

Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership (LCR LEP) Board

Confidential complaints procedure

Introduction

1. The LCR LEP is committed to creating a work environment with the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In view of this commitment we encourage any person with serious concerns about any aspect of the LCR LEP's work to come forward and voice those concerns without fear of reprisal. All complaints or allegations will be considered under the appropriate procedure¹.
2. Concerns from a member of the public or a third party² may be reported through
 - the whistleblowing policy³ (link);
 - West Yorkshire Combined Authority's (WYCA's) complaints policy (link)⁴ ;
 - The procedure for considering complaints alleging a failure to comply with the LCR LEP Board members' Code of Conduct; or
 - This confidential complaints procedure.

Confidential Complaints Procedure

3. If you are a member of the public or a third party and you want to make a confidential complaint, you should raise it under this procedure. Please contact Caroline Allen, Head of Legal and Governance Services
 - by e-mail to Caroline.Allen@westyorks-ca.gov.uk or
 - in writing to Caroline Allen, Head of Legal and Governance Services, West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Wellington House, 40-50 Wellington Street , Leeds , LS1 2DE

Please state clearly that you want the complaint to remain confidential, and for it to be dealt with under this procedure.

Your complaint must set out:

- a) the **substance** of the complaint, including the background and reason behind it; where, when and how it arose and who was involved,
- b) whether they have already raised the issue with anyone previously (for example, a LCR LEP Board member or an officer), and any response received, and
- c) how you suggest the complaint could be **resolved**.

Confidentiality

¹ The Head of Legal and Governance Services shall determine the appropriate procedure for any concern, complaint or allegation received.

² Officers or other workers involved with the LCR LEP may use the whistleblowing policy (link) to raise their concerns, or (officers only) the relevant grievance procedure.

³ The Whistleblowing policy may be followed where an individual has concerns about a danger, risk, contravention of rules or illegality and provides useful information to address this. In doing so they are acting in the wider public interest, usually because it threatens others or impacts on public funds. The whistleblowing policy does not extend to any grievance or private complaint which is a dispute about the individual's own position and which has no or very limited public interest.

⁴ WYCA is the accountable body for the LCR LEP which is also covered by this policy.

4. Any complaint received under this procedure will be treated in confidence, and every effort will be made to protect your identity if you wish to remain anonymous, by restricting disclosure to a “need to know” basis. However, in some circumstances (for example, where a criminal offence may have been committed) it may become necessary to reveal your identity. We will advise you if this becomes necessary, before proceeding.
5. The Department of Communities and Local Government may request information arising from this process, if they have concerns regarding the LCR LEP or have been approached with similar complaints. The expectation is that this information will be provided on an anonymous basis, but it may be necessary to provide your personal details to progress a complaint.
6. Where details are gathered, the LCR LEP will put in place appropriate data protection arrangements in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Action taken by the LCR LEP

7. The Head of Legal and Governance Services will nominate a designated complaints officer to investigate your complaint. The designated complaints officer should:
 - contact you within 10 working days to acknowledge the complaint and discuss the appropriate course of action.
 - write to you within 28 working days with findings of the investigation. If the investigation has not concluded within 28 working days, the officer will write to you to give reasons for the delay in resolving the complaint.
 - take any necessary steps to rectify the issue.

Anonymous complaints

8. The LCR LEP takes all complaints and concerns raised by members of the public and third parties seriously. The Head of Legal and Governance Services will determine whether an anonymous complaint should be investigated, taking into account:
 - the seriousness of the issue raised;
 - the credibility of the concern; and
 - the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

However, the best way to raise a complaint is to do so openly, as this makes it easier to investigate, reach a firm conclusion and provide feedback. Also, investigating an anonymous complaint may reveal the source of information in any event.

Referring your complaint to the Cities and Local Growth Unit

9. If you are either unable or unwilling to raise the matter directly with the LCR LEP or you are dissatisfied with the action taken under this procedure you can refer your complaint to the Cities and Local Growth Unit in the Department of Communities and Local Government and the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy:
 - by e-mail to: LEPPolicy@communities.gsi.gov.uk or
 - in writing to LEP Policy Deputy Director, Cities and Local Growth Unit, Fry Block, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.

Please clearly mark your email or letter as “Official - complaints”.