

Selsey Community Forum

Whistleblowing Policy



Policy Statement

Selsey Community Forum is committed to conducting our business with honesty and integrity and we expect all staff, volunteers and Trustees to maintain high standards. Selsey Community Forum encourages staff and volunteers to be alert to any wrong-doing and to report any matter that they believe to be seriously wrong or even illegal. If they choose to do so internally, they should use the Grievances Formal Notification procedure. Provided the allegation is made in good faith and with reasonable suspicion that the alleged malpractice has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur, they will not normally be penalised in any way as a result of having reported the matter.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment.

What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to our activities. This can include bribery, fraud or other criminal activity, miscarriages of justice, health and safety risks, damage to the environment and any breach of legal or professional obligations.

How to raise a concern

Any concerns should be raised with the appropriate manager or project lead. However, where you prefer not to raise it with your manager for any reason, you should contact the Chair of the Trustees. A meeting will be arranged as soon as possible to discuss your concern. You may bring a colleague or union representative to any meetings under this policy. Your companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

Confidentiality

It is hoped that staff will feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. Completely anonymous disclosures are difficult to investigate. If you want to raise your concern confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret and only reveal it where necessary to those involved in investigating your concern.

External disclosures

The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases it should not be necessary to alert anyone externally.

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate to report concerns to an external body such as a regulator. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external. **Protect** is a Charity which operates a confidential helpline, offering free, confidential and expert advice to whistleblowers, helping you to decide how best to raise your concern, advising you on what protection you are entitled to and what you can do if things go wrong; you can contact them on 0203 117 2520 or <https://protect-advice.org.uk/contact-protect-advice-line/>

Protection and support for whistleblowers

We encourage openness and will support whistleblowers who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken. Whistleblowers must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a genuine concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform the Chair of Trustees (or any Trustee) immediately. If the matter is not remedied you should raise it formally using the Grievance Procedure.

Staff, volunteers and Trustees must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way. If you are involved in such conduct, you may be subject to disciplinary action. In some cases the whistleblower could have a right to sue you personally for compensation in an employment tribunal.

However, if we conclude that a whistleblower has made false allegations maliciously or with a view to personal gain, the whistleblower may be subject to disciplinary action.

Other Matters

A written record is to be retained detailing the outcome of all complaints and all Formal Notifications.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Selsey Community Forum's Staff Handbook and is applicable to all the activities in which Selsey Community Forum is or becomes involved; it is to be reviewed and updated as necessary at least annually.

Reviewed and Approved by Trustees: November 2025

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Mike Nicholls, Chair, Selsey Community Forum