



## Chelmsford Rugby Football Club – Complaints Procedure

### **What is this procedure for?**

Chelmsford Rugby Football Club (CRFC) takes complaints on Club matters seriously. We encourage feedback and view complaints as an opportunity, where possible, to learn and improve the advice and support that we offer our members. If you are not satisfied with an outcome that cannot immediately be resolved, please follow the process below.

Our aims are to:

- Provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to understand.
- Be open about how we will deal with complaints.
- Ensure that all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
- Gather information for CRFC to improve.

For the purpose of these procedures, a complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about any aspect of CRFC.

How do I make a complaint?

### **Stage One**

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue that is being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, we expect that all reasonable efforts will have been made to resolve it swiftly if possible and appropriate (informal resolution). However, we appreciate that this is not always possible or appropriate and therefore have the following additional process in order to deal with all complaints raised.

### **Stage Two**

If it has not been possible to resolve the complaint in Stage One of this process, the complaint should be made to a Committee Member of CRFC. This should be in writing by email, contact details are set out at the bottom of this procedure. The complaint will be acknowledged and responded to within 14 working days and a copy of this complaint's procedure will be supplied.

If the complaint is most appropriately dealt with by the CRFC Committee, it will form a view and decide who the best person to respond to the complaint is.

The investigating individual at Stage Two is referred to in this procedure as the Stage Two Reviewer.

The Stage Two Reviewer will:

- Consider whether the complaint falls within the scope of this procedure.
- Consider whether any action taken with regards to the complaint would hinder the progress of any other investigation or other proceedings.
- initiate discussions, meetings or other correspondence with the complainant to fully understand their issue, seek clarity and be clear on what would constitute a resolution for them.
- Consider whether the substance of the complaint has already been dealt with in the response to another complaint or as part of Stage One of the process. If it has already been dealt with appropriately, then no further action will be taken.

It is hoped that an acceptable resolution can be found and the complaint can be concluded to the complainant's satisfaction at this stage. However if this is not the case, the complainant must inform the CRFC Secretary within 10 working days of the decision to initiate Stage Three, which will be progressed as follows:

### **Stage Three**

At Stage Three, the details of the complaint and actions taken at Stage One and Two will be passed to another Committee Member within CRFC. The investigating individual at Stage Three is referred to in this procedure as the Stage Three Reviewer.

The Stage Three Reviewer will:

- Within fourteen working days acknowledge receipt of the Stage Three complaint and that they are reviewing it;
- Make it clear when a response can be expected. The aim will be for complainants to receive a definitive reply within twenty working days. If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a further communication will be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.
- Review principal documentation and the actions taken so far.

The role of the Stage Three Reviewer is to assess whether the conclusion reached by the Stage Two Reviewer was one to which a reasonable person could have come, or whether he or she acted fairly to the complainant. The Stage Three Reviewer will not ordinarily review the matter from the beginning. The Stage Three Reviewer shall not ordinarily ask for further statements from the complainant or third parties.

If the Stage Three Reviewer concludes that the conclusion reached by the Stage Two Reviewer was one to which a reasonable person could not have come, or failed to act fairly to the complainant, he or she shall instruct another individual to conduct a Stage Two Review again. Alternatively, or in addition, the Stage Three Reviewer may propose that the complainant engages in mediation with the CRFC and/or any relevant third parties. If the Stage Three Reviewer is satisfied that the conclusion of the Stage Two Reviewer was reasonable, and that the complainant was treated fairly, then the Stage Three Reviewer shall inform the complainant that the matter is closed.

The reply will be within twenty working days where possible to the complainant and will inform them of the action(s) taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

### **What happens next?**

The decision of a Stage Three Reviewer on whether to close the complaint's file and/or recommend an alternative action is final.

Where any recommendations, any Stage Two Reviewer or Stage Three Reviewer result in disciplinary action for any person, the relevant disciplinary rules will be followed, including those relating to appeal against any resulting sanction.

What else you need to know

The person making the complaint must be the person directly affected by the issue (or any parent and/or person with parental responsibility for a child directly affected by the issue) and not a third party. We will not ordinarily respond to third party complaints.

This procedure does not apply to any process which is the subject of the RFU Regulations (such as RFU Regulation 19 (Discipline, or RFU Regulation 21 (Safeguarding)), for example if you have been given a disciplinary sanction or a safeguarding bar or other restrictions.

Final bars will ordinarily include a date after which the subject may ask for this to be reviewed. This may be, for example, the date at which the subject is no longer listed on the sex offenders' register. Should you wish to apply for any such review, then you should write to the address detailed below.

CRFC need not engage this procedure if, any Stage Two Reviewer or Stage Three Reviewer considers that any complaint is vexatious, frivolous or made in bad faith.

### **How do I make contact?**

You can contact Chelmsford Rugby Football Club

- By email: [secretary@chelmsfordrugby.com](mailto:secretary@chelmsfordrugby.com)
- By post:

The Secretary,

Chelmsford Rugby Football Club,

Smylie Way,

Timsons Lane,

Chelmsford, Essex CM2 6AG