

Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership

Complaints and Enquiries Policy

September 2020

## Contents

1.	Enquiries, Complaints and Confidential Complaints.....	3
2.	Enquiries.....	3
3.	General Complaints Policy .....	3
4.	What should I do if I want to make a complaint to Dorset LEP? .....	3
4.1.	Stage One.....	3
4.2.	Stage Two .....	4
4.3.	Stage Three.....	4
4.4.	Stage Four.....	4
4.5.	Stage Five.....	4
5.	Does Dorset LEP deal with all complaints in this way? .....	4
6.	Confidential Complaints Policy .....	5
7.	Action taken by Dorset LEP.....	5
8.	Anonymous allegations .....	5

## 1. Enquiries, Complaints and Confidential Complaints

1.1. This policy sets out Dorset LEP's policy on enquiries, complaints and confidential complaints.

## 2. Enquiries

2.1. Dorset LEP welcomes all general enquiries. We would also like to hear from you if you have a suggestion on how we can improve or if you have been particularly happy with any part of the service that you have received from our team.

2.2. You can make an enquiry to Dorset LEP using the following contact details:

- **Telephone:** 01202 965868
- **Email:** [khill@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:khill@bournemouth.ac.uk)
- **Website:** <http://dorsetlep.co.uk/contact/>
- **Post:** Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Poole House, Fern Barrow, Poole, Dorset, BH12 5BB

2.3. All members of the Dorset LEP team will do their best to respond to enquiries promptly. All enquiries made to the above will be responded to within ten working days of receipt. However, should you send your enquiry to any other point of contact we cannot guarantee that you will receive a response within these timescales.

2.4. All comments received by Dorset LEP will be logged and reviewed regularly so that they can inform our future service. If you have a compliment in relation to service received by Dorset LEP, please include the name of any relevant members of the team so that we can ensure that your feedback reaches them.

2.5. Any media enquiries should be directed to both:

- Charlotte Knight and Amy Blackham Communications Managers
- **Email:** [DorsetLEP@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:DorsetLEP@bournemouth.ac.uk)

## 3. General Complaints Policy

3.1. Dorset LEP aims to provide the best possible service. However, if we get it wrong, we want to know about it and will try and put things right as soon as possible. We take complaints very seriously and have a clearly defined Dorset LEP complaints procedure.

3.2. We aim to address complaints quickly and fairly and we will try and resolve any mistake or misunderstanding straight away. Sometimes it may take longer, but we will let you know how long it will take.

## 4. What should I do if I want to make a complaint to Dorset LEP?

### 4.1. Stage One

4.1.1. The people who can best deal with a complaint are those who provide the service. You should speak or write to the member of the team that you have been dealing with and explain the reasons that you are unhappy with Dorset LEP. We can usually sort out any mistakes and misunderstandings quickly and informally at this stage.

4.1.2. We will acknowledge your complaint in ten working days. We will then investigate your complaint and respond within ten working days. If we cannot meet these timescales, we will let you know when you can expect a response. Our response will include details of who to complain to if you are not happy with the response at Stage One.

## 4.2. Stage Two

4.2.1. If you are not happy with the response provided at Stage One, you can escalate your complaint to Lorna Carver, Dorset LEP Director by emailing [lcarver@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:lcarver@bournemouth.ac.uk). At this stage it is helpful if your complaint can provide details of which parts of the Stage One response that you are not happy with.

4.2.2. We will investigate the complaint and respond back to you within ten working days. An investigation may take longer than this but if it does we will explain the reasons why and let you know when you can expect a full reply.

4.2.3. In our response to your Stage Two complaint, we will provide contact details for the Chair of Dorset LEP who you will need to contact if you are not happy with our response.

## 4.3. Stage Three

4.3.1. If you are still not happy, you can contact the Chair of Dorset LEP who will carry out a full review of your complaint. It will help the investigation if you can explain why you are not satisfied and what you expect from a further review. A response will be issued within 28 working days. An investigation may take longer than this but if it does we will explain the reasons why and let you know when you can expect a full reply.

## 4.4. Stage Four

4.4.1. If you are not happy with the way the Dorset LEP has dealt with your complaint you can then escalate your concerns through Dorset LEP's Accountable Body which is Dorset Council.

## 4.5. Stage Five

4.5.1. If you are either unable to raise the matter with Dorset LEP 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 of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, at the following email address: [LEPPolicy@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto: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".

## 5. Does Dorset LEP deal with all complaints in this way?

5.1. The above process covers the general complaints procedure for Dorset LEP. Complaints or enquiries in relation to Dorset LEP's Accountable Body (Dorset Council) will need to follow standard local authority procedures. Further details on Dorset County Council's policies can be found at: <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/your-council/complaints-to-dorset-council.aspx>

- 5.2. Dorset 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 employees and others with serious concerns about any aspect of our work to come forward and voice those concerns without fear of reprisal.
- 5.3. For employees and those working closely with Dorset LEP, please follow the whistleblowing policy on our website: <http://dorsetlep.co.uk/governance/>
- 5.4. For third parties and members of the public, please follow the confidential complaints procedure outlined below. If a member of the public or third party believes that their complaint fits the Whistleblowing description below, they may report their concerns through these procedure located on our website: <http://dorsetlep.co.uk/governance/>
- 5.5. 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 individuals own position and has no or very limited public interest.

## **6. Confidential Complaints Policy**

- 6.1. Dorset LEP is aware that the organisation's ordinary complaints procedure may not be suitable if someone wants the complaint to remain confidential.
- 6.2. If a member of the public or a third party wants to make a confidential complaint or raise a concern, it will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made to protect the person's identity if they wish to remain anonymous. Dorset LEP will investigate all complaints or allegations.
- 6.3. If you would like to make a confidential complaint please write or email:
- 6.4. Lorna Carver, Director, Dorset LEP, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Poole House, Fern Barrow, Poole, Dorset, BH12 5BB or Corrina Osborne, Head of Governance & Operations, Dorset LEP.
- 6.5. Please ensure you state that you want the complaint to remain confidential.

## **7. Action taken by Dorset LEP**

- 7.1. The designated complaints officer will raise your concern and investigate the complaint. You can expect the officer to:
  - 7.1.1. Contact you within ten working days to acknowledge the complaint and discuss the appropriate course of action.
  - 7.1.2. 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.
  - 7.1.3. Take the necessary steps to rectify the issue.
- 7.2. If you are unhappy with the outcome of the complaint or the complaint involves those responsible for the confidential complaints procedure you can escalate your complaint through Stage 4 and 5 of complaints procedure.

## **8. Anonymous allegations**

- 8.1. Dorset LEP takes all complaints and concerns raised by members of the public and third parties seriously. We will investigate anonymous allegations. However, we

remind complainants that when people put their names to an allegation the ability to investigate and therefore reach firm conclusions is strengthened. Concerns expressed anonymously will be considered at the discretion of Dorset 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.

8.2. 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, but it may be necessary to provide personal details to progress a complaint.

8.3. Where details are gathered, Dorset LEP will put in place appropriate data protection arrangements in line with the Data Protection Act 1998, as set out in our Data Protection Policy.