

Sussex Community Rail Partnership Ltd.

Policy number: 24

Policy Title: External Complaints

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction by any Partnership service user or stakeholder, whether justified or not. Complaints should be seen as an opportunity for SCRP to improve the quality of its Partnership working, and to improve relations with its stakeholders and service users.

Serious complaints

Complaints of a serious nature e.g. fraud or sexual harassment will follow SCRP's Disciplinary or Grievance procedures. Any complaint thought to be of a serious nature should be passed immediately to a Director.

Other complaints

All other complaints should follow the procedure below.

Stage 1

When a verbal complaint is made, staff (to include Directors, employees and volunteers and referred to as "staff" below) should:

- Be courteous;
- Minimise the need for the complaint to be made, if possible;
- Record the complaint taking the following details:
 - The name and address of the complainant
 - Detail of the complaint
 - What redress the complainant wants
- Read back the complaint for verification.

Stage 2

- The complaint (written or verbal) should be passed to the Development Manager;
- If the complaint is about the Manager, then the complaint should be given to a Director;
- A letter should be sent acknowledging the complaint within 5 days, explaining SCRP's complaint procedure and timescales;
- The complaint should be investigated as quickly as possible and recommendations made.

Stage 3

- The Director should be given the complaint and the recommendations of the investigation.
- The Director will either support the recommendations or instigate a further investigation.

Stage 4

- The complainant will be contacted in writing with the response to the complaint.

Stage 5

- The complainant may appeal against the Director's decision to the Chairman, who may delegate the appeal to be dealt with by a different Director. However the Chairman will only accept this appeal if the complainant gives good reason why the earlier decision was unacceptable.

Investigating complaints

- Investigations should be appropriately thorough and fair;
- Investigators should seek to establish whether or not the complaint is fully justified, partially justified, or not justified, with reasons;

- Investigators should identify whether the complainant's redress is suitable and within SCRP's capacity to redress;
- The Development Manager should also identify appropriate remedies for improvement;
- The Board may instigate a further investigation.

Status	Draft agreed by	Considered by Board	Final version approved	Review
Date	2014			Periodically
Date Reviewed	Reviewed By		Comments	