

Guernsey Rugby Union Football Club: Complaints Policy and Procedures

The Guernsey Rugby Football Club (“**the Club**”) welcomes views of members and others involved in its activities, whether in the form of constructive comment, critical concern, or a complaint where we may have fallen short.

Complaints Policy

This Policy provides a guideline of how to raise a complaint and how we as a Club will endeavour to respond to it. The Club will give due consideration to any concerns raised under this Policy and will endeavour to determine all complaints in a timely and appropriate manner.

Values and principles

- 1. You have the right to complain:** we take all complaints seriously. You should not be harassed, bullied, victimised or put at a disadvantage because you make a complaint.
- 2. Equality:** you should receive a proper response to your complaint, regardless of any particular characteristic (i.e. your age, gender, disability, race, religion, nationality, social status, carer status, sexual orientation or association or political persuasion, whether protected by law in Guernsey or not).
- 3. Fairness:** we believe that complaints should be dealt with fairly and openly. Unless it would put others at risk, those affected by a complaint should have a chance to contribute and respond as part of or to any investigation.
- 4. Safety and welfare take priority:** we will always endeavour to give priority to concerns that affect safety and welfare.
- 5. Confidentiality:** we will treat complaints as confidentially as possible. Sometimes we have to discuss complaints with other organisations or persons outside of the Club. If we are worried about a risk to a person or to the public, we might need to pass on our concerns to the relevant authorities. If necessary, we will get advice from other organisations such as the Police, Social Services or the RFU.

How to make a complaint?

If you have a complaint, it may be best to start by **having a conversation** with someone at the Club. A good first contact would be one of the Executive Committee Members. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the Secretary have broad responsibilities for the running of the Club and oversee the work of the Committee, and other Directors have particular areas of interest. Consider who would be the best official to discuss your concern with in the first instance. They may be able to help to resolve your problem. As a general rule, we would always seek an **informal resolution** to any complaint in the first instance.

If you are not able to resolve the issue informally with the Club having made efforts to do so (or where it is not appropriate for you to have sought an informal resolution), and you decide to take things further you will be asked to put your **complaint in writing**. Please include your name

(and the name of your organisation if you are not a member of the Club), the date of the events leading to the complaint, and the details of what happened. This is to enable us to understand in full your concerns and the basis for those concerns to enable us to properly investigate them. While we will in exceptional consider anonymous complaints these are difficult to investigate properly and in the event we are able to investigate, we may be unable to respect all the values and principles listed above.

Who should you write to?

Formal complaints may be made in any of the following ways:

- by email to the Secretary (clubsecretary@guernseyraiders.com) or Chair (chair@guernseyraiders.com)
- by post to either the Secretary or Chair, Guernsey RFC, PO Box 181, Footes Lane, St Peter Port, Guernsey, GY1 2UL
- by hand to any member of the Committee

Child Protection - if you are worried about the safety or welfare of a child, DO NOT delay in raising concerns. Please bring the matter to our attention immediately (even if this cannot be done in writing in the first instance) – an assessment of immediate risk will take priority. Contact details for the Safeguarding Officer are on the Club's website (safeguarding@guernseyraiders.com), but please talk about your concerns to any Committee member if the Safeguarding Officer is not immediately available.

What will we do to investigate?

The specific process we adopt in response to a complaint will differ depending on the nature of the complaint received and the Club reserves an unfettered discretion to respond to and deal with a complaint in such a way that it considers appropriate in the circumstances. Generally though, we will nominate a senior member of the Committee (or such other person as the Club considers appropriate) as the Lead Official in considering a particular complaint and tell you who this is; this will not be someone already connected to your complaint. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Lead Official may be supported in their investigation by a sub-committee of appropriate individuals (generally other Committee members).

We will investigate your complaint fairly. We will generally wish to meet with you to discuss your complaint in person (or with your parent or guardian if the complaint concerns a minor). We will also endeavour to discuss the complaint with all of the relevant people, and to gather relevant information and consider that information. Sometimes we will reveal information from the investigation to other people to allow them to respond, but we will consider whether doing so would affect someone's safety or welfare and in far as it is reasonable to do so, ensure that confidentiality provisions are respected. Please tell us if you have any such concerns yourself and obviously, we would expect you to maintain similar levels of confidentiality in the process. We will try to give you a formal response and outcome to your complaint as soon as possible, and in any event, aim to do this within four weeks.

How will I know what is happening?

The Lead Official will explain the process, and answer questions or concerns that you have. They will endeavour to ensure that you are given regular updates and if there are delays will keep you informed.

When we get to a conclusion we will report back to you, including in respect of the outcome of your complaint and about how you could be affected by any action we will be taking.

What are the possible outcomes or results of my complaint?

Where we can resolve problems **informally** the outcome might include (but are in no way limited to), for example:

- A change in arrangements for particular activities
- An explanation
- An apology
- An agreement to communicate or to act differently in future
- A finding that the complaint was not substantiated

Where there has been a **formal** complaint the Committee members will consider the information gathered by the Lead Official (and any sub-committee appointed as applicable). The first task will be to decide if the complaint is upheld and on what grounds.

Where the complaint is upheld we will explain the outcome of the complaint, tell you what went wrong, and what we will do to put things right. This could include (but is in no way limited to, for example):

- Formal disciplinary action (against a member or against an employee or volunteer);
- A change in Club policy or procedures;
- Corrective action
- A decision to refer the case to another organisation such as the RFU, Police, or Social Services.

Where the complaint is not upheld, we will explain the outcome of the Complaint to you and the reasons that we have determined that your complaint is not upheld. We believe that something can be learned from every complaint and so even if we do not uphold a particular complaint, the Club will always endeavour to ensure that all parties take something positive from the experience.

Appeals

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you will have the right to appeal that outcome. Any appeal must be made in writing to the Chairman within 5 business days of your receiving the outcome of your complaint, detailing the basis of your appeal and your desired outcomes. The Chairman will generally hear and determine any appeal although the Club reserves the right to appoint a different individual should the circumstances require it. Similarly to any complaint, the Club will endeavour to determine any appeal in a timely manner and in any event within 4 weeks of receiving notification of your appeal.