

NCSAB Complaints & Escalation Process

Complaints

This Board Complaints policy only deals with complaints which are specifically about the Board, or a Board process. This is likely to be limited to complaints about Safeguarding Adult Reviews, about Safeguarding Adult Review processes or about other publications or campaigns led by the Board.

When a complaint is received by the Board office, the Board Manager will explore (liaising with partners where necessary) whether the complaint meets the criteria for other statutory complaints processes (for example NHS Complaints, Social Care Complaints, Police Complaints etc). This Board Complaints process should only be followed when other statutory complaints processes are not applicable.

The NCSAB position in relation to complaints is based on the following key principles

- Viability – The system for dealing with complaints has to be one that can be adequately resourced in order to provide a robust and timely response. It is essential that only complaints which are legitimately about the Board are dealt with through a Board process.
- Efficiency – The system has to avoid duplicating or overlap with other existing measures. This would include both escalation processes and other complaints systems/processes.
- Informed – The system needs to be delivered by those with the expertise to provide a balanced and knowledgeable response.
- Problem solving – experience indicates that a positive, solution focussed approach will minimise the number of formal complaints received.

In light of this the Board position in relation to complaints is as follows

Complaints from, or on behalf of, an agency are dealt with through an escalation process (see below), rather than a complaints process, with the Independent Chair acting as final arbiter.

Complaints from a citizen regarding the conduct or performance of an employee or volunteer of a Board partner agency will be referred to the agency that employs or is responsible for that person's work.

Complaints from a citizen about a Board process, e.g. a Safeguarding Adult Review, will initially be responded to by the Board Manager in consultation with the relevant Head of Service, with a written response within 28 days of receipt. If the complainant is unsatisfied, they should contact the Board Manager who will arrange for their complaint to be considered by the Independent Chair, who will consult with the Director of Adult Social Care before responding. The Independent Chair will provide a further written response within 28 days of the complainant contacting the Board Manager.

Where a citizen wishes to appeal a decision made by the SAB (for example a decision to initiate a SAR) this will be considered as a complaint, as in the paragraph above.

