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# **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

# **Policy Brief and Purpose**

**The Diocesan Office is committed to serving the whole Diocese and living out our Kingdom People vision. Where we fall short of the high standards we set for ourselves we are also committed to looking at why and putting things right.**

This policy sets out our provision for the timely, and accurate response to complaints received. All complaints are taken seriously and will be dealt with promptly and appropriately.

*We are committed to the following overarching principles for handling complaints:*

* *We are transparent and open: we will provide accessible and publicly available information about our complaints process and policy.*
* *We will follow our complaints process in a timely manner: in line with statutory requirements and our policy and process.*
* *We are fair: we endeavour to be objective and will seek to appoint people to handle a complaint who can do so objectively. We will not discriminate in how we respond to a complaint based on any personal characteristic.*
* *We actively seek learning from complaints whatever the outcome and value everyone’s opinion.*

**The purpose of the policy is to:**

• provide definition of the term complaint

• clarify who can make a complaint

• clarify the eligible grounds for a complaint

• clarify the complaints process and timelines with details of the roles and responsibilities therein

**Complaints are defined as formal requests from:**

• Those expressing concern or dissatisfaction with a service provided, or lack of a service, relating to services provided by the Worcester Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd or its employees.

• Those expressing concern or dissatisfaction relating to our systems and/or processes.

**Who can make a complaint?**

Anyone, members of the public, churchgoers or clergy, who accesses diocesan services.

**Eligible grounds for a complaint**

Eligible complaints are considered to be those that are regarding lack of service, or where we have not applied our internal procedures properly or fairly and within three months of the complainants recorded incidence of experiencing the matter.

**Complaints Process**

Complaints must be made in writing to: HR Team, 16 Lowesmoor Wharf, Worcester, WR1 2RS or by email to hrteam@cofe-worcester.org.uk

The letter must be signed and dated and include the following information:

• Full name, contact address and daytime contact number of the complainant

• include any documentary evidence to support the complaint if there is any

If a complainant wishes any matter to remain private and confidential this must be stated clearly in the letter, otherwise we will assume permission has been granted to disclose any information provided as deemed appropriate and necessary.

The Board will acknowledge the complaint within 14 days of receipt.

Within 14 days of acknowledging the complaint the board will check that all of the required documentary evidence has been supplied and that the complaint falls within the time limits, scope and definition specified above.

We will give serious consideration to the grounds of the complaint and the evidence provided. In more complex cases it may be necessary for the board to contact the complainant to request additional information. In all circumstances we will endeavour to respond to complainants with a decision within 28 days of the start of our investigations.

There are two possible outcomes:

• The complaint is upheld - on the basis that the grounds and evidence justify the complaint. The Board follow up action will vary according to the nature of the complaint.

• The complaint is not upheld – on the basis that the grounds and evidence do not justify the complaint. In either case, the decision will be final.

*If you are concerned about possible malpractice in the organisation, you should draw this to our attention – please contact the HR team regarding our Whistle-blowing policy for more details.*

# **Reviewing this Policy**

The HR team shall be responsible for reviewing this Policy from time to time / time basis to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.