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COMPLAINTS POLICY

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Introduction

The Gloucestershire VCS Alliance (hereafter referred to as “we”) welcomes feedback on any aspect of our work, including complaints, comments, suggestions, or compliments.

This policy covers complaints only. Comments, suggestions or compliments can be shared with us by emailing info@glosvcsalliance.org.uk or using the “[Contact Us](#)” form on our website.

Scope

This policy is intended for users of the Gloucestershire VCS Alliance’s services, including members, event attendees, contractors, and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in Gloucestershire. Staff and Volunteers should instead follow the Grievance Policy or Whistleblowing Policy.

What Are Complaints?

A complaint is a formal expression of dissatisfaction with any element of the work of the Gloucestershire VCS Alliance.

Our Commitment

Through the implementation of this policy and procedure, we will ensure there is a fair, clear, and consistent process which sets out our three stages for considering complaints.

We will provide a nominated contact person who will keep you informed throughout the complaint process.

Withdrawing your complaint

Complaints can be withdrawn at any time, in writing, to your nominated contact person.

How to complain

You can complain via:

- Email to info@glosvcsalliance.org.uk
- Using the “[Contact Us](#)” form on our website
- Writing to us at: Gloucestershire VCS Alliance, Suite 4 Bank House, Abbey Terrace, Winchcombe, Gloucestershire GL54 5LL

Complaint Retention

All complaints received will be kept on file for a period of three years.

Anonymised complaints will be shared with our Board of Trustees for learning and development purposes as part

Complaints Process

i. Stage One Complaints

We recognise that, in many circumstances, complaints will be resolved most effectively on an informal basis by a member of staff.

On receipt of a complaint, we will endeavour to resolve the complaint swiftly and within ten working days. If we are unable to resolve the complaint in this timeframe, we will tell you as quickly as possible and let you know when you can expect to hear from us.

If, after receiving a response to a stage one complaint, you remain dissatisfied, you may escalate the complaint to Stage Two by letting us know in writing.

ii. Stage Two Complaints

On receipt of a written Stage Two complaint, we will:

1. Acknowledge the complaint in writing (within two working days of receipt)
2. Notify you of your nominated contact person for the duration of the complaint process.

The Chief Officer will then nominate a senior staff member to investigate the complaint. If the complaint is about the Chief Officer or a member of our Board of Trustees, the first available uninvolved member of our Board of Trustees trustee will complete this stage.

We aim to complete the investigation within ten working days of receipt of the Stage Two complaint.

At the end of the investigation, you will be notified of the investigation findings and outcome in writing. At this stage you will also be informed of the appeal process if you remain dissatisfied.

iii. Complaint Appeal

If you remain dissatisfied following a Stage Two investigation, please tell us in writing within 10 working days of receiving the written outcome notification, through your nominated complaint contact. Your complaint appeal will be acknowledged within two working days in writing.

The Chief Officer will then investigate the complaint.

Where the complaint was investigated by the Chief Officer or a member of our Board of Trustees at Stage Two, another uninvolved member of our Board of Trustees will manage to this stage.

The complaint appeal will involve a reconsideration of the original complaint, and a review of how the Complaints Policy was followed.

The outcome of the complaint appeal will be provided in writing to the complainant within ten working days of receipt of the appeal.

Complaint appeal decisions are final.

