Complaints Advisory Panel Meeting Minutes

Date: 21 October 2026
Meeting: Complaints Advisory Panel (CAP)

Attendees:

Cheryl McCabe – Head of Customer Voice

Lauren Burley – Customer Engagement Officer

Panel Members:

Ged McLoughin – Chair

Denise Cowgil – Vice Chair

Debra Griggs

Pamela Gallagher

Peter Wilkins

Stephen Whitbread

Welcome and General Feedback

- The panel welcomed the use of charts within the report and felt they were helpful in presenting information clearly.
- Peter commented positively on the new approach of reviewing three complaint summaries and allowing panel members to select the case they wished to review.

Complaint Case Review – Fob Access Issue

Initial Complaint Handling

- The panel felt the complaint was not treated with sufficient seriousness at Stage 1, particularly as the customer was unable to access their home.
- Members questioned whether sufficient consideration had been given to the impact on the customer, including whether any medical or vulnerability information was known.
- The panel felt that, based on the complaint documentation, the severity of the issue was underestimated during the early stages of the investigation.
- Concerns were raised that the issue was not investigated thoroughly enough at the outset and that earlier intervention may have prevented escalation to Stage 2.

Investigation and Technical Response

- The panel questioned why investigations did not initially explore whether the issue was isolated to one property, as the complaint indicated only one fob appeared to be affected.
- Members queried why a replacement or spare fob was not provided earlier to rule out a fob fault before focusing solely on the intercom system.
- There was concern that the possibility of a combination fault involving both the fob and the access system was not fully explored.
- Questions were raised regarding the contractor's involvement and whether sufficient information had been provided about work undertaken and findings identified.
- The panel queried why a reported loose connection affected only one customer and whether this should have prompted further investigation.

Communication and Record Keeping

- The panel identified several communication concerns throughout the handling of the complaint.
- Members noted that dates provided by the customer did not appear to match records referenced in responses.
- The panel felt that providing incorrect dates in complaint responses gave the impression that Stockport Homes had not listened to the customer.
- It was agreed that inaccuracies in complaint records could significantly impact customer confidence and satisfaction.
- The panel questioned whether the customer should have been offered the opportunity to formally raise a complaint earlier, given that they reported contacting services repeatedly about the issue.
- Members felt the complaint escalated largely due to communication failures between internal teams.

Customer Behaviour and Building Security

- The panel expressed concern that the customer had reportedly wedged communal entrance doors open to gain access, potentially compromising the security of other residents.
- Members discussed whether complaint investigations should more robustly challenge behaviours that conflict with tenancy agreements while still addressing the underlying service issue.

- There was recognition that the customer's actions may have placed the wider block at risk, despite the access difficulties they were experiencing.

Policies and Preventative Measures

- The panel asked whether new customers are informed during sign-up about procedures for lost keys and fobs, and whether guidance differs depending on tenancy duration.
- Members questioned whether alternative access arrangements, such as an override key or emergency access solution, exist and in what circumstances these could be provided.
- Discussion took place around whether additional customer communications are needed to explain what residents should do if they become locked out of a communal block.
- Suggestions were made to explore longer-term solutions such as access passwords or concierge arrangements, although it was recognised that these may not be practical in all buildings.
- Cheryl explained that responses to access issues are risk-assessed and may differ depending on whether the issue affects an individual resident or an entire block.

Compensation

- The panel questioned whether compensation should be awarded where customers have taken annual leave in connection with repairs or access issues.
- Overall, the panel felt that the £50 compensation offered was fair and proportionate in this case.
- One panel member believed a higher compensation award could have been considered and felt references to the Ombudsman not having specific compensation guidance on this issue appeared somewhat dismissive.

Learning and Good Practice

Service Failure Identified

- The panel agreed that recording and communicating incorrect dates represented a service failure.
- Members felt this error contributed significantly to the customer's dissatisfaction and was a key factor in the escalation from Stage 1 to Stage 2.

Complaint Response Quality

- The panel felt the wording used in the Stage 1 response was overly generic and risked appearing dismissive.
- Members discussed introducing more customer-focused language that demonstrates learning, reflection and service improvement.
- The panel noted that the language used in the Stage 2 response was stronger and conveyed greater understanding of the customer's concerns.

Positive Practice

- The panel recognised that there were examples of good practice during later stages of the complaint.
- Members praised efforts made to show the customer access records and provide additional reassurance.
- The panel felt this demonstrated a willingness to communicate openly and showed the customer that their concerns were being taken seriously.

Key Learning Points

- Ensure complaint investigations fully explore all possible causes from the outset.
- Improve accuracy of records and dates referenced in complaint responses.
- Strengthen communication and information sharing between internal teams and contractors.
- Review customer communications regarding lost keys, fobs and emergency access arrangements.
- Consider more customer-focused complaint response wording, particularly at Stage 1.
- Balance challenging tenancy breaches with responding appropriately to the underlying service issue.
- Continue demonstrating transparency and proactive engagement with customers throughout complaint investigations.

Actions

Action	Owner
Review information provided to new customers regarding lost keys and fobs.	Relevant Service Team
Consider additional customer communications covering lockouts and access issues.	Housing Management Team
Review complaint response templates to strengthen customer-focused wording and learning statements.	Customer Feedback Team
Share learning regarding accurate recording of customer-reported dates within complaint investigations.	Customer Feedback Team
Explore lessons learned from contractor communication and investigation processes.	Relevant Service Team / Contractor Management Team