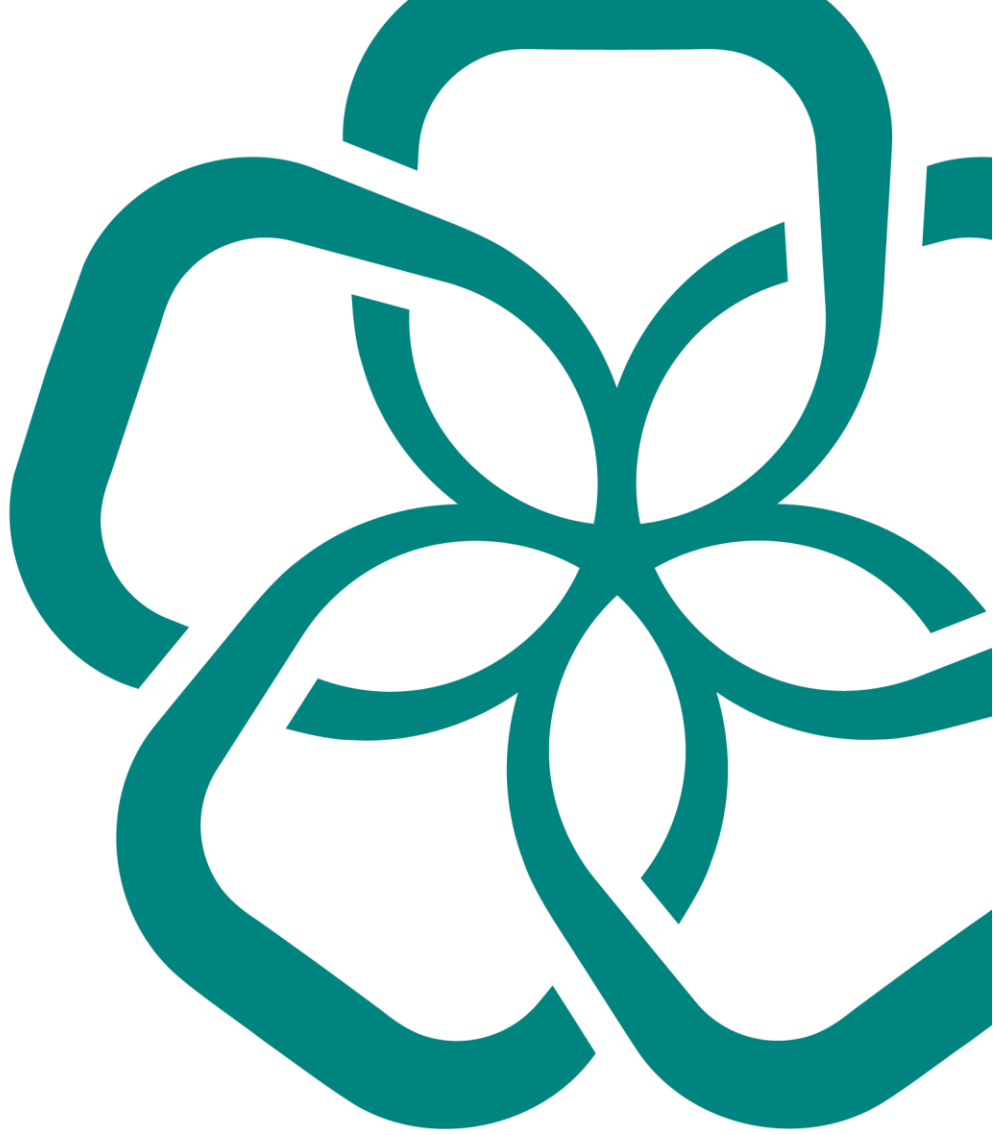




West
Yorkshire
Combined
Authority

Tracy
Brabin
Mayor of
West Yorkshire



Customer Enquiries and Complaints Policy

March 2024

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1. Policy Purpose

- 1.1 This policy will explain how to contact West Yorkshire Combined Authority, what to expect from us when you do and will outline our process for handling any enquiries or complaints that may be made to us about the services we provide.
- 1.2 This policy will also explain the process of contacting us with general enquiries and feedback and how we will respond.
- 1.3. This policy will also outline the types of contact that cannot be dealt with under this policy and will explain what you need to do and who you may need to contact.

