



Complaints and Compliments Policy

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1. Introduction

Sandwell Consortium is committed to providing the best possible service for its members, partners and the residents we collectively serve.

2. Compliments

Sandwell Consortium values feedback regarding its staff, volunteers, and services, whether positive or negative. All compliments will be acknowledged passed to staff or volunteers involved and their line manager/supervisor. A copy of the compliment will be kept on the employee's HR file or volunteer record.

3. Complaints

In order to constantly develop and improve our services, it is important that we receive feedback - including comments, suggestions, and complaints. The complaints procedure is intended to provide a balanced framework and process for making and responding to complaints. It aims to resolve any issues within this framework to the satisfaction of all parties, and without the need for escalation.

4. Principles

1. People making complaints have the right to be treated equally and not suffer discrimination.
2. People making a complaint are entitled to seek support from a colleague, carer, friend or family member, to assist in their complaint or advocate on their behalf at any meetings that may take place within this Complaints process.
3. Complaints are to be treated with an open mind and will be investigated without prejudice.
4. People making complaints have the right to confidentiality. If requested, names will not be disclosed in investigating complaints. Anonymous complaints will not be investigated.
5. Abusive and offensive comments are not defined as complaints and will not be accepted as complaints.

5. Notes

Once we have received your complaint, we will do our best to respond to it quickly and thoroughly and where appropriate to make changes in our practice. Complaints are to be treated seriously and dealt with in good time. This policy is not used for grievances by staff – please refer to the grievance procedure for this. This policy is for external complaints. Complaints from volunteers should in the first instance use the Problem Solving procedure.

6. Process

The complaint should be made in writing to one of the Sandwell Consortium management team (Chief Executive, Programmes Manager or Finance Manager) depending on the nature of the complaint. If you do not feel you can approach the management team or your complaint is regarding one of the Managers, you can make your complaint to the Chief Executive or Chair of the Board.

The written submission should provide information about the nature of the complaint, and the positive outcome you would wish to be achieved by bringing the complaint. This does not create an obligation on Sandwell Consortium to resolve the outcome in this way.

Your complaint will be acknowledged in writing within five working days.

The complaint will normally be dealt with by the Chief Executive or appointed deputy, who will consult with the Chair of the Board and investigate the circumstances leading to the complaint.

If your complaint is regarding the Chair of the Board, this may be dealt with by the Vice Chair.

Clients receiving immigration advice have the right to complain to the Immigration Advice Authority (IAA) at any time.

The Chief Executive or appointed deputy will write to you to inform you of the result of investigation within 21 working days. If you are dissatisfied with the results, you will have the right to put your case directly to the Board in writing in the first instance. If a complaint is made against a member of Sandwell Consortium staff or Board, they will have the right to present their case to their line manager or to the Chair of the Board.

If a complaint results in disciplinary action being taken against a member of Sandwell Consortium staff, this will follow the disciplinary procedure.

7. Record keeping

Sandwell Consortium will keep a Complaints/Compliments file where all records of complaints and compliments will be kept for two years. The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring the Complaints/Compliments file is kept up to date and that information is stored and disposed of in line with UK GDPR requirements.

8. Policy review

Sandwell Consortium will review this policy every three years or sooner as required.