

Summary of Invest NI Complaints and Feedback 2018-19

Invest NI promotes a customer centric culture, with the goal of providing a world-class customer experience at the heart of everything we do. Occasionally our customers may feel we fall short of our own standards and our Complaints and Feedback Process affords us the opportunity to identify areas in which we can make improvements, or to address instances when something goes wrong. It also gives us the ability to recognise good experiences through the recording of positive feedback.

The Invest NI Complaints and Feedback Policy was reviewed in November 2018 with a view to making a simpler, more streamlined process. Staff are empowered to deal with problems when they arise as part of their day-to-day interaction with customers, with issues logged as 'negative feedback' so that lessons can be learned. All complaints received via the formal channel are acknowledged within one working day, with a response to be issued within a target of 10 working days. If we are unable to provide a response within this timescale a revised schedule will be clearly communicated to the complainant with the new expected response date advised.

If we are unable to resolve the complaint to our customer's satisfaction at this stage, a review can be requested through the office of the Chief Executive. Should a resolution not be possible at that stage, the complainant may refer the matter to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman for independent review.

In 2018-19 a total of six (2017-18: seven) complaints were received through this process, two raised informally (pre Policy review) and four categorised as formal. Neither of the two informal complaints recorded could be resolved within the 10 working day timeframe, however new timelines were clearly communicated to our customers. Of the four formal complaints received all responses were issued within the expected 10 working days. 24 cases of negative feedback (2017-18:29) were recorded which did not require a response within the 10 working day target. No requests for Formal Reviews were received.

In November 2018 the office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) confirmed that a complaint that was referred to them in April 2017 would proceed to investigation. Invest NI has provided details of the case to the NIPSO and the outcome of the investigation is expected within quarter one of 2019-20.

The details of all complaints are recorded centrally and analysed to identify trends or themes to drive improvement in our processes and services. Three of the six complaints received in 2018-19 were upheld or partially upheld. Issues identified included lack of engagement regarding customer concerns, excessive requests for information and a lack of a timely response to customer queries. In all cases where the complaint was upheld, further engagement was undertaken to remedy the situation and in two cases an apology was issued. Invest NI's progress against the ten day response target is reported through our Standards of Service.

Further information on the handling and monitoring of complaints can be found in the Invest NI Customer Charter and, more specifically in the Invest NI Complaints Procedure, both of which are available on the Invest NI website.