



FC UNITED: COMPLAINTS POLICY

Overview

1. In all instances, FC United aim to deal with all complaints and resolve problems at the earliest opportunity and avoid the need for a formal process. Often the right intervention, in the right manner, at the right time can resolve things quickly and to everyone's satisfaction. FC United encourages supporters to raise problems as and when they encounter them, on a face to face basis, and allow club officials to resolve matters there and then if at all possible. However it is recognised that this may not be possible in all cases and the purpose of this policy is to set out a framework by which complaints can be resolved in a fair and transparent manner.

Aims

2. The aims of the Complaints Procedure are to:
 - provide a speedy, confidential and effective system for dealing with complaints against the club and/or its representatives;
 - acknowledge and learn from our mistakes in order to improve the way we do things.

Definition of a Complaint

3. A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction regarding any matter for which the Club is responsible and has the power to resolve.

Who can make a complaint?

4. The following list is not exhaustive:
 - anyone who believes that they have receive an unsatisfactory level of service from the club;
 - anyone who believes that their health, safety or wellbeing has been put at risk due to events which have occurred either on the club's premises or at an official club event outside the club's premises;
 - anyone who has witnessed an action on club property or at a club event which they feel warrants action by the club;
 - any volunteer or contractor employed on a contract for service for the club who is dissatisfied with any aspect of their work or terms and conditions;
 - any member of the club who believes that action taken or not taken by the club and/or its representatives represents a breach of the club's founding principles.
5. A club employee or worker who has a complaint regarding any matter relating to their work for the club or their terms and conditions should pursue their complaint through the club's Grievance Policy.

6. A club employee or worker who holds a reasonable belief that illegal or dishonest practices may have taken place at the club should pursue their complaint through the club's Protected Disclosures (Whistleblowing) Policy.
7. The club will direct anyone who believes that they have been subject to criminal or illegal behaviour, either on the club's premises or at an official club event outside the club's premises, to report the matter to the police or the appropriate authorities. The club would also expect such incidents to be reported immediately to a club steward, security person or club official.
8. The club will not involve itself in personal disputes or arbitrating in matters which it considers fall outside its jurisdiction.

How to make a complaint

9. All complaints should be referred in the first instance to Viv Ware, Club & Company Secretary, either:
 - by e-mail to vivware@fc-utd.co.uk or, alternatively, to office@fc-utd.co.uk;
 - by post to FC United of Manchester, Broadhurst Park, 310 Lightbowne Road, Manchester M40 0FJ;
 - by telephone on 0161-769-2005.
10. In making a complaint, the complainant must specify not only the matter that they are dissatisfied about but also the resolution they are seeking in order to put the matter right. All complaints will be treated in strictest confidence.

Procedure following receipt of complaint

11. In all instances, the Club & Company Secretary will acknowledge receipt of all complaints within 2 working days of receipt. The Club & Company Secretary will first of all consider whether or not the report falls to be dealt with as a complaint under these procedures. Where necessary, further information to clarify the matter will be sought from the complainant. If it is decided that the matter raised cannot be dealt with as a complaint, the Club & Company Secretary will notify the person making the report of the reasons for this and, where appropriate, redirect their enquiry.
12. In some circumstances, whether the matter that forms the basis of the complaint is subject to a legal process (for example, police investigations), it may be necessary to defer any action by the club on the complaint until such time as the legal process is resolved. However each complaint will be viewed in the light of the individual circumstances of the case.
13. Having established that the complaint is one which falls to be considered under these procedures, the Club & Company Secretary will direct how the matter should be dealt with. Where it is apparent that there is sufficient information to hand to deal with the matter, the Club & Company Secretary will direct the complaint to the appropriate club employee, official or board member to consider the complaint and to respond.
14. Where the matter is more involved, the Club & Company Secretary will arrange for an investigation, to establish the facts of the matter, and will arrange for either a manager within the club or, where appropriate, a board member to conduct that investigation. In doing so, the Club & Company Secretary will ensure that no conflict of interest exists, whether perceived or actual, and that the person investigating the complaint is both able and also seen to be able to act impartially.
15. In conducting such an investigation, the manager should, where appropriate:

- obtain a further written statement from the complainant;
- obtain written statements from other parties who may have relevant information;
- obtain any documentary evidence required.

Outcome of Investigation

16. Once the investigation has been completed, the investigating manager should prepare a written report detailing the information obtained and the findings. The investigating manager will then prepare and issue a written response to the complainant, summarising the outcome of the investigation and the club's response to the complaint. Where it is identified that some remedial action or redress is required, it will be the responsibility of the investigating manager to ensure that this is put into place.
17. Wherever possible, the aim should be to provide a final written response to the complaint within one calendar month of the initial receipt of the complaint. The Club & Company Secretary will maintain oversight of all complaints and progress chase matters to ensure that no unnecessary delay occurs.

Further complaint

18. Where the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they may request that the matter is reconsidered by the full board. The complainant should submit their request in writing, outlining the reasons for their request, within 2 weeks of receiving the notification of the outcome of their complaint. via the Club & Company Secretary who will arrange for the matter to be considered by the full board within one calendar month of receiving such a request. Any board member(s) who was party in any way to the original complaint, either as the subject(s) of the complaint or as the investigating manager, shall recuse themselves from any further involvement in the complaint.
19. In considering whether or not to review the original decision, the board will have regard to the following in particular:
 - any new/additional evidence provided by the complainant;
 - whether a sufficient investigation of the complaint has taken place;
 - whether the outcome of the complaint is "reasonable", having regard to all the evidence available.
20. Once the board have reached a final decision on the matter, they will arrange for this to be communicated to the complainant, via the Club & Company Secretary at the earliest opportunity. The board's decision will be final.

Statutory Rights

21. None of the above shall preclude any individual from exercising their normal statutory or legal rights.

Vexatious/Serial Complaints

22. All complaints will be treated seriously and accepted at face value. However if evidence exists that provides a reasonable belief that a complaint may be vexatious or mischievous or in instances of repeated, unsubstantiated complaints over the same issue, the club reserves the right to remove itself from any further discussions or considerations of the matter.

Review

23. The club reserves the right to review and amend the above policy at any time but will otherwise review the effectiveness of these arrangements every 12 months. The club will also maintain a log of any complaints received and the outcomes, with a view to identifying areas for improvement. Anonymised, summary data will be shared with members on a quarterly basis.