



## Two Ridings Community Foundation COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE POLICY

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Target Audience	Employees, Trustees, Donors, Volunteers, Grantees

### 1. Introduction

This Policy relates to any aspect of the operation of Two Ridings Community Foundation. It can be used by any person or body who feels dissatisfied with the way they have been treated, or their case has been dealt with. This applies whether the concerns or complaint is about any actions by a member of staff of the Foundation, by a Trustee, a Committee or Panel of the Foundation, or a volunteer who is representing or acting on behalf of the Foundation in some other capacity. It applies whether the concerns relate to an application for grant assistance from the Foundations' own funds, or any of the other Funds which are administered by the Foundation.

### 2. Aims of the Complaints Policy

The Foundation views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint.

Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- **To make sure everyone at the Foundation knows what to do if a complaint is received**
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- To make sure all complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do

### **3. Definition of complaints**

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not about any aspect of Two Ridings Community Foundation. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

This policy does not cover complaints from staff, who should use Two Riding's Discipline & Grievance Policy.

### **4. General advice about complaining**

Two Ridings Community Foundation is committed to providing a high standard of customer service. The Foundation – staff and trustees - welcomes constructive comments and recommendations about our services and will respond openly to complaints about the organisation.

If you are dissatisfied with the service you have received from the Foundation we hope that in the first instance you would feel it appropriate to speak about the problem with the member of staff of the Foundation who is involved with the particular matter. It is hoped that this would lead to a resolution of the issues in the most informal way. If that is not successful, however, or if you are not prepared to follow that course of action for whatever reason, then the following information is provided to guide you on how you can take the matter forward in other more formal ways.

However, we hope that most complaints can be settled quickly and as close to the source of the problem as possible. It is for that reason that we ask that all initial complaints are made within 2 weeks of any problem arising.

### **5. Receiving complaints**

Complaints may arrive through channels publicised for that purpose or through any other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have.

Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded. The person who receives a phone or in person complaint should:

- Write down the facts of the complaint
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to Two Ridings (for example: grant applicant)
- Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

## **6. Resolving complaints**

### **Stage One**

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate.

Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to the Chief Executive within one week.

On receiving the complaint it is recorded in the complaints log. If it has not already been resolved, the Chief Executive delegates an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within a week. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached.

Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

### **Stage Two**

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Board level. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the chair of Two Ridings Community Foundation.

The request for Board level review should be acknowledged within a week of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.

The Chair of Two Ridings may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond.

The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.

Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution

### **External Stage**

The complainant can complain to the Charity Commission at any stage.

Information about the kind of complaints the Commission can involve itself in can be found on their website at: [www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx)

## **7. Variation of the Complaints Procedure**

The Two Ridings Board may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Chair should not also have the Chair as the person leading a Stage Two review.

## **8. Monitoring and Learning from Complaints**

Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.

## **9. Contact information**

If you wish to pursue your complaint formally, it may help to know the following details of the key people at the Foundation.

**Chair:** James Naylor

**Chief Executive:** Jan Garrill

**Telephone:** 01904 929 500

**Website address:** [www.tworidingscf.org.uk](http://www.tworidingscf.org.uk)

**Email:** [info@trcf.org.uk](mailto:info@trcf.org.uk)