2. Related Policies and Procedures

- 2.1 The policies that are related to this one include:
 - Unreasonable Behaviour Policy
 - Data Protection & Confidentiality Policy
 - FOI/EIR & Transparency Policy
 - Whistleblowing Policy
 - Procedure for Considering Complaints in Relation to Members' Code of Conduct
 - Procedure for Managing and responding to threats, aggressive behaviour, violence, and crime from members of the public

3. How Can I Contact You?

- 3.1 You can contact us by phone, by writing to us, by emailing us or by submitting a complaint via our online portal. Our contact details can be viewed on our website here.
- 3.2. We collect demographic information through our online contact form to allow us to better understand EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) metrics across the region.
- 3.3. We have current resources in place to allow reasonable adjustments to be made allowing all members of the public to make contact with us.

4. What We Can Action Under This Policy

- 4.1 Complaints – A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service the Combined Authority provides. Our staff are able to resolve most issues as part of their job, without the need for you to make a complaint. However, there may be cases that require further investigation and the involvement of other officers to find out what went wrong. We will deal with these as complaints. The Combined Authority can investigate complaints relating to our work, the products, and services we provide and our people. However, there are a number of issues we cannot investigate, examples of these are explained in more detail in section 5.
- 4.2 General enquiries and feedback – The Combined Authority can provide some information in response to general enquiries, section 5 outlines the items we cannot provide information for. We welcome feedback however we are not always able to respond.

5. What We Cannot Action Under This Policy

- 5.1 Before contacting us, please ensure you are raising your complaint/ enquiry with the correct organisation. Please note - the Combined Authority is not a council and has not replaced any of the roles or functions of your Local Authority.
- 5.2. Issues that occurred over 12 months ago – We would not normally investigate complaints about something that happened more than 12 months ago unless there are exceptional circumstances. Such exceptional circumstances would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. This decision will be made by the Casework and Correspondent Manager and/or the head of service.
- 5.3. Bus & train service-related Issues – Whilst the Combined Authority is the statutory transport authority for the region, it is not the provider of bus or train services. Complaints related to an individual's experience using a bus or train service should be made directly to the operator. Such complaints may include (but are not limited to) matters relating to the reliability of the service, the conduct of operators' staff, tickets and payment arrangements and the presentation of vehicles. To assist complainants to pursue issues with the relevant company, a list of bus and train operators can be found on our website:
- <https://www.wymetro.com/buses/bus-operators/>
 - <https://www.wymetro.com/trains/train-operators-contact/>
- 5.4 Issues related to employment & recruitment – Complaints related to recruitment or an individual's current or previous employment with the Combined Authority will be referred to the HR (Human Resources) team and handled in line with applicable grievance procedures.
- 5.5 Whistleblowing issues – Complaints related to topics already covered by our whistleblowing policy will be dealt with under that policy.
- 5.6 Legal Proceedings – Complaints about matters which are subject to legal proceedings will not be investigated under this policy.
- 5.7 Procurement Issues – Complaints relating to the awarding of contracts and tenders are dealt with under existing procurement processes.
- 5.8 Issues relating to Members – Complaints relating to our Members and the Combined Authority's Code of Conduct will be dealt with under a separate procedure which can be viewed here.
- 5.9 Data Protection related issues – Complaints about how we process personal data should be made directly to our Data Protection Officer at dpo@westyorks-ca.gov.uk
- 5.10 Issues relating to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests – Complaints about FOI requests or requests made under the Environmental Information Regulations should be made directly to the FOI Officer at freedom.info@westyorks-ca.gov.uk
- 5.11 Policing & Crime Complaints – complaints for the attention of our Mayor's Police and Crime Commissioner functions will be dealt with in accordance with the procedure detailed on our website. Please visit the webpages linked below for further information.
- <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/policing-and-crime/>

