



Complaints Policy and Procedures

Content 1 - Policy

Content 2 - Scope

Content 3 - Stage One

Content 4 - Stage Two

Content 5 - Stage Three

Content 6 - Streamlining

1. POLICY

1.1 Individuals and organisations have the right to express their views about Healthwatch West Berkshire (HWWB) performance and the manner in which it discharges its responsibilities. Anyone directly affected by the way in which HWWB has carried out its functions may make a complaint under HWWB Complaints policy.

HWWB (HWWB) takes all complaints seriously and will work hard to ensure that the matter is resolved. We will treat both concerns and complaints in the same way.

2. SCOPE

2.1 This policy applies to all HWWB employees and staff, including volunteers.

2.2 HWWB will endeavour to understand the potential effect of its policies and practices on the staff, volunteers and communities, particularly those from 'protected' characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 section 149.

3. STAGE ONE: Informal Complaint.

3.1 If you feel that you have been treated unfairly or have received a less than satisfactory standard of service, in the first instance we would encourage you to raise a concern, or complaint, or to provide feedback on our service informally. Providing information or correcting misunderstandings or at this stage may enable the issue to be successfully resolved. You should contact the member of staff who has been working with you and detail the nature of your complaint. Every effort will be made to resolve the matter as speedily as possible and to your satisfaction.

3.2 Every reasonable effort will be made for the response, whether oral or written, to be given within 15 working days of the receipt of your complaint.

3.3 A brief record of your complaint will be made on file (using the Customer Complaints Log - Appendix 1 if the complaint was resolved). This constitutes a resolution of the complaint.



3.4 If you are still dissatisfied, you may proceed to Stage Two of the complaints procedure.

4. STAGE TWO: Formal Complaint.

4.1 If you feel your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you may lodge a formal complaint by speaking to or writing to either:

4.2 The Chief Executive Officer, HWWB, or:

4.3 The Chair, HWWB.

4.4 You will receive an acknowledgement within five working days that your complaint has been received and is being investigated. The CEO or Chair will work with you and the appropriate member of staff to resolve the complaint and agree action points. We will probably talk to you over the phone and arrange face-to-face meetings where necessary. Any agreed action points will be confirmed in writing to you.

4.5 If you are unhappy with the outcome, you have the right to have your complaint heard by the HWWB Complaints Panel.

5. Complaints Panel.

5.1 The final stage of this internal procedure is to have your complaint investigated by a Complaints Panel drawn from the Board of HWWB. The Board members of HWWB are non-remunerated trustees of the organisation. They are therefore independent of the staff body.

5.2 We will ask you to lodge your complaint in writing and explain why you found our attempts to resolve the complaint at Stage Two unsatisfactory. Formal complaints can be made in writing to the Chair at the address given in Stage Two.

5.3 You will receive an acknowledgement within five working days that your complaint has been received and is being investigated.

5.4 A Complaints Panel comprising of at least two Board members and attended by the CEO and relevant Line Manager (if applicable) will meet at the earliest opportunity (within 28 days of the receipt of the complaint) and agree what action should be taken. A representative of this panel may contact you to gain further information or to invite you to attend a meeting if appropriate.

5.5 Should the complaint refer to the Chief Officer, relevant Line Manager or Board member, they will be replaced in the complaints panel either by another Board Member or an independent member of Seap (holders of the HWWB contract).

5.5 The Panel's decision and agreed action will be communicated to you in writing within 5 working days of the meeting referred to above (5.4). If this is unlikely to be possible, you will receive a reason in writing for the delay within a 5 day period.

5.6 This represents the final internal stage of HWWB complaints process.

5.7 Should you remain unhappy with the decision you have the option to take your complaint to the Seap Board. The Seap complaints policy will apply from that point.



