

# Complaints Policy

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The South East LEP Ltd (SELEP) 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 SELEP's work to come forward and voice those concerns without fear of reprisal.
- 1.2. For employees and those working closely with SELEP, please follow the whistleblowing<sup>1</sup> policy available on our website <http://www.southeastlep.com/aboutus/our-policies>.
- 1.3. If you require your complaint to be confidential, then third parties and members of the public, please follow the confidential complaints procedure outlined in this policy.
- 1.4. If you do not require your complaint to be confidential or wish to raise any general concerns, third parties and members of the public should email the SELEP on [hello@southeastlep.com](mailto:hello@southeastlep.com).
- 1.5. If a member of the public or third party believes that their complaint fits the description of whistleblowing<sup>2</sup>, they may report their concerns through the whistleblowing policy procedure <http://www.southeastlep.com/about-us/our-policies>.

## 2. Anonymous allegations

- 2.1. SELEP takes all complaints and concerns raised by members of the public and third parties seriously. We will investigate anonymous allegations but 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 SELEP. When exercising this discretion, the factors to be taken into account would include:
  - a) the seriousness of the issue raised;
  - b) the credibility of the concern; and
  - c) the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.
- 2.2. The Ministry of Housing and Local Government may request information arising from this process if they have concerns regarding SELEP 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.
- 2.3. Where details are gathered, SELEP will put in place appropriate data protection arrangements in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

## 3. Confidential Complaints Procedure

- 3.1. 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. SELEP will investigate all complaints or allegations.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 individual's own position and has no or very limited public interest.

<sup>2</sup> As above

3.2. If you would like to make a confidential complaint in accordance with this policy please email the CEO at [adam.bryan@southeastlep.com](mailto:adam.bryan@southeastlep.com), or the Governance Officer at [amy.ferraro@southeastlep.com](mailto:amy.ferraro@southeastlep.com). Or write to:

Adam Bryan/Amy Ferraro,  
CEO/Governance Officer,  
South East Local Enterprise Partnership,  
c/o Essex County Council,  
County Hall,  
Chelmsford,  
Essex,  
CM1 1QH

3.3. In doing please ensure you state that you want the complaint to remain confidential.

#### **4. Action taken by SELEP**

4.1. Your concern will be confidentially investigated by the SELEP CEO or the designated complaints officer. You can expect SELEP to:

- a) Contact you within 10 clear working days to acknowledge the complaint and discuss the appropriate course of action.
- b) Write to you within 28 clear working days with findings of the investigation. If the investigation has not concluded within 28 clear working days, the officer will write to you to give reasons for the delay in resolving the complaint.
- c) Take the necessary steps to rectify the issue where applicable.

4.2. 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 concerns through SELEP's Accountable Body which is Essex County Council. The County Council has its own confidentiality procedures.

4.3. If you are either unable to raise the matter with SELEP 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 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 write to:

LEP Policy Deputy Director,  
Cities and Local Growth Unit,  
Fry Block,  
2 Marsham Street,  
London, SW1P 4DF.

4.4. Please clearly mark your email or letter as "Official - complaints".