

## **Complaints, Grievance and Whistleblowing Policy**

### **Purpose**

WCN believes that all stakeholders are part of our community (service users and their families, volunteers, network partners) and have the right to be treated fairly, safely and with respect. If this is not the case they should feel they can raise a concern which will be followed up in a timely fashion, with all parties being listened to, and reported back to.

### **Complaints from Service Users**

In the first instance Service Users and or their families should contact the Helpline 01749 467079 and ask for a member of the Core Group to contact them. The Helpline volunteer should complete the usual form and reassure the Service User that someone will get back to them as soon as possible. The WAC on duty should contact a member of the Core Group on the same day. NB The Service User should not be asked about the complaint due to confidentiality.

### **Grievance from Volunteers**

If a volunteer has a complaint or a concern they should contact the Helpline 01749 467079 and ask for a member of the Core Group to contact them and the process above will be followed.

If a volunteer has a complaint about bullying, harrassment or discrimination this should be treated as a grievance.

### **Whistleblowing**

If you have any suspicions that any of the following are taking place:

- a criminal offense, for example fraud
- someone's health and safety is in danger
- risk or actual damage to the environment
- a miscarriage of justice
- law are being broken, for example does not have the right insurance

- you believe someone is covering up wrongdoing

Please contact the Helpline 01749 467079 and ask to be contacted by one of the Directors.

## **Procedure**

**Stage 1:** WCN will take every complaint or grievance seriously and in the first instance will attempt to achieve an informal resolution if that is acceptable to both sides.

**Stage 2:** Escalation if necessary

**Stage 3:** Reporting to statutory bodies – when WCN has no option but to take things further e.g in cases of Safeguarding

Date of adoption March 2022

Reviewed annually

## **Appendix 1.**

Procedures for Core Group members/Directors dealing with complaints

### **Stage 1:**

1. Core Group member contacts the volunteer/service user and takes informal details. Nb if they ascertain that the complaint is about themselves they should refer it to another member. Check if complainant is happy to be named ( not essential) and if anyone else involved.
2. Contact the person about whom the complaint has been made for Informal discussion
3. Ideally manage an informal outcome.

**Stage 2:** Escalation if necessary.

1. Complaint required in writing
2. Contact made with witnesses
3. Action taken. ( Removal from Network options)

**Stage 3:** Reporting to statutory bodies eg Police – when WCN has no option but to take things further e.g in cases of Illegality.

Nb if there is any suspicion of safeguarding being an issue please take advice immediately from safeguarding lead or contact Somerset Adult Social Care on 0300 123 2224

[adults@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:adults@somerset.gov.uk)

Police: 101 or in an emergency 999