5.8 You can equally take your complaint to the commissioners of the HWWB service, West Berkshire Council.

Service Manager Commissioning

West Berkshire Council,

Council Offices,

Market Street

Newbury

RG14 5LD

5.9 Once you have exhausted the above procedure and still remain unhappy you do have the right to have your complaint considered by the independent PHSO Local Government Ombudsman:

<https://www.ombudsman.org.uk/>

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Millbank Tower

Millbank

London

SW1P 4QP

0345 015 4033

8.30am - 5.30pm Monday to Friday

6. Streamlining a complaint

6.1 Notwithstanding anything contained in sections 2,3,4, and 5, if the Line Manager or CEO takes the view that the complaint is of a sufficiently serious nature, the process above should be streamlined, and discretion should be used to escalate the matter to the Chair or Vice Chair of HWWB's Board.



Appendix 1

Customer Complaint Log

Customer Details

Name	
Address	
Telephone Number	
Project Title/Reference No	
Nature of Complaint	

Stage One: Informal Complaint (to be completed by the project contact within 10 working days)

Action Taken	
Signed	Date

Stage Two: Formal Oral Complaint (to be completed by the line manager contact within 10 workings days)

Action Taken	
Signed	Date



Stage Three : Formal Written Complaint (to be completed by the CEO)

Written Date acknowledgement Sent by		
Signed by		Date

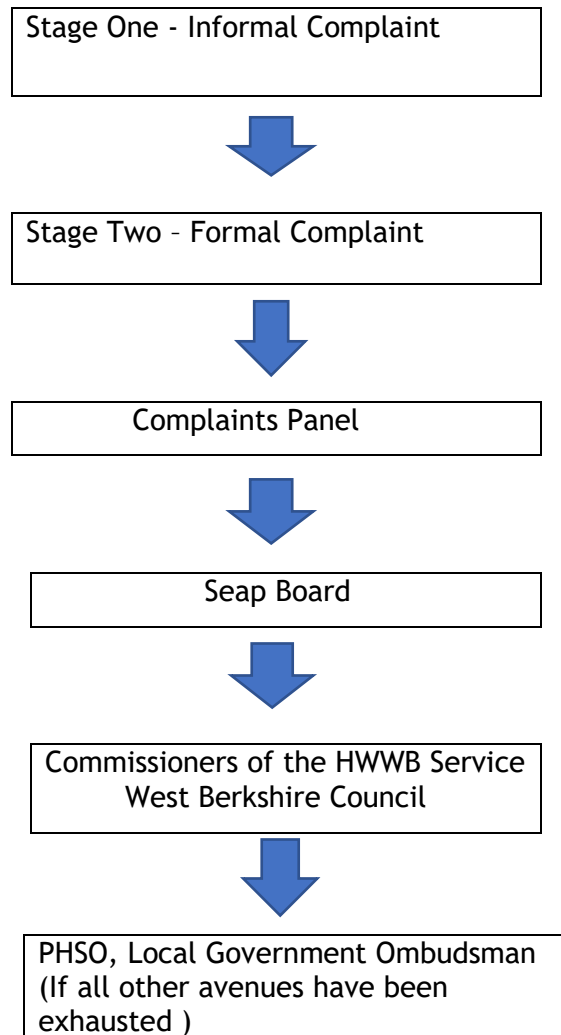
Stage Four: Complaints Panel (to be completed by the Chair or Vice Chair)

Written acknowledgement sent by		Date
Panel Member		Position:
Panel Member		Position:
Panel Member		Position:
Action Taken		
Signed		Date

Please ensure that a copy of the completed Customer Complaint Log and all relevant document is sent to the CEO for monitoring and record keeping.



Appendix 2 - Complaints Flow Chart





Version Number	3
Date of Equality Impact Assessment	23/05/18
Date approved by HWWB Board	
Author	Andrew Sharp
Date Implemented	01/04/2016
Last revised	23/05/18
Next revision due	23/05/20
<u>If required this policy can be supplied in different formats</u> Tel: 01635 886 210 or email: contact@healthwatchwestberks.org.uk	
All personal data collected in relation to this policy will be held in accordance with Data Protection Legislation	