



Warwickshire
POLICE AUTHORITY

The authority behind the force

Complaints Procedure

July 2010

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Introduction

This procedure explains how to make a complaint if you are dissatisfied with any services provided by the Police Authority. It does not cover complaints in the following areas:-

- Operational policing matters, which should be addressed to your local police District Commander.
- The conduct of an individual police officer, which should be addressed to the Professional Standards Department at the Police Headquarters in Leek Wootton, Warwick.
- The conduct of an individual Member of the Police Authority, which should be addressed to the Standards Board for England, PO Box 36656, London SE1 0WN

Please also note that although complaints may refer to the behaviour of a particular member of staff, any issues concerning the employer/employee relationship including the need for disciplinary action to be taken are addressed separately under the Authority's internal procedures.

How To Complain About The Police Authority's Services

Warwickshire Police Authority (WPA) aims to provide services which are both efficient and fair. However, if you are not satisfied with any service which you have received from WPA or feel that you have been unfairly treated you are entitled to make a complaint.

WPA has a set of procedures for dealing with complaints with the intention that everyone who makes a complaint is treated equally. This procedure explains each stage involved to ensure that complain are properly dealt with.

WPA's intention is to respond positively to any complaints which are made and in particular if mistakes have been made to acknowledge this and try and put things right.

Making Your Complaint

STEP ONE

Complaints should be submitted in writing and addressed to the Chief Executive of WPA. However, if for any reason this presents a difficulty it is possible to make a complaint either in person or by telephone or to ask someone else, eg a friend or relative, to do it for you.

When making a complaint, please give the name of the member(s) of staff involved in the issue giving rise to the complaint, outline the circumstances of the complaint in as much detail as possible and give the reasons why you are not satisfied with the way you have been dealt with.

The Chief Executive will endeavour to respond to your complaint within 14 days. There will be cases, however, where this is not possible. In such cases you will be contacted in writing and told when you can expect a response.

If, in any case, your complaint relates directly to the Chief Executive then it will be referred to Step Two of this procedure.

If you are still dissatisfied once you have received a response then you may ask for the complaint to proceed to Step Two.

STEP TWO

WPA has a Monitoring Officer whose responsibilities include the consideration of complaints and you should write to him with details of your complaint and where possible include copies of all previous correspondence.

The Monitoring Officer will review how your complaint has been handled and again will aim to let you have a response within 14 days. If this is not possible then you will be contacted in writing and given a date when you can expect a response. In particular a longer time may be needed if the Monitoring Officer feels that some detailed investigation is necessary which involves consideration of the relevant files.

If your complaint directly involves the Monitoring Officer it will be reviewed by another senior officer of the County Council.

Once you have received a response from the Monitoring Officer and if you remain dissatisfied then you may ask the Monitoring Officer to refer your complaint to Step Three. Please note, however, that normally the Monitoring Officer will only refer a complaint to Step Three where the complaint raised issues about the Authority's policies or procedures.

STEP THREE

In appropriate cases a final decision about your complaint will be taken by WPA's Standards Committee which comprises Members of the WPA but is chaired by an independent person not associated with WPA. If a complaint is referred to Step Three you will be further advised about the procedure to be followed.

Problems in Pursuing Your Complaint

If you have any practical difficulties in being able to pursue the complaint, for example, because of disability or language problems, please contact the Chief Executive and consideration will be given as to how WPA can best provide assistance.

Complaints to the Local Ombudsman

If, after going through the various steps in this procedure, you feel that WPA has not handled your complaint satisfactorily you are entitled to make a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will not usually investigate a complaint unless you have tried to resolve it with WPA first.

Addresses and Contact Numbers

Chief Executive, Warwickshire Police Authority, 3 Northgate Street, Warwick CV34 4SP –
Tel No. 01926 412118 – email oliverwinterstr@warwickshire.gov.uk

Monitoring Officer, Warwickshire County Council, PO Box 9, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RR
– Tel No. 01926 412564 – email davidcarter@warwickshire.gov.uk

Local Government Ombudsman, Beverley House, 17 Shipton Road, York YO30 5FZ – Tel
No. 01904 663200