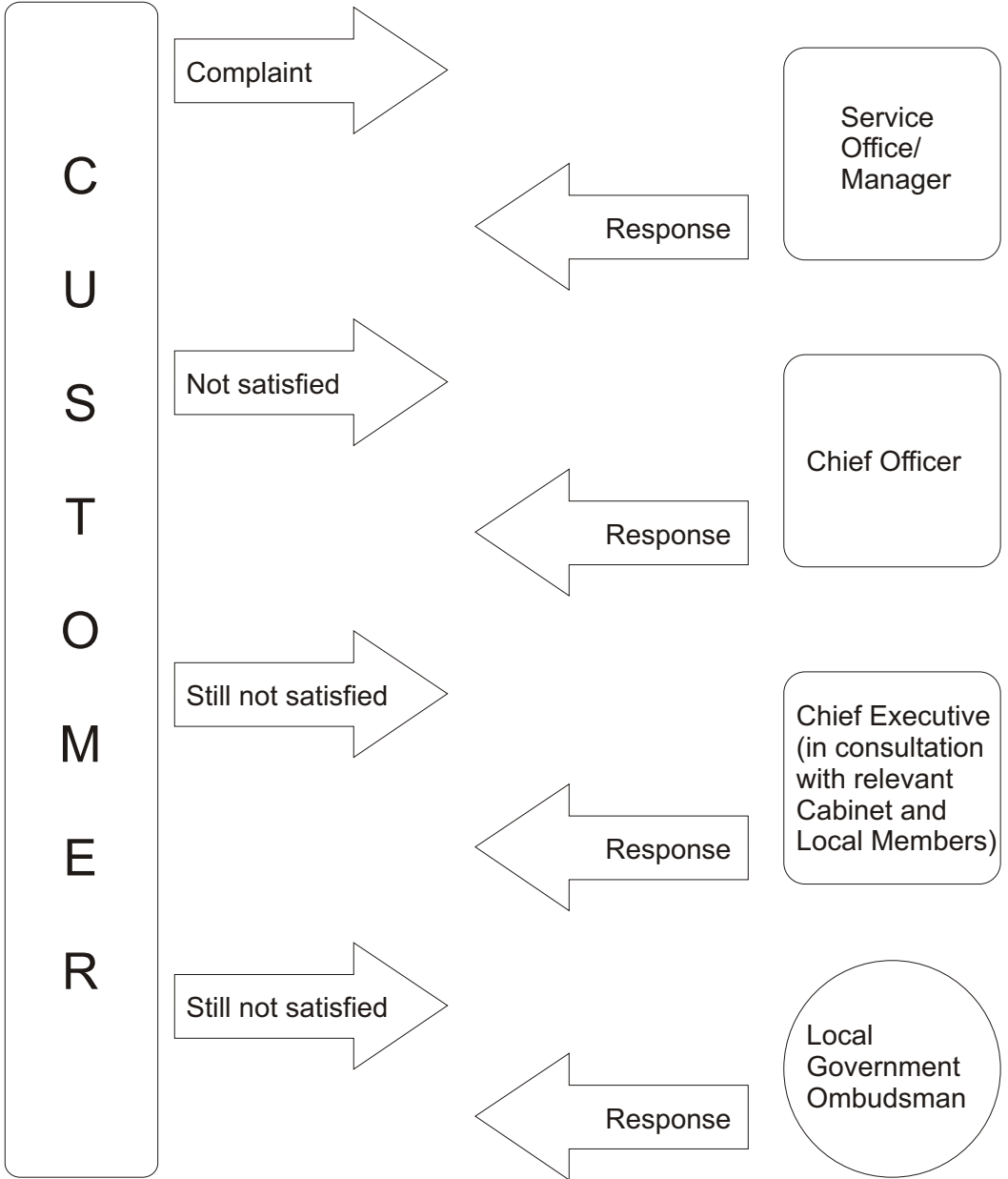
- Value your Comments
- Record them effectively
- Acknowledge within 5 working days if a full response cannot be sent
- Respond within 10 working days

All complaints are dealt with confidentially and the Council takes care to ensure its actions are compliant with the Human Rights Act 1988.

If you remain dissatisfied with the response given then your comment will be referred to a more senior officer, who will respond within the Comments Procedure timescales as above. At any time you may refer your comment to the Local Government Ombudsman. However, the Council will normally be afforded the opportunity to resolve the complaint locally before the Ombudsman investigates. This means that in most cases the Customer Comments Procedure will precede any detailed involvement with the Local Government Ombudsman. The address and telephone number is as follows

LGO Advice Team,
Local Government Ombudsman,
PO Box 4771,
Coventry CV4 0EH,
telephone 0835 602 1983 or 024 7682 1960
text 0762 480 4323,
email advice@lgo.org.uk

FLOW CHART



How to Contact us

Complete a 'Helping You to let us know what you think' form available from Council offices or telephone us on 01773 570222, or email us at: enquiry@ambervalley.gov.uk, or visit our website at: www.ambervalley.gov.uk