



COMPLAINTS POLICY

DEFINITION

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by an individual or a group of individuals about an organisations action or lack of action, or about its standard of service, whether the action was taken by the organisation itself or by a person or persons acting on behalf of the organisation.

INTRODUCTION

Feedback and complaints provide a valuable source of information on how organisations are performing and help to identify potential opportunities for improvement. LBRO is committed to providing a good service to its customers and therefore welcomes opportunities to improve its service, with feedback from complaints being one of its drivers. LBRO will ensure, through its proactive management of complaints and the review and evaluation of feedback received that wherever possible, there is a positive, timely resolution to every complaint, addressing issues of poor service and making sure that similar issues are not repeated.

This policy outlines LBRO's approach to recording, monitoring and resolving complaints from outside the organisation and to considering and acting on feedback in working towards and sustaining an excellent standard of service.

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT OR PROVIDE FEEDBACK

Complaints, suggestions and feedback can be made in writing, by phone, fax or email ideally in the first instance to the Office Manager, but also to any member of the LBRO staff and/ or Board.

LBRO's contact details are:

Local Better Regulation Office
The Axis
10 Holliday Street
Birmingham
B1 1TG

T: 0121 226 4000

F: 0121 226 4029

E: enquiries@lbpro.org.uk

The identity of complainants will be made known only to those necessary in considering and investigating the complaint and will not normally be made public.

PROCEDURE (WHAT HAPPENS NEXT)

LBRO will acknowledge all complaints, feedback and/ or suggestions received within five working days, with a copy of the acknowledgement being kept on record for reference. The Office Manager is responsible for recording and routing the complaint to the person best suited to take responsibility for applying measures appropriate to resolving and closing the complaint. Staff will consider the feedback and where appropriate will recommend relevant actions to colleagues within LBRO.

A central complaint register will be kept and maintained by LBRO. The register will differentiate between different types of complaints. Complaints will be logged by the Office Manager and given a register number, date received and an action by date. The nature of complaints will also be recorded so that potential trends can be identified.

LBRO aims to resolve all complaints as quickly as possible. Any member of staff who receives a complaint will take appropriate action to try and remedy any concerns raised and resolve the complaint in the first instance.

The target for acknowledgement is five working days from receipt by LBRO, the target for a satisfactory outcome or response to the complainant is ten working days from receipt by LBRO. This will identify actions that are to be, or have been taken by LBRO in response to the complaint. If a complaint cannot be addressed in the timeframe the complainant will be advised of any delay, kept informed of progress, and told when a full reply can be expected.

Respective managers will receive timely emails from the Office Manager identifying any outstanding complaints that fall outside the close down date. An analysis of complaints will be reviewed by the Director of Resources and any serious/overdue complaints presented in a Learning report to the Board. All feedback will be considered as part of LBRO's annual review of complaints and feedback.

If this action does not resolve the complaint to the complainant's satisfaction, or if an initial solution to the complaint cannot be achieved, the complaint will be referred to the Chief Executive for further consideration. Internal controls will apply to ensure appropriate steps are taken and processes followed in order to investigate the complaint further and to bring the complaint to a satisfactory conclusion. Throughout the whole process LBRO will identify and implement control measures to ensure similar events do not re-occur. In such cases the complaint will be logged and acknowledged. This will normally be within three working days of receiving notification that the complainant remains dissatisfied. The Chief Executive will consider the complaint and may recommend further action to help resolve the complaint. Wherever possible the Chief Executive will aim to consider and provide a full response to the complaint within twenty working days. Where this is not possible, complainants will be regularly kept informed of progress.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied following the Chief Executive's review of the complaint it may be referred to the Board who can investigate the complaint from a fresh perspective. Board meetings take place on a six weekly time cycle. The complaint will be added to the agenda and raised for discussion at the next available Board meeting. Notification of the outcome will be made to complainant within ten working days from that meeting.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied once the Board has completed a review of the complaint they may ask their MP to refer the matter to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

Further information is available from:

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP

At each stage of the complaint process and following any decisions made about the complaint, LBRO will write to the complainant informing them of progress.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Specific information on LBRO's duty to consider requests made under the Freedom of Information Act is set out in the LBRO Freedom of Information policy.

Complaints about FOI will be dealt with using this policy. The first stage involving direct officer resolution will be fast tracked: an officer receiving a complaint about FOI will report this immediately to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will decide whether to take action, after a review with the board if necessary.

Following this, if the complainant remains dissatisfied then he or she may appeal to the Information Commissioner.

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

USING COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

LBRO aims to use feedback and complaints as opportunities for learning and improvement. LBRO will carry out an annual formal review of the complaints and feedback received to help identify common themes or areas for potential improvement. Areas where potential opportunities for learning or improvement have been identified will form part of future LBRO policy through contributing to the LBRO corporate plan.

LBRO COMPLAINTS PROCESS DIAGRAM

