

Complaints and Comments Procedure

Introduction

Deafconnect welcomes any suggestions for improving its services - and you can help by using our Comments & Complaints Procedure.

Deafconnect provides services in line with need, in consultation with the Deaf, deafened and hard of hearing communities and other stakeholders. We actively involve the Deaf and hearing impaired community in the decision making process of Deafconnect.

Deafconnect also manages and maintains the Spencer Dallington Community Centre. This is also done in consultation with the local community and other stakeholders.

Your experience could help us improve our services so that you, and others, receive an even better service in the future.

If you have a comment or an idea you wish to share

If you know which staff member you wish to contact please get in touch immediately. You are also welcome to visit Deafconnect at our Drop-In times. All staff will have comments forms available for you to complete and will be happy to help you complete the form if necessary. Not all comments and ideas can be acted upon immediately at Deafconnect, but we still would like to hear from you as your comment or idea could be the start of a new procedure or service (subject to funding)

What is a complaint?

For Deafconnect's Procedure, a complaint is defined as:

"An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by Deafconnect or its staff affecting an individual user or group of users"

This definition is sufficiently broad to cover most complaints such as

- Dissatisfaction with the administration of policy and decisions;
- Delays in responding to service requests;
- Failure to achieve standards of service;
- Failure to fulfil responsibilities; or
- Employees' behaviour or attitude.

What happens if I wish to make a complaint?

If you wish to make a complaint any member of staff can help you and will have complaints forms available for you to complete and will be happy to help you

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complete the form if necessary. If you prefer, you can talk to the Chief Executive Officer.

If the complaint can be resolved easily by the member of staff or Chief Executive Officer, it should be, and the matter closed after formally recording details on a complaints form (either with or without the complainant's full details). It will then be logged as having been dealt with by Deafconnect.

Can I take the matter further?

If the complaint cannot be resolved immediately, it will be referred to the Chief Executive Officer. You will be notified that it is being dealt with by the Chief Executive Officer within three working days of receipt of the complaint, and be given details of the complaints procedure.

The Chief Executive Officer will then investigate the issue which could involve her contacting you again for more details. Wherever possible the outcome of the investigations or a reply to your complaint will be communicated to you within 10 working days of the Chief Executive Officer receiving the complaint.

Where a complaint concerns the conduct of an individual member of staff, Deafconnect's disciplinary procedure may need to be invoked. If this is the case, you will be informed that your complaint will have to await the outcome of Deafconnect's disciplinary procedure.

The complaint is about the Chief Executive Officer?

All complaints about the Chief Executive Officer should be addressed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. This can either be in writing or on DVD/ Video clips, posted to the Deafconnect office labelled as Private and Confidential for the attention of the Chair. Personal details of the members of the Board of Trustees cannot be shared. You will be notified that it is being dealt with by the Chair within three working days of receipt of the complaint, and be given details of the complaints procedure.

The Chair will then allocate members of the Board of Trustees to investigate the complaint. Wherever possible the outcome of the investigations or a reply to your complaint will be communicated to you within 14 working days of the Chair receiving the complaint.

Where a complaint concerns the conduct of the Chief Executive Officer, Deafconnect's disciplinary procedure may need to be invoked. If this is the case, you will be informed that your complaint will have to await the outcome of Deafconnect's disciplinary procedure.

Can I appeal?

If the Complaint cannot be resolved by the Chief Executive Officer or the Members of the Board of Trustees, you have a right of appeal to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. The Chair will decide whether it is appropriate to involve other members of

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the Board of Trustees or investigate him/herself. He/she will decide within 14 days whether to propose a different resolution of the complaint, or uphold the initial decision. The Chair of the Board of Trustees' decision will be final.

Recording and Monitoring of Complaints

All complaints will need to be recorded as follows:

- All complaints, whether written or oral, shall be recorded by number and type, the member of staff responsible and the action taken.
- All complaints will be reported to the Chief Executive Officer
- An annual report of complaints statistics will be made public

Action to consider if a complaint is justified

Where a complaint is found to be justified, consideration needs to be given to the question of a remedy. The remedy needs to be appropriate to the complaint. An apology will normally be appropriate and other action may also need to be considered. The Complainant will not be notified of actions taken against members of staff.

Approval

This section denotes review and approval dates of this policy document.

Action	Name	Date
Initial review	Joanna Steer	04.01.16
Reviewed by CEO	Joanna Steer	05.07.18 No change required
Approved by the Trustees		25.02.16