Complaints to the Charity Commission

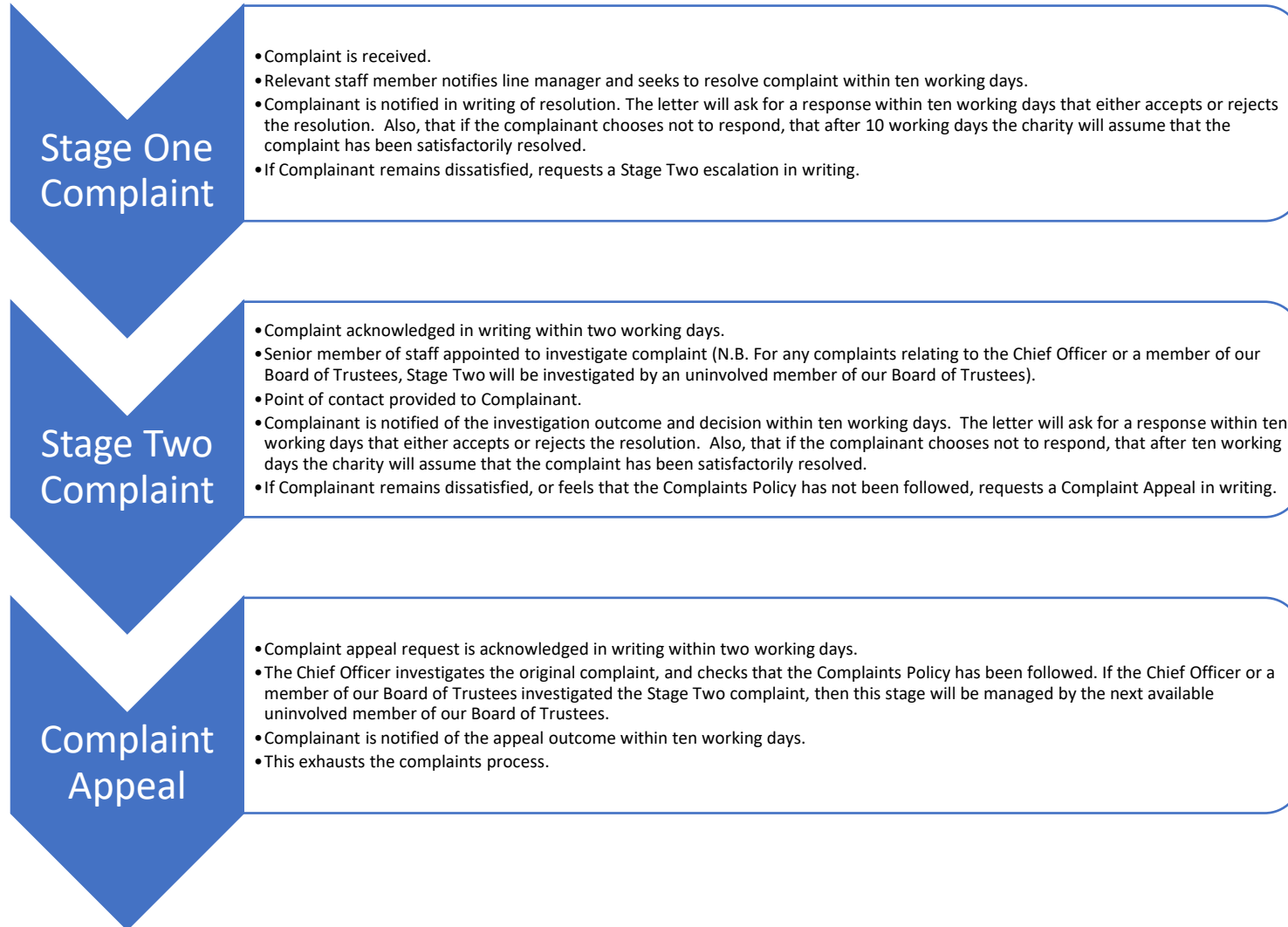
The Charity Commission will intervene in matters where there is serious risk of significant harm to, or abuse of, charities, their beneficiaries, or assets.

Examples of serious issues include:

- a charity not following the law, with damaging consequences to its reputation and public trust in charities generally.
- serious harm to the people the charity helps or other people who come into contact with the charity through its work.
- a person or organisation receiving significant financial benefit from a charity.
- criminal, illegal or terrorist activity
- a charity set up for illegal or improper purposes.
- a charity losing significant amounts of money.
- a charity losing significant assets, for example land or buildings.

If you have reason to believe that such an issue has, or might, to occur at the Gloucestershire VCS Alliance, you can report it here: <https://forms.charitycommission.gov.uk/Raising-Concerns/>

APPENDIX A: Complaint Process Diagram



APPENDIX B: Complaint Investigation Plan Template (for use in Stage Two and Appeal)

Investigator	
Date complaint received	
Date response due (10 working days from receipt)	
Nature of complaint	
Policies and procedures to review and follow	
Issues that need to be explored/clarified	
Sources of evidence to be collected	
Persons to be interviewed (including planned order of interviews)	
Further considerations	

APPENDIX C: Investigation Report Template (for use in Stage Two and Appeal)

Introduction	Investigator: [Name and role]
	Date investigation began:
	Nature of complaint: [Brief overview of the matter]

Process of investigation	The investigation process: [Explain how the investigation was authorised]
	Evidence collected: [List all evidence collected]
	Evidence not collected: (List all evidence that could not be collected and why)

	Persons interviewed: [List all people interviewed]
	Persons not interviewed: [List any witnesses that could not be interviewed and why]
	Anonymised statements: [If any, explain why and provide details of any enquiries into witness]

The investigation findings	Summary of written and physical evidence: [name and summarise each document contained, set out how the evidence supported or did not support your findings and why]
	Summary of witness evidence: [name and summarise each witness statement, quote from statement where relevant, set out how the witness statement supported or did not support your findings and why]

	Facts established: [detail what the investigation has established]
	Facts that could not be established: [detail any part of the investigation that was inconclusive]
	Mitigating factors: [detail if there were any mitigating factors uncovered that are relevant to the investigation]
	Other relevant information: [detail any other information that is relevant to the matter]

Conclusion [if required]	Recommendation: Formal action/Informal action/No action required.
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	<p>Further details on recommendation: [such as the type of action suggested for example, formal disciplinary meeting, and if there are any other recommendations related to the matter. In disciplinary matters, the investigator should not recommend a possible sanction. This should only be considered at a disciplinary hearing]</p>
	<p>Investigator's signature:</p> <p>Investigator's name and role within charity:</p> <p>Date:</p>

Supporting documents	[List all documents collected as part of investigation and included in report]
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