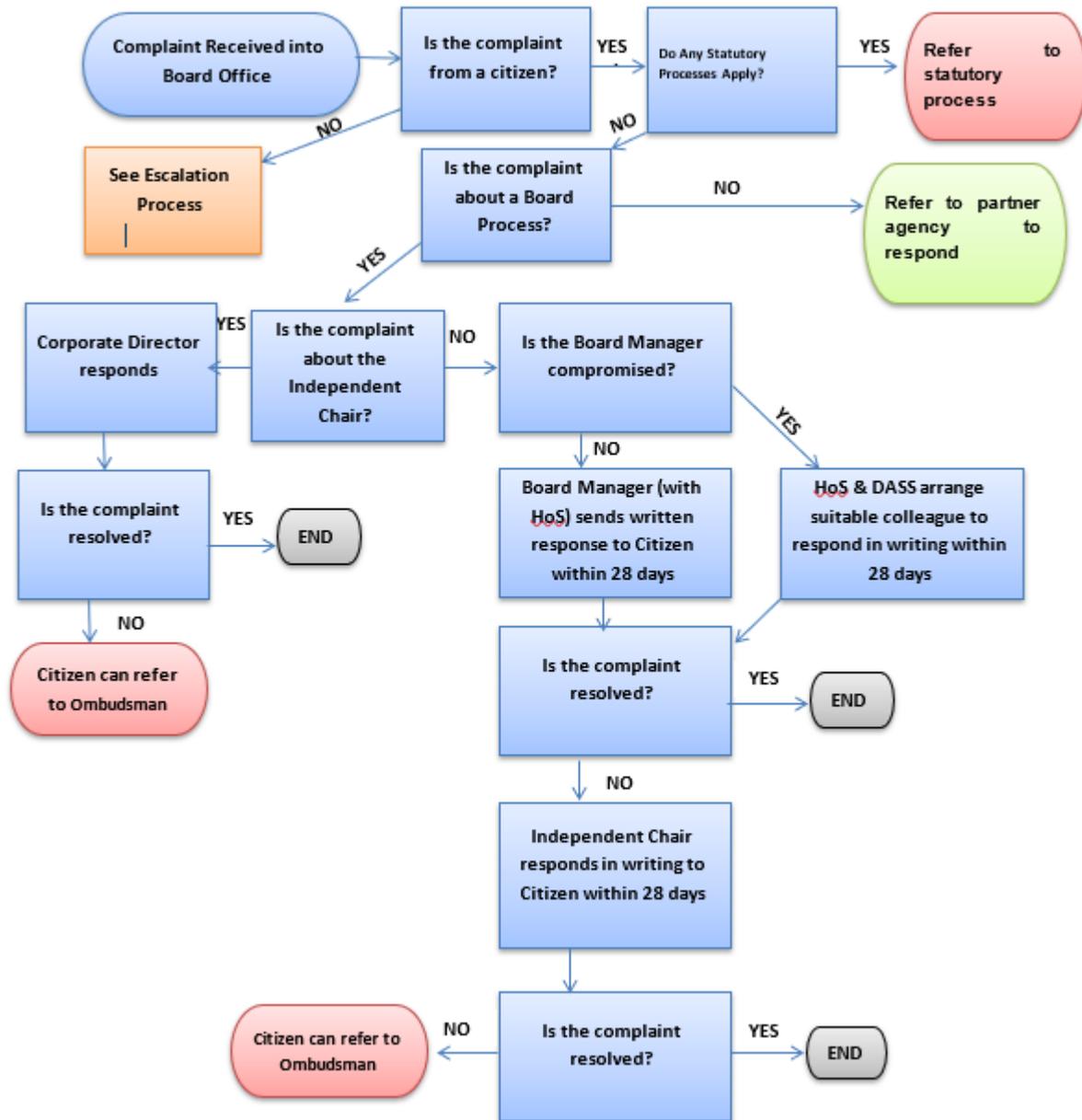
Where a complaint from a citizen is about a process which the Board Manager has been involved with, the Board Manager will consult with the Head of Service for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance (CSC) who will decide whether or not the Board Manager is too compromised to respond to the complaint. In those cases (and in all cases where the complaint is directly or substantially about the Board Manager), the Head of Service will consult with the Director of Adult Social Care to identify another suitable colleague who can provide a written response to the citizen.

Complaints from a citizen about the Independent Chair will be considered by the Corporate Director of Children and Adults Services.

All written complaint responses will include details of how to contact the Local Government Ombudsman.

The Board Office will ensure that a record is kept of complaints received, responded to and those referred to partner agencies. Complaints and copies of responses will be securely retained in accordance with the principles of data protection legislation.

NCSAB Complaints Process



Escalation

The Board seeks to promote challenge between agencies to ensure continuous improvement in the safeguarding arrangements across Nottingham. In the usual course of Board business partner agencies are expected and encouraged to provide constructive challenge to each other.

Where a colleague in a partner agency wishes to raise a concern about a Board Process, they should escalate to their Board Member in the first instance, who will decide whether it can be addressed within their agency. Where the Board Member of a partner agency wishes to escalate concerns about a Board process these should be raised with the Board Manager in the first instance. The Board Manager will send a written response to the Board Member who raised the concern. (For partner agencies who are not members of the Board, concerns should be escalated to their safeguarding lead to raise with the Board Manager).

If the concern remains unresolved, the Board Member should escalate the concern to the Independent Chair who will act as final arbiter.

There may be exceptional circumstances in which partner agencies have concerns about another partner, in relation to Adult Safeguarding which cannot constructively be raised through the existing structures of the subgroups, Board and BMG.

In these circumstances colleagues should escalate concerns to their Board Member. The Board member will then decide whether this is a matter which can be resolved through existing partnership arrangements, or whether to escalate to the Independent Chair. This will depend on whether other partner agencies are involved or if the concern is likely to impact on other organisations or partnerships.

Where concerns are escalated which relate to a commissioned service (including health providers) the Board Member and/or Independent Chair should involve the relevant commissioner.

Board Escalation Process

Key	
	Board Escalation
	Partner Response
	Board Complaint
	Statutory Process
	End

