

# Valley Youth Hub CIC (VYH)

## Complaints Policy

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

### **Our policy is:**

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- To publicize the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- To make sure everyone at VYH 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

### **Definition of a Complaint**

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of VYH.

### **Where Complaints Come From**

Complaints may come from any person who has a legitimate interest in VYH. This includes members, stakeholders, partners or beneficiaries. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing. This policy does not cover complaints from staff, who should use VYH's Discipline and Grievance policies.

### **Confidentiality**

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

### **Responsibility**

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Directors.

### **VYH Complaints Procedure**

#### **Publicised Contact Details for Complaints:**

Written complaints may be sent to:

Complaints Coordinator at Valley Youth Hub, c/o Homerton Grove Adventure Playground,  
Wardle Street, London E9 6BX.

Complaints should be marked Private and Confidential.

### **Receiving Complaints**

Complaints may arrive through channels publicized for that purpose or through any other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have.

Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded. The person who receives a phone or in person complaint should:

- Write down the facts of the complaint
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to VYH
- Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

### **Resolving Complaints**

#### **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 the Complaints Coordinator within one week.

The Complaints Coordinator is usually the Director of Valley Youth Hub - Emma Merrick, unless the complaint is about this Director, in which case the Complaints Coordinator will be an alternative Director.

On receiving the complaint, the Complaints Coordinator keeps a record of the complaint.

If it has not already been resolved, they should investigate the complaint for themselves or delegate an appropriate person 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 complaint's 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.

## **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 an alternative Director or Directors who have so far not been involved in reviewing the complaint.

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

The Directors at board level 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.

## **External Stage**

The complainant can complain to the CIC Regulator through their designated channel, such as the email address [cicconcerns@companieshouse.gov.uk](mailto:cicconcerns@companieshouse.gov.uk) – at any stage.

**Variation of the Complaints Procedure**

The Directors may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Director should not also have the Director as the person leading a Stage One review.

**Monitoring and Learning from Complaints**

Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.