



# Swindon Town FC

## Complaints Policy & Procedures

Version I.D	Reviewed by	Update details	Issue Date	Review Date	Endorsed by
1.1	Matt Waters	Post EFL Visit edits	2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2018	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2019	Steve Anderson
1.2	Matt Waters	End of Season review and staff changes	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2019	1 <sup>st</sup> June 2020	Steve Anderson



## Complaints Policy

Swindon Town Football Club has a complaints process in place for staff and volunteers who have been subject to an abuse or poor practice investigation. Any staff member or volunteer who wishes to lodge a formal complaint is required to do so in writing to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. The designated safeguarding officer will endeavour to allay any concerns regarding the case management process by dealing with the issue in an efficient, open and transparent manner. Resolutions will be recorded in writing with a copy forwarded to the complainant.

Swindon Town Football Club is committed to the continuous improvement of the services it provides. We recognise that, occasionally, mistakes will be made or the service offered will not meet an individual's requirements or expectations. For these reasons it is our policy that all complaints should be:

- Treated seriously and in an open manner
- Acknowledged immediately, preferably in writing
- Investigated
- Resolved, wherever that is reasonably practicable, within no longer than 13 working weeks
- Used as feedback to improve the service which the STFC offers

### **Scope**

The policy applies to all members of the Club community but does not replace procedures for staff grievances and disciplinary action: those procedures should be used where appropriate.

### **Legislation**

The Human Rights Act 1998 applies to the operation of this policy.

### **Responsibilities:**

**All Club Staff** have a responsibility for receiving complaints, treating them seriously and dealing with them promptly and courteously in accordance with the procedure set out below.

**Senior Managers** have a responsibility for resolving a complaint, and leading or contributing to an investigation into a complaint when this is considered appropriate.

**The Chief Executive** is responsible for resolving complaints which have not been resolved during the previous two stages. The decision made by the Chief Executive is final.

**The Governing Board** is responsible for ensuring that the complaints policy and procedure are operating effectively and may become directly involved if a complaint is directed against the Chief Executive or members of the governing body.



## Actions to Implement and Develop Policy

### Stage One

The Club expects complaints to be made informally to a member of staff in the first instance. Where this is not possible or does not result in satisfactory resolution, the complaint should be submitted in writing to Swindon Town Football Club

The Club usually expects complaints to be made by the person concerned. However it will consider complaints made by a parent or advocate.

Anonymous complaints won't be considered without full details.

All comments/complaints will be forwarded to Swindon Town Football Club who will acknowledge receipt within one working week. Swindon Town Football Club will then forward to the relevant Club employee.

### Stage two

The relevant Club employee will respond in writing within one working week, explaining what has happened as a result of the complaint. Where this involves a member of staff, specific detail of action taken will not be made available. This is to ensure that our employees are afforded appropriate dignity at work.

If the complaint requires further investigation that cannot be carried out within the week, the employee shall keep the complainant informed and specify a date when a response can be given.

### Stage Three

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the relevant employees response then the complaint will be forwarded to a member of the Club Senior Management to resolve.

The senior manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within two working weeks and a final reply will be completed within 8 working weeks to allow time for any formal investigations to take place.



### **Stage four (final internal College stage)**

If the complainant is still dissatisfied with the response, then the matter will be referred to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will respond within three weeks.

If the complainant is still not satisfied then they should contact ombudsman or the EFL.

The total comments/complaints procedure should be finalised in no more than 13 working weeks unless there are exceptional circumstances in which case the complainant will be kept informed of progress.

### **Complaints against the Chief Executive or Members of the Board**

Complaints against the Chief Executive should be addressed to the Chair of the Governors c/o the Clerk to the Corporation. Complaints against the Governing Body should also be addressed to the Clerk to the Corporation.

### **Monitoring & Evaluation**

The Club will maintain a confidential record of complaints dealt with to feed into quality improvement processes. The Club will maintain a record of all complaints, appeals and outcomes and produce an annual report for analysis by the Board.



## Safeguarding/Welfare Concerns

A concern would be classified as safeguarding when it relates to either:

- A child at risk of abuse or significant harm
- A concern in relation to a member of Club staff abusing or causing harm either physically or mentally

Safeguarding/Welfare concerns and the required actions are categorised in the table below

<b>High priority- requires Club Safeguarding policy to be followed and referral to statutory agencies</b>	<b>Medium priority- may need action/referral to statutory authorities after investigation by Club</b>	<b>Low priority- welfare concern that should be addressed through discussion with safeguarding lead and Club complaints policy</b>
Involvement of statutory services is required	Abuse or harm is one possible but unlikely explanation for behaviour, signs and symptoms	There is no discernible like to abuse or harm
A disclosure of actual potential harm or abuse		
Abuse or harm is a credible explanation for behaviour, signs or indicators, or may have occurred		
Despite evidence to the contrary, a strong suspicion of abuse of harm remains		