



## **Criminal Justice Comments and Complaints Procedure**

### **How we deal with issues that concern you**

The West Lothian Criminal Justice Social Work Service (CJSWS) has a complicated job. The demands of courts and the Parole Board for strict enforcement of court orders and prison aftercare licences mean that sometimes we have to make decisions about our work with you that you may not like. While you may disagree with our decision, if the problem is one that would normally require us to advise the court or Parole Board, that body has the responsibility for deciding if we have acted reasonably.

Sometimes there may be things about our work with you that you consider we have not done well enough, or you may think of ways that we could do something better.

We ask that any issues or comments be raised in the first place with the member of staff who is working with you. If you have more than one worker (for example if carrying out unpaid work as part of a Probation Order), please speak to the worker most directly linked to the issue you want to raise.

If you do not feel that your complaint has been sorted out, please ask for an appointment to see the Team Manager (or Duty Manager, if the Team manager is unavailable). We will try to arrange such an appointment within one working day, but cannot guarantee it will be possible for a manager to meet you immediately the request is made.

If you still feel we have not handled your request appropriately, we would ask you to complete the council's corporate comments and complaints leaflet "Points of View", available from any public council office.

West Lothian Council aims to resolve the majority of complaints within 5 working days, but will keep service users informed if it cannot be done within that time-scale. If a service user is not satisfied with the response, the next step is to write to the Chief Executive of the council, who will decide if more action is needed.

This process is important. It allows us to resolve complaints quickly and efficiently, and service users are able to address their issues directly with the service in the first instance.

We explain this process to service users in the first stages of their contact with us, and a leaflet is given out which explains how we deal with these matters.

The CJSWS logs all formal complaints and comments, however they are received. We will report back regularly on: the level of complaints; the types of issues raised; on our responses to complaints; and on the level of satisfaction of service users and others about the way we handle these complaints.

If you have further enquiries about any of the points mentioned, please contact the Criminal Justice Social Work Service:

West Lothian Council Criminal Justice Social Work Service  
West Lothian Civic Centre  
Howden South Road  
Livingston  
EH54 6FF

01506 280999

Email [CriminalJusticeTeam@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:CriminalJusticeTeam@westlothian.gov.uk)

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