

# Principles of Good Administration

Adopted by ARB from the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

## Good administration by public bodies means:

### 1. Getting it right

- Acting in accordance with the law and with regard for the rights of those concerned.
- Acting in accordance with the public body's policy and guidance (published or internal).
- Taking proper account of established good practice. Providing effective services, using appropriately trained and competent staff.
- Taking reasonable decisions, based on all relevant considerations.

### 2. Being customer-focused

- Ensuring people can access services easily.
- Informing customers what they can expect and what the public body expects of them.
- Keeping to its commitments, including any published service standards.
- Dealing with people helpfully, promptly and sensitively, bearing in mind their individual circumstances.
- Responding to customers' needs flexibly, including, where appropriate, co-ordinating a response with other service providers.

### 3. Being open and accountable

- Being open and clear about policies and procedures and ensuring that information, and any advice provided, is clear, accurate and complete.
- Stating its criteria for decision-making and giving reasons for decisions.
- Handling information properly and appropriately.
- Keeping proper and appropriate records.
- Taking responsibility for its actions.

#### 4. **Acting fairly and proportionately**

- Treating people impartially, with respect and courtesy.
- Treating people without unlawful discrimination or prejudice, and ensuring no conflicts of interest.
- Dealing with people and issues objectively and consistently.
- Ensuring that decisions and actions are proportionate, appropriate and fair.

#### 5. **Putting things right**

- Acknowledging mistakes and apologising where appropriate.
- Putting mistakes right quickly and effectively.
- Providing clear and timely information on how and when to appeal or complain.
- Operating an effective complaints procedure, which includes offering a fair and appropriate remedy when a complaint is upheld.

#### 6. **Seeking continuous improvement**

- Reviewing policies and procedures regularly to ensure they are effective.
- Asking for feedback and using it to improve services and performance.
- Ensuring that the public body learns lessons from complaints and uses these to improve services.