

MANAGEMENT BOARD

Date 8 June 2011

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES

Recommendation

That the Management Board endorses the Complaints Procedure outlined and will ensure that all Partner Councils are made aware of it so that complaints about WRS related issues are dealt with consistently and transparently,

Background

It is recognised that on occasions there may be complaints made about WRS' services. It is important that there is a published Complaints and Compliments procedure so that local citizens know how to raise issues and what type of response they may receive.

A draft procedure was put before the Management Board at its meeting on 11 May 2011, comments were noted and this final procedure has taken account of those comments. This procedure is now ready for Partners to adopt.

Contact Points

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Background Papers

Worcestershire Regulatory Services Complaints,
Compliments and Suggestions.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Supporting and protecting you

COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Who are Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS)

Our Service was created on 1 June 2010 to deliver local authority functions relating to Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing on behalf of:

- Bromsgrove District Council
- Redditch Borough Council
- Malvern Hills District Council
- Worcester City Council
- Worcestershire County Council
- Wychavon District Council
- Wyre Forest District Council

The Service reports to a Joint Committee of these seven authorities comprising two elected members from each council.

Let us know what you think

We want to hear from you if you've got a comment to make, whether it's good or bad about any of our services. We also want to hear your suggestions about how we can improve Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS). By asking for your feedback, we can make changes if we need to and make sure your contact with WRS is a positive one.

How can you get in touch?

Email wrsenquiries@worcsregservices.gov.uk
Phone 01527-881288
Write to WRS, Wyatt House, Farrier Street, Worcester, WR1 3BH
In person at your nearest Worcestershire Hub Customer Service Centre (to find your nearest centre and the contact details for that centre, visit the [Worcestershire Hub Online](#) web pages).

AREA	DAYS	TIMES
Bewdley	Monday to Friday	9.00am to 1.00pm
Bromsgrove	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday Thursday Saturday	9.00am to 5.00pm 10.00am to 5.00pm 9.00am to 12noon

Droitwich	Monday to Friday	9.00am to 5.00pm
Evesham	Monday to Friday Saturday	9.00am to 6.00pm 10.00am to 2.00pm
Malvern Hills	Monday to Friday	9.00am to 5.30pm
Pershore	Monday to Friday	9.00am to 5.00pm
Redditch	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday Wednesday Friday Saturday	9.00am to 5.30pm 10.00am to 5.30pm 9.00am to 5.00pm 9.00am to 12noon
Stourport	Monday to Friday	9.00am to 5.00pm Cash office open till 4.30pm
Tenbury	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday	9.30am to 5.30pm
Upton	Monday, Wednesday, Friday	9.30am to 5.30pm
Worcester	Monday to Friday Saturday	9.00am to 5.00pm 9.00am to 12noon
Wyre Forest	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday Wednesday	8.30am to 5.00pm 10am to 5.00pm

Do you want to make a suggestion?

We welcome your feedback and encourage your comments or suggestions about our services. It may be that your suggestion helps to change the way a service is delivered.

Have we got it right?

If you think we've done something well, we'd love to hear from you. We want to receive your feedback and use it to help us make improvements to our services. We will pass on all compliments to the service or member of staff concerned.

Do you feel we have got it wrong?

We want to hear from you if you think we have:

- Done something wrong or badly
- Not done something we should have
- Treated you unfairly or unprofessionally
- Been too slow to act

What do we ask of you?

If you want to make a complaint or pay us a compliment please give us as much detail as possible about the service including dates, times and names of the people you dealt with if known.

If making a complaint, please also let us know what you would like us to do to put things right.

If you are making a complaint for someone else, you will need their permission first.

Please include your name, address and contact details as we cannot deal with any anonymous complaints.

What can you expect from us?

We want to settle all complaints quickly. If you have contacted us with a complaint, there are three stages to our process.

Stage One – quick resolution

Please make your complaint to the person dealing with the query or, if you are not happy to do this, through one of the routes outlined above. Many issues can be resolved with an explanation, action or apology. If you aren't satisfied, you can ask for your complaint to be escalated to the second stage.

Stage Two – full investigation

We will acknowledge stage two complaints within 5 working days.

Your complaint will be dealt with by one of our Team Managers or Business Managers and reviewed by the Head of Regulatory Services, who will ensure the matter is fully investigated.

You will get a full reply within fifteen working days or an explanation of progress to date if there are exceptional reasons why we are unable to complete the investigation within that time.

If you are not happy with the result of the investigation, you can ask for your complaint to be progressed to the third stage.

Stage Three - review

If the complaint is escalated to Stage 3, it will be referred to the nominated officer of the most appropriate council (Wychavon, Wyre Forest, Worcestershire County, Worcester City, Malvern Hills, Bromsgrove, or Redditch – depending on the nature of your complaint and where you live)

WRS will advise you of who is dealing with this matter has been referred to and send you their contact details.

The relevant council will review the full details of your complaint and you will get a full response explaining the outcome within ten working days.

Every effort is made to keep within the above timescales but in the event of more complex enquiries, this might not be possible. If more time is needed before replying, you will be kept informed of the delay.

What isn't a complaint?

This procedure is designed to receive compliments about WRS services you have received, or to make a complaint about services you have received or activities undertaken by WRS.

However we are not able to deal with all issues under this process.

WRS is not directly responsible for matters of policy that have been set by individual councils, for example, licensing policy. Complaints regarding such issues will be referred directly to that council for them to process. We will tell you if this is the case and provide you with details as to who the complaint has been referred to along with their contact details.

Complaints regarding the conduct of councillors should be referred to the relevant council's Monitoring Officer, who will investigate allegations of misconduct. Further information can be found on the relevant council's website.

Complaints about other people, for example regarding noise nuisance or products you've purchased will be dealt with as requests for service. Where a complaint alleges criminal conduct that falls outside of the remit of the service, this will be referred to a more appropriate body i.e. Police, HMRC.

Employment issues will be dealt with in accordance with our Host Authority's Personnel Handbook.

Complaints concerning members of staff alleging misconduct will be dealt with, where appropriate through our disciplinary procedure, the outcome of which will remain confidential.

Where a complaint is regarding the conduct of one of our many partner organisations, we will forward any complaints regarding our partners or their services to the appropriate manager.

The individual councils have a number of separate appeal or statutory procedures for some of the services it provides such as:

- Statutory notice decisions
- Decisions of licensing and appeals committees

This list is not exhaustive and if your complaint falls under one of these separate appeals processes, you will be given advice how to make your appeal.

Anonymous Complaints – We will treat all feedback confidentially. If complaints are received anonymously, we will not investigate them under this procedure.

Dealing with unreasonably persistent complainants

In a very small minority of cases, customers persist unreasonably with their complaints or complain just to try to make life difficult for WRS instead of genuinely trying to sort out a problem.

If these vexatious or unreasonably persistent complaints affect our ability to do our work or provide a service to others, we will refer this matter to the appropriate individual council who will deal with this under their own policies for dealing with vexatious complaints.

Still not satisfied following a complaint?

If you have followed this procedure but still think you've not been treated fairly, you can contact the Local Government Ombudsman. This service is not run by us and is free of charge. The Ombudsman is there to deal with the way in which a decision is made, not with the merits of our decision:

Local Government Ombudsman
PO Box 4771
Coventry
CV4 0EH
0845 602 1983 or 024 7682 1960

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