



Governance and Assurance Framework

Section K: Complaints Policy

June 2021

Confidential reporting of complaints

1. The Midlands Engine Partnership is committed to creating an 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 the Midlands Engine Partnership's work to come forward and voice those concerns without fear of reprisal.
2. For employees, they should first consider raising their concerns via the relevant Staffordshire County Council policy.
3. For other parties and members of the public, please follow the confidential complaints procedure outlined below.
4. Alternatively, if any individual believes that their complaint fits the Whistleblowing description below, they can elect to report their concerns through the Whistleblowing Policy procedure.

Whistleblowing

5. Whistleblowing is where an individual reports concerns about a danger, risk, contravention of rules or illegality. In doing so they are acting in the wider public interest, usually because the matter they are reporting 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.

Confidentiality

6. If an individual 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. The Midlands Engine Executive Team supported by the Accountable Body will investigate all complaints or allegations.

Anonymous allegations

7. The Midlands Engine Partnership takes all complaints and concerns raised by members of the public and third parties seriously. We will investigate anonymous allegations. However, we 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 the Midlands Engine Partnership. 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.
8. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government may request information arising from this process if they have concerns regarding the Midlands Engine Partnership or have been approached with similar complaints. The expectation is that this information will be provided on an anonymous basis. However, it may be necessary to provide personal details to progress a complaint.

9. Where details are gathered, the Midlands Engine Partnership will put in place appropriate data protection arrangements in line with the Data Protection Act 1998, the General Data Protection Regulation and other applicable prevailing legislation.

Confidential Complaints Procedure

10. If you would like to make a confidential complaint please contact Gayle Aughton, Senior Executive Officer, Midlands Engine, Trent Bridge House, Fox Road, Nottingham NG2 6BJ T: 07753 137650
Email: Gayle.aughton@midlandsenine.org
11. State that you want the complaint to remain confidential.

Action taken by the Midlands Engine

12. The designated complaints officer will record your concern and investigate the complaint. You can expect the officer 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.
13. If you are unhappy with the outcome of the complaint or the complaint involves those responsible for the confidential complaints procedure, you can address your concerns to the Midlands Engine's Accountable Body which is Staffordshire County Council. A copy of the Council's Complaints Policy is available at <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Contact-compliments-and-complaints/complimentscommentscomplaints/Make-a-general-complaint.aspx>
14. If you are either unable to raise the matter with the Midlands Engine Partnership or its Accountable Body, or you are dissatisfied with the action taken, you can report it direct to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy via the Midlands Engine Director, Cities and Local Growth Unit, Apex Court, City Link, Nottingham NG2 4LA. You should clearly mark your email or letter as "Official - complaints".