- <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/policing-and-crime/complaints-and-conduct/crime/complaints-and-conduct/>

6. Our Process

6.1 Complaints Process

We have a two-stage process for dealing with complaints. Upon receipt of a complaint, we will look at whether we feel we could resolve the issue for you quickly. This is known as “informal resolution.” If we cannot, your complaint will be dealt with as follows:

Stage 1

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days and will include a reference number which you will need to quote if you need to contact us again about the same issue.

Our policy is to provide you with a full response within 15 working days, however sometimes issues can take longer to resolve. Should we need longer to investigate your complaint, we will seek to inform you of this at the earliest opportunity and provide a revised timeframe of when you can expect to receive a full response from us. We may need to contact you for further information to help with the investigation of your complaint.

Stage 2

If you remain dissatisfied after receiving our response, you can ask for your complaint to be escalated to Stage 2, where it will be reviewed by a more senior officer.

You will normally have 28 days from the date we responded to your initial complaint to take your complaint to Stage 2 unless there are exceptional circumstances.

You will need to provide an explanation of why you feel our initial response did not resolve your complaint and any further information you wish to add that will assist our review.

As with Stage 1 of our process, we will acknowledge receipt of your request within 3 working days and aim to provide you with a full response within 15 working days wherever possible.

Next Steps and The Role of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

If you are still not satisfied that we have resolved your complaint after proceeding through the complaints procedure, you can complain to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (“LGO”). You can complain to the LGO at any time at no cost to you, but they will usually refer a complaint back to us if it has not been through all stages of the complaints procedure. The LGO can be contacted at <https://www.lgo.org.uk/contact-us> or by calling 0300 061 06.

6.2 Enquiry Process

All enquiries will be assigned to the relevant team and full responses will be provided within 15 working days. If we need longer to gather the information together or liaise with other colleagues, we will notify you of this.

7. Dealing with Unreasonable or Unreasonably Persistent Complaints and Enquiries

- 7.1 If following receipt and consideration of a complaint it is considered that the complainant's behaviour is unreasonable or unreasonably persistent, the matter will be considered in accordance with the Combined Authority's Unreasonable Behaviour Policy. To understand how we classify and deal with unreasonable or unreasonably persistent behaviour please access the Policy at - [Link](#)

8. Equality Impact Assessment

- 8.1 In the creation of this policy, consideration has been given to any possible adverse equality impact for the following groups: disability; gender; gender reassignment; marital status (including civil partnerships); sexual orientation; race; religion or beliefs; age; pregnancy and maternity. The policy is considered to have little or no adverse equality impact.

9. Data Protection

- 9.1 Personal data provided to the Combined Authority as part of the enquires and complaints process is processed under our statutory obligation to respond to enquiries or complaints. The data is not processed for any other purpose or shared with any third parties other than where this is necessary for the handling of the complaint. The data will be retained for a period of minimum 1 year following the resolution of the complaint and then securely destroyed. Our full privacy notice can be viewed on our website at <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/footer/privacy-notice> and <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/footer/privacy-notice-and-cookie-policy/cookie-policy/>
- 9.2. Enquiries or Complaints Made on Behalf of Other People – Should you wish to make a complaint on behalf of someone else and where this involves divulging their personal information to us, we will usually require evidence of consent from that person before we will investigate. Should this not be possible, our ability to investigate the complaint will be considered on a case-by-case basis, in line with the requirements of relevant legislation (e.g., The Data Protection Act).

10. Policy Review or Changes

- 10.1 The West Yorkshire (Mayoral) Combined Authority reserves the right to amend the details of this policy as required following consultation with relevant parties. This policy will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis, to ensure that it meets the needs of the West Yorkshire (Mayoral) Combined Authority and ensure compliance with relevant legislation.

Document Control

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Find out more
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All information correct at time of writing