



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

- 1.1 This procedure covers situations where a professional, a member of the public or another person with a valid reason requests a response to a complaint in relation to the way the LSCB has carried out its functions. This is distinct from complaints about child protection conference arrangements for which there are separate procedures.
- 1.2 These situations are likely to be rare and may be related to a complaint regarding a LSCB process or decision, or an LSCB activity or publicity. Where the complaint is regarding the conduct of someone representing the LSCB, the complaint should normally be referred to the relevant agency (unless it concerns a Lay Member). If the complaint is in relation to the LSCB Independent Chairperson, the LSCB Business Manager will forward the information to the Chief Executive.
- 1.3 On receipt of a verbal or written communication to Brighton & Hove LSCB, the LSCB Business Manager will decide whether the complaint is informal or formal in nature. If the complaint relates to a single agency then the complainant will be referred on as appropriate.

Informal Complaints

- 1.4 Where the information indicates the complaint is informal and can be responded to as such, the LSCB Business Manager will respond directly to try and resolve the issue as soon as is practicable. An informal complaint can later be treated as a formal complaint if circumstances dictate.

Formal Complaints

- 1.5 Where the information indicates that the matter should be treated as a formal complaint, the LSCB Business Manager will forward the complaint to the LSCB Independent Chairperson immediately with a recommendation about action. The LSCB Business Manager will send an acknowledgement letter to the complainant within 2 working days of receiving the complaint with an indication of when a formal response will be sent (if this is known at the time). This should usually be within 20 working days, although for complex matters this timescale may be extended and the complainant given an expected timescale for a response and the reason for the expected delay.
- 1.6 The LSCB Independent Chairperson will decide on the appropriate action:
 - (a) Where the information is already available to give a full response, the LSCB Business Manager will draft a suitable letter on behalf of the LSCB Independent Chairperson. This may be in conjunction with the relevant LSCB Subcommittee Chairperson dependent on the issue, or
 - (b) Where further enquiries need to be made, the LSCB Independent Chairperson will request the most relevant LSCB Subcommittee Chairperson to do this and provide a report. The LSCB Business Manager will then draft a suitable letter on behalf of the LSCB Independent Chairperson.
- 1.7 The LSCB Independent Chairperson has the option to convene a small panel (e.g. up to 2 LSCB statutory members and the LSCB Independent Chairperson) to assist in reaching a conclusion regarding a complaint. This may be necessary if the complaint is complex or there are conflicts of interest.
- 1.8 Response letters should be worded to indicate the decision by the LSCB Independent Chairperson is final. There is no formal appeals process, but if the complainant disputes the Independent Chairperson final decision we will ask another LSCB Independent Chair to Peer Review our response.