

POWYS CHALLENGE

Registered Charity No: 1091494 Company No: 4350654

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Powys Challenge aims to give the best possible service to its users and, where it fails to achieve this, to resolve any shortcomings as soon as possible. Complaints and representations about the service provided by the organisation enable Powys Challenge to improve the quality of its services and ensure that the needs of its users can be better met.

Complaints will be dealt with as quickly as practicable and, wherever possible, be resolved informally at the time of the initial complaint. Complaints can be made verbally as well as in writing and all complaints, however transmitted, will be recorded in a register kept at the Powys Challenge Trafford House Office. All staff will receive training in how to handle complaints effectively and receive written guidance.

There are three stages to Powys Challenge's complaints procedure: the aim of the process is to resolve the complaint as quickly as possible and to ensure that the individuals involved, and the organisation as a whole, benefit from the experience. During all stages of the process, the complainant and any other person involved in assisting the investigation shall be entitled to have a supporter or advocate in attendance.

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

Where a problem arises it will usually be possible to immediately resolve the issue satisfactorily. The member of staff hearing the complaint will look into the complaint and give the complainant a verbal or written response within seven working days, (many complaints will be dealt with at the time the complaint is first made). Complainants will be supplied with Powys Challenge's leaflet 'How to Complain'

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response from the member of staff s/he can ask that the matter be referred to Powys Challenge's Chief Officer for investigation. If they wish, complainants can request that the matter is investigated by the Chief Officer at the initial stage.

Stage 2: Investigation by Chief Officer

The Chief Officer will establish the facts and find out what can be done to resolve the complaint. After interviewing all the relevant individuals, including the complainant, the Chief Officer will write a report detailing the complaint, the method of investigation, the information gathered and giving his/her findings plus any recommendations.

The report will be given to the Chair of Powys Challenge who will consult colleagues before writing to the complainant, setting out the findings of the investigation, any recommendations and Powys Challenge's response to it. The response will be made within 14 working days of the matter first being referred to the Chief Officer, wherever possible.

If for any reason it is considered that the Chief Officer was not the appropriate person to investigate the complaint, (possibly because of some prior involvement) the Chair shall appoint another suitably qualified person to carry out the investigation.

Stage 3: Appeal Panel

If the complaint has not been resolved to the complainant's satisfaction s/he is entitled to ask that the matter be reviewed by a panel of two Trustees, (who have not been involved with the complaint hitherto) and an appropriately experienced Independent Person, appointed by the Chair who shall act as Chair of the panel. The panel will sit to review the evidence contained in the investigation report, ensure that correct procedures were followed and seek solutions. The complainant will be entitled to make representations to the panel. The Chief Officer (or the appointed Investigating Officer, in cases where the Chief Officer did not conduct the investigation) will be in attendance. The determination of the panel is final and they will give their decision in writing to the complainant, within three days of the hearing. The panel will adjudicate on the complaint within 21 working days of Powys Challenge receiving the request for an appeal.