



## **Complaints Procedure:**

### **1 Summary**

SENSCOT views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person Senscot that has made the complaint.

This procedure outlines the procedures followed by Senscot in the event that Senscot should receive a complaint from any individual or organisation, either in writing or by telephone.

Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- To make sure everyone at Senscot knows what to do if a complaint is received
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do

### **2 Stage One**

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate.

Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to Aidan Pia, executive director within one week.

On receiving the complaint, it will be logged and recorded. If it has not already been resolved, an appropriate person will be delegated to investigate it and to take appropriate action.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within a week. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached.

Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

### **3 Stage Two**

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Board level. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to Sophy Green or the current chair of the organisation.

The request for Board level review should be acknowledged within a week of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.

The person who receives Stage Two complaints may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond.

The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.

Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

### **4 Resolution**

As previously stated, it is hoped that the initial communication and subsequent resolution action outlined in agreement with the complainant is sufficient to resolve the complaint.

If the complainant agrees that the issues raised have been resolved, then the complaint is closed. The Complaints Manager will despatch a letter to the complainant to verify these discussions.

If the complainant is still not satisfied then it will be necessary to escalate the complaint. Alternative dispute resolution such as mediation may be used as a way to escalate the complaint.

## **5 External Stage**

The complainant can complain to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) at any stage.

Information about the kind of complaints OSCR can involve itself in can be found on their website at: <http://www.oscr.org.uk/charities/raise-a-concern-about-a-charity>

## **6 Confidentiality**

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

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