

## Body Politic Whistleblowing Policy

Body Politic is committed to maintaining a culture where it is safe and acceptable for all employees and users to raise concerns about poor or unacceptable service, civil offences (including negligence, breach of contract) or misconduct.

This policy is designed to assist those who have come to a decision to express a concern after a great deal of thought.

Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within the organisation. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues, Body Politic or other agencies. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances, it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of malpractice.

Body Politic is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment, we expect employees, and others that we deal with, who have serious concerns about any aspect of the service to come forward and voice those concerns. It is recognised that most cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis.

The policy document makes it clear that you can do so without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. This Whistle blowing policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns within our service rather than overlooking a problem or “blowing the whistle” outside.

There are existing procedures in place to enable you to lodge a grievance etc relating to your own employment. The Whistle blowing policy is intended to cover major concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures.

These include:

- Safeguarding 
- Conduct which is an offence or a breach of Law 
- Disclosures related to miscarriages of justice 
- Health and safety risks, including risks to the public, children as well as other employees 
- Damage to the environment 
- The unauthorised use of charity funds 
- Possible fraud and corruption 

- Other unethical conduct [SEP]

The law only requires that there be genuine doubt, therefore the individual who decides to “whistle blow” is not expected to produce unquestionable evidence to support the concern. Producing the evidence is the responsibility of the club. [SEP]

**Policy Principles:** [SEP]The person raising the concern (whistle blowing) will not be allowed to be victimised for doing so [SEP]

- The victimisation of whistle blowers is a serious matter and disciplinary action [SEP]will be taken should this happen [SEP]
- The organisation will not attempt to conceal evidence of poor or unacceptable [SEP]practice and disciplinary action will be taken if any evidence of such is destroyed [SEP]
- Confidentiality policy/clauses do not forbid or penalise whistle blowing [SEP]

A member of staff or volunteer may raise the concern with the manager or a trustee (in the case of the concern being about the manager) or if it is regarding a safeguarding issue and it is inappropriate to report to the manager then they must call the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team on 0345 0507666 [SEP]

#### How to raise a concern [SEP]

As a first step, you should normally raise concerns with a member of the management team. This depends, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is suspected of the malpractice. For example, if you believe that a member of the management team is involved you should approach the Chair of Directors. [SEP]

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. Staff wishing to make a written report are invited to use the following format;

- The background and history of the concern (giving relevant dates) [SEP]
- The reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation. [SEP]

The earlier you express the concern, the easier it is to take action. Although you are not expected to prove beyond doubt the truth of an allegation, you will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are reasonable grounds for your concern. [SEP]

Within **ten working days** of a concern being raised, the responsible person will write to you: [L SEP]

- Acknowledging that the concern has been received; [L SEP]
- Indicating how it is proposed to deal with the matter; [L SEP]
- Giving an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response; [L SEP]
- Telling you whether any initial enquiries have been made; [L SEP]
- Supplying you with information on staff support mechanisms (where [L SEP] appropriate) and [L SEP] telling you whether further investigations will take place and if not, why not. [L SEP]

The amount of contact between those considering the issues and you will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved, and the clarity of the information provided.

If necessary, further information may be sought from you. [L SEP] Whistle blowing should not be used in place of grievance procedures or be used to raise unfounded or malicious allegations against colleagues or users.

Reviewed by:	Emma-Jane Greig
Signed:	
Date of next review:	1st September 2021