

LONGHOUGHTON COMMUNITY AND SPORTS CENTRE TRUST

POLICY ON PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE (WHISTLE BLOWING)

1 Introduction

The Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre Trust (LCSCT) committee is committed to ensuring the highest possible care and ethical standards in delivering the services it provides. This policy sets out the Committee's commitment to recognise and take action in respect of malpractice, illegal acts or omissions by the Committee members, Centre users and/or Volunteers. It is the responsibility of all Committee members, Centre users and Volunteers to ensure that if they become aware that the actions of other Committee members, Centre users or Volunteers might compromise this objective, they will be expected to report the matter to a LCSCT Officer. Any such report will be treated seriously and sensitively and the person(s) submitting the report must be made to feel safe that the matter will be properly investigated within appropriate levels of privacy.

2 Scope of the Policy

The policy applies to all Committee members, Volunteers and Centre users.

Situations may arise when it is not appropriate or the "concerned" person feels unable to report incidents to the most "available" Trust Officer.

These may include:

- Malpractice or ill treatment of a child, young person and/or vulnerable adult.
- Suspected fraud.
- A criminal offence is, has or likely to be committed.
- Disregard for legislation e.g. health and safety legislation.
- Damage to the environment.

This list is not exhaustive.

3 Procedure for Reporting

1. All Committee members, Volunteers and Centre users who reasonably believe they have concerns as described on the complaints form, are encouraged, where possible, to discuss them with the person(s) involved.
2. In certain cases it is recognised that individuals may be reluctant to voice their concerns, particularly if the conduct or action of a colleague is involved. If this situation arises, the person is requested to discuss their concerns with a LCSCT Officer/Trustee.
3. LCSCT Officers/Trustees will do their utmost to ensure that a "concerned" person feels able to raise such concerns confidentially and without fear of subsequent action being taken against them.
4. In all cases, the "concerned" person has the right to discuss their concerns with the Chairperson of LCSCT.
5. All Committee members, Volunteers and Centre users are reminded of their obligations with regard to confidentiality and to only discuss concerns on "a need to know basis".

4 Committee Responsibilities

These are as follows:

- 1 Take all reported matters seriously
- 2 Consider the issues fully and sympathetically
- 3 Recognise that raising a concern can be a difficult experience for some
- 4 Seek advice where necessary. The LCSCT Chairperson is to be appraised of all such complaints at the earliest possible time.
- 5 Treat the matter confidentially
- 6 Reassure the “concerned” person about protection in the event of possible reprisals or victimisation.

The “concerned” person will receive an initial written response within five working days, including details of any further action to be taken, and a full written response within seven working days of the completion of the investigation.

If the “concerned” person is not satisfied with the outcome, the Trustees recognise the right of individuals to pursue the matter further. In such cases the full Trust Committee would be called together to consider the concerns. **Confidentiality is a priority in such sensitive situations.**

Concerns about the LCSCT Chairperson – if the complaint relates to the Chairperson the matter should be referred to the Secretary for consideration and action.

Reviewed and Approved 14 May 2024

Next review 2026