

COMPLAINTS

1. Introduction

Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership Ltd (TVB LEP) is committed to using its resources effectively and efficiently, ensuring that the needs of our stakeholders are our top priority. If we fall short of this commitment or something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. You can contact us electronically, by telephone or by letter; the contact details are on our website. We will, where possible, respond to you electronically or by telephone rather than by letter.

We aim to resolve the concerns of stakeholders as quickly as possible. However, where this is not possible, we have a complaints process to ensure that all complaints are dealt with fairly, appropriately, and timely.

2. What is a complaint?

Our definition of a formal complaint is:

“an expression of dissatisfaction, where you feel we have got something wrong, such as: the standard of service, or the way a decision has been made, behaviours or actions or lack of action by the LEP, its staff or its partners and contractors, that affects you, that has already been reported and has not been addressed”.

3. When can you make a complaint?

Complaints need to be made within six calendar months of the cause for the complaint so that we can investigate fully and fairly.

There may be times when you haven't had a chance to complain within six months. If there are exceptional circumstances (illness, changes in personal circumstances, etc), the CEO may make a discretionary decision to consider a late complaint providing you can explain and evidence.

4. Things to include in your complaint

Please tell us clearly and concisely by giving as much information as possible.

- What we did wrong and when?
- What should have happened in your opinion?
- What policy or procedure has not been followed and why (if known)?
- How can we put it right?
- And any other outcomes you are seeking

5. Anonymous complaints & whistle blowing

Please refer separately to our [Confidential Reporting of Complaints](#) and [Whistle Blowing](#) policies.

6. Persistent, vexatious and unreasonable complainants

In a minority of cases some complainants pursue their cases in a way that can impede the investigation of their complaint or have significant resource issues for us. This may include reasons like:

- Repeatedly not accepting the response and failing to provide any new evidence
- Not wanting to follow the correct appeals/complaints channel
- Repeatedly copying many people into contacts resulting in several people working on it at the same time
- Volume of contacts
- Aggressive and intimidating in style of communication
- Unreasonably chasing for responses within timeframes published.

We do not expect our staff to spend time dealing with unreasonable complainants, nor do we expect staff to tolerate threatening or abusive behaviour by complainants and we will act to protect staff from such behaviour.

7. The Procedure

Step 1 – Identifying your concerns

On receipt of your complaint, we will work with you to identify your concerns and what your desired outcomes are, to ensure that we can effectively address your complaint.

We will aim to do this within ten working days.

Step 2 – Investigating your complaint and providing an outcome

Once we have identified your concerns, complaints will be investigated and dealt with by the CEO. You will normally receive a full response within twenty working days from the commencement of step two. If this is not possible, we will let you know when we will be responding, along with the reasons why we are unable to respond to you within this time limit.

Our response to your complaint will include:

- What we understand the agreed issue(s) to be
- A chronology of events
- If we uphold or partially uphold your complaint;
 - what we are going to do to put it right
 - when it will be put right
 - an apology (if relevant); and
 - what we will do differently to avoid or minimise the risk of a recurrence of the events that led to the complaint

- If we do not uphold your complaint, we will provide you with a clear explanation detailing the reason why we do not consider it appropriate to (uphold your complaint)

Having considered our response, you are still unhappy you must let us know within 20 working days from the date of our response. If we do not hear anything from you within 20 working days we will assume that you are satisfied with our response and will close the complaint.

Step 3 – Request to review our investigation of your complaint.

If you remain unhappy you can seek a review. To do so you will need to give clear reasons and provide further evidence as to why you disagree with the investigation outcome and what you want us to do to resolve it.

If you are not able to provide any evidence as to why the findings were wrong we will not be able to undertake a review. The CEO will work with you to help determine whether you can proceed through the review process.

Step 4 – Review of complaint handling

Following identification and agreement of the issue(s) to be reviewed, the review will be investigated by a member of the LEP's Nominations & Governance Committee, who has not previously been involved. A response will be sent to you within 28 working days.

The response will include:

- What we understand you think we failed to address or correct
- A chronology of events
- If we uphold or partially uphold your complaint
 - what we are going to do to put it right
 - when it will be put right by
 - an apology
 - what we will do differently now to prevent a recurrence
- If we do not uphold your complaint a clear explanation detailing the reason why

7.What to do if you are not satisfied

If you are still not satisfied with the response from Thames Valley Berkshire LEP then you can approach the Accountable Body for the LEP which is the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. They oversee the governance and management of the LEP and you can contact them concerning the complaint. They have their own complaints procedure:

<https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/council-and-democracy/contact-us/make-complaint>

Please write to:

S151 Officer: Adele Taylor
 Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
 Town Hall
 St Ives Road
 Maidenhead
 SL6 1RF

If you are either unable to raise the matter with the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership or you are dissatisfied with the action taken you can report it direct to the Cities and Local Growth Unit in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, at the following email address: LEPPolicy@communities.gsi.gov.uk or by writing to:

LEP Policy Deputy Director
Cities and Local Growth Unit
Fry Block, 2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

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