

Confidential Reporting of Complaints

The York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership is committed to creating a work environment with the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In view of this commitment we encourage employees and others with serious concerns about any aspect of the LEP's work to come forward and voice those concerns without fear of reprisal.

The LEP adopts the complaints policy of its Accountable Body, North Yorkshire County Council.

To make a complaint in confidence about any processes and decisions or any aspect of the work of the LEP, please visit the North Yorkshire County Council website or click on the following link;

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/complain-about-another-service>

The complaints procedure sets out details of a two stage resolution process:

- **Stage one – local resolution**
Stage one of the procedure is where the service involved will look into the matter raised and respond to you directly.
- **Stage two – formal investigation**
When a stage two escalation request is received, this will be considered by a senior manager. If we go ahead with a stage two investigation, an investigating officer will be appointed and they will investigate all points of complaint and will produce a report with any recommendations. This will be passed to a director or assistant director for consideration and they will respond to you with their findings on your complaint along with a copy of the investigating officer's report.

How To Complain

The complaints procedure has two stages. In the first instance you should direct your complaint to the LEP via James Farrar, Chief Operating Officer. You can disclose your complaint by;

- Emailing: James.Farrar@businessinspiredgrowth.com
- Writing to James at:
The York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership
The Lodge
2 Racecourse Lane
Northallerton
DL7 8AH

Alternatively, you may make on complaint via the secure online form on the North Yorkshire County Council website. <https://wa5.northyorks.gov.uk/genEform/complaints>

When you contact us we will need to know;

- what has happened,
- how it has affected you, and
- what you think should be done to put things right.
- Whether you want your complaint to remain confidential

If a member of the public or third party believes that their complaint fits the description below; they can elect to report their concerns through the whistleblowing policy procedure;

<http://www.businessinspiredgrowth.com/funding/whistleblowing/>

- *Whistleblowing* - where an individual who has concerns about a danger, risk, contravention of rules or illegality 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. By contrast, a grievance or private complaint is a dispute about the individual's own position and has no or very limited public interest.

All complaints will be treated in the strictest of confidence and every effort will be made to protect the person's identity if they wish to remain anonymous. LEP Officers will then work to ensure complaints are responded to quickly and resolved at this stage wherever possible.

Where data is gathered, the LEP via its Accountable Body has the appropriate data protection arrangements in place in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Once Your Complaint Has Been Submitted

The timeline process for responding to complaints is set out below.

- If we cannot respond straight away we will acknowledge your complaint within five working days.
- A full response will be made within 15 working days (20 working days if a third party has carried out the work). If it will take longer we will contact you to explain why and keep you informed.

If you are not satisfied with the response you have received you can contact us to escalate your complaint through the two stages. However, if we feel that your complaint has been considered fully at an early stage and it would not be of benefit to either party to pursue internally, we will instead refer you to the local government ombudsman.

You are free to contact the local government ombudsman yourself for advice at any point, though they will usually expect you to have allowed the Council the opportunity to have dealt with your complaint before they will investigate it.

If you are either unable to raise the matter with the LEP or you are dissatisfied with the action taken you can report it direct to Government via;

- the Cities and Local Growth Unit in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, using the 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”.

Anonymous Complaints

You can make an anonymous complaint but the LEP would rather talk to you directly about your concerns. We take all complaints and concerns raised by members of the public and third parties seriously and we will investigate anonymous allegations.

If you do not provide contact details, however, the ability to investigate allegations and reach firm conclusions are weakened and we won't be able to let you know directly what has happened with your complaint. Anonymous complaints can be made using any of the methods described in the “How To Complain” section of this document and will be considered at the discretion of the LEP.

When exercising this discretion the factors to be taken into account would include:

- the seriousness of the issue raised;
- the credibility of the concern; and
- the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government may request information arising from this process if they have concerns regarding a LEP or have been approached with similar complaints. The expectation is that this information will be provided on an anonymous basis. However it may be necessary to provide personal details to progress a complaint.

LEP Officers

For employees and those working closely with the LEP, please follow the whistleblowing policy on our website <http://www.businessinspiredgrowth.com/funding/whistleblowing/>

Further information on making complaints is available on the North Yorkshire County Council website

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/complain-about-another-service>