



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Written by Louise Randall

Approved Date 08/05/2017

Review Date: 08/07/2017

Trustee Signature _____

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

PURPOSE

All Board Members, employees and volunteers (“team member”) are to familiarise themselves with the Code of Governance, since it applies to their activities and responsibilities whilst on Aspire Ryde business, or representing the organisation

Aspire Ryde (“the organisation”) aims to provide a service that is acceptable to all our users. If we fail to do this we want to know about it. This will enable us to not only deal with the problem, but also avoid it happening again.

This Complaints Procedure sets out how to take up matters you feel are unsatisfactory about our service. If you wish to make a complaint then ask at reception for a complaints form, if you would rather speak to someone then contact the duty officer.

Aspire Ryde staff and volunteers will give those wishing to complain every assistance in bringing their complaint, including help with translation, interpretation, signing and any other language needs that may exist. In considering the complaint Aspire volunteers and staff will throughout be sensitive to the physical and cultural circumstances of the complaint.

Complainants will be advised and encouraged to use advocacy organisations which may be able to help them.

Problem Solving

A complaint is an “expression of dissatisfaction” with something Aspire, Ryde has done or failed to do in an acceptable way.

- 1.1 Where such an expression is made to any member of staff or volunteers of the Aspire, Ryde, it is the duty of that person to try and sort out the problem as quickly as possible or, if they are unable to do this themselves, to make sure the complaint is put in touch with someone who can. The complainant will be advised of who is dealing with the complaint. This will be done within 5 working days of the complaint being received.

Stage One

- 1.2 The Volunteer Co-Ordinator will contact the complainant within 5 working days of receipt to establish the cause of dissatisfaction and take appropriate actions to deal with it. If it is not possible, for whatever reason, to reach a solution with the complainant, an explanation should be given as to why this is so and the complainant advised of their right to a formal investigation of their case (Stage 2).
- 1.3 The Volunteer Co-Ordinator will act in as direct and informal manner as possible and will seek to cause a minimum of inconvenience to the complainant. The Volunteer Co-Ordinator will keep a written record of the complaint and action taken.

- 1.4 It is expected that Investigations will be completed within **10 working days** of receipt and, where this is not possible the complainant will be kept informed of any reason for delays and the action that is being taken.
- 1.5 At the conclusion of his/her work the Volunteer Co-Ordinator will write to the complainant clarifying the outcomes of the investigations and clearly identifying what action should be taken.
- 1.6 At any stage of the Procedure the complainant may by written notice request the appointment of an independent person to review the work of the Volunteer Co-Ordinator.

Stage Two – Formal Investigation

- 2.1 Should the complainant wish, they have the right to have their complaint formally considered without first passing through the informal stage. Additionally, it will be open to the complainant to have the matter investigated formally by the Project Leader in any case where the complainant is dissatisfied as to the outcome of the Stage One Process.
- 2.2 Complaints at this stage should be made in writing, Those unable to put their complaints in writing will receive assistance from Aspire, Ryde staff or volunteers to do this. In such circumstances staff will allow the complainant the opportunity to comment on what has been recorded and obtain their formal agreement that what is written is an accurate statement of what they wish to say.
- 2.3 The complaint will be forwarded immediately to the Project Leader/CEO who will acknowledge receipt as soon as possible.
- 2.4 The investigation will be undertaken with reference to the following time scales.
- 2.5 If the complaint has previously been considered at Stage One the Project Leader/CEO will refer the complaint back to the Volunteer Co-Ordinator to consider whether a further attempt to conciliate the complainant should be made before Stage Two Investigations takes place. If within **10 working days** conciliation actions are not seen as feasible or are unsuccessful, a Stage Two Investigation will be initiated. .
- 2.6 Cases covered by the Children Act 1989 must be investigated and a response made to the complainant within 28 days of being received.

Where an Investigation is likely to exceed the expected time scale, the Project Leader/CEO will keep the complainant advised of the reasons for this and revised targets for completion of the work.

- 2.7 Where an Independent Person has been appointed, this person will be given access to all relevant materials and will be included in all interviews conducted in the course of the investigation.
- 2.8 Where an Independent Person has been involved in the investigation, this person has the right to produce their own separate report. If the Independent Person chooses not to produce such a report, then their comments and a

signature will be included in the Project Leader/CEO's report. The Project Leader/CEO will then write to the complainant advising of the outcome of the investigation, any action that is to be taken and the time scales for this. The complainant will also be advised that, if they are dissatisfied with the action of Aspire Ryde they have the right to have their case considered by the Review Panel (made up by at least 2 board members) and that if they wish to follow this course they have **28 days** in which to make their request.

- 2.9 The investigation report, its findings and recommendations will be made available to the complainant and Project Leader/CEO as appropriate, by the Managers concerned. Where there are reasons for not disclosing the full content of the Report, its findings or recommendations, then a record of the reasons for this decision will be made and kept in the complaints file.

Stage Three – Review Stage

- 3.1 A complainant may request in writing for the complaint to be considered by The Board of Trustees (made up of at least 2 board members) in the circumstances discussed in paragraph 2.7 above. Receipt of a request will be acknowledged within **2 working days**.
- 3.2 The Review Stage will only consider issues that have been previously addressed during the Formal Stage 2 Investigation. The complainant will be expected to put their reasons for seeking a Review in writing.
- 3.3 The Project Leader/CEO, Volunteer Co-Ordinator and the Board of Trustees, the complainant and others needing to attend, will convene the Panel **within 28 days** of the request being received.
- 3.4 Complainants will be advised of the name of all Board Members.
- 3.5 Complainants will be advised of their right to submit written statements **at least 7 days** in advance of the meeting and oral statements at the meeting. Aspire, Ryde will seek to ensure the specific language needs of the complainant are catered for at the meeting. Complainants will also be advised that they have the right to be accompanied by another person who may act as an Advocate on their behalf at the meeting.
- 3.6 The Panel will decide on its recommendations after the Review Panel meeting and make these known in writing within 7 days to:
- a) The Complainant
 - b) Where the requirement exists under the terms of The Children's Act, others with interest.
- 3.7 Within **28 days** of the date of the Review, the Board of Trustees will respond to the complainant and interested parties, outlining Aspire, Ryde's position and any action that is to be taken. Such action as agreed upon will be taken as quickly as possible.



Complaints Form

<u>Date</u>	
<u>Name</u>	
<u>Complaint</u>	
<u>Signature of Claimant</u>	
<u>Complaint Recorded By</u>	
<u>Action Taken</u>	