

Compliments and Complaints Policy

Aim of the Policy

1. The aim of this policy is to enable Community Action Fareham (CAF) to respond to any compliments that are presented so that the appropriate members of staff may be rewarded and, to respond to any complaints received so that the service may be improved by the review of the appropriate Policies and/or Procedures and/or the conduct of members of staff.

Scope of the Policy

2. This policy relates to complaints received about the delivery of all of the services provided by CAF or the behaviour of staff or volunteers.

Statement of Commitment to Principle or Law

3. The provision of services and goods is regulated in a number of ways including charity law, health and safety, equality act, fair trading and more. The principle that the charity is based upon is public benefit in respect of achieving its purpose, therefore excellent customer service, through understanding and meeting customer requirements is a very important principle of the way that complaints should be handled.

Compliments and Complaints Procedure

4. All Compliments will be acknowledged formally and presented at the next Board Meeting. The Board will consider whether any review of the associated Policy or Procedure are required and will determine an appropriate reward for the members of staff who delivered the service.
5. All Complaints will be dealt with seriously and formally. All messages of dissatisfaction will be considered to be a complaint and dealt with according to the procedure. The procedure, presented in the Annex, gives the standards for response to complaints.
6. All services will advertise the way in which a complaint may be made.

Communication and Training for Implementation

7. All employees and volunteers will be made aware of the Compliments and Complaints Policy and the Complaints Procedure and leaflet at induction.

Monitoring

8. The successful implementation of this Policy will be measured by examining the number of Compliments received and the number of Complaints received and the time-scales for resolution. This will be reported to the Board on a six monthly basis.
9. Customer feedback will be given in the six monthly reports of the services.

Reduction of Complaints

10. CAF will examine its service procedures to ensure that they are fair and user friendly. Procedures will be written and publicised so that clients understand them clearly.

Customer Feedback

11. CAF will conduct formal customer feedback surveys to establish levels of satisfaction. Clients will be encouraged to give their name but anonymous feedback will be considered. The value of unsolicited, anonymous feedback may be limited, as it cannot be validated. Anonymous complaints about the actions or attitude of a member of staff will not normally be investigated in any way.

Rewards for Staff who are the Subject of a Compliment

12. The Board will determine the rewards, and method of presentation to be presented to members of staff who have been responsible for the delivery of the service that has been the subject of praise and/or a compliment.

Support for Staff who are the Subject of a Complaint

13. Complaints about the actions or approach of an employee or volunteer will be discussed with the employee or volunteer by their line manager in a formal but sensitive manner. Care will be taken not to jump to conclusions but to clarify the facts with certainty or agreement before determining the next step. Notes of the examination of facts will be recorded. The member of staff will be offered support during the process. Outcomes could include defence of the staff member's actions or approach, additional training or use of the disciplinary procedure. All such matters will be dealt with In Confidence. The conclusion about such matters will be decided by a panel appointed by the Board who would usually be the line manager, the Chief Executive and a Trustee.
14. Complaints by a member of staff about another are dealt with through the Grievance Procedure not through the Compliments and Complaints Procedure.

Review of policy

15. The policy will be reviewed as necessary but at least once per year.

Signed : Chairman

Date Agreed

Link to Trustees' Meeting that approved policy

Reference Minute:

Date:

Appendix: Complaints and Service Enquiries Procedure

What is a Complaint?

1. Complaints will be recognised when a service user says not only "I want to complain" but also when phrases such as the following are used:
 - "I'm not happy about"
 - "I expectedso it caused a problem"
 - ".....was dirty so I had to....."
2. Complaints by staff will be dealt with by the Line Manager; if the problem is not easily resolved or is serious the Grievance Procedure should be used.

What will go through the Procedure?

3. All complaints written, spoken or apparent will be recorded and dealt with according to the Complaints and Service Enquiry Procedure.

Receiving Complaints

4. Details of the concern will be taken politely and non-judgementally. It is good if our attitude is to welcome complaints, because that enables us to improve our service or to start changing perceptions. Details as identified on the 'Complaint Details Form' should be noted. Any letter should be attached.
5. The matter will be dealt with by the person responsible for the service.

What to do

6. The following actions are to be carried out:
 - a. If the complaint is clearly justified the matter should be fixed immediately or as soon as resources allow;
 - b. A written reply will be made to the service user concerned within 2 days;
 - c. A copy of the details will be given to the Chief Executive on the same day with an outline of proposed investigation or solution;
 - d. When the enquiry is complete a reply will be made to the service user and the record will be closed by the Chief Executive's signature on the log;
 - e. If a service user remains unsatisfied then the matter will be referred to the Board of Trustees;
 - f. The Chief Executive will review complaints monthly and report to the Board on a half yearly basis;

Learning from Complaints

7. Matters that arise from complaints will be used to change and improve our service delivery; all members of staff are expected to co-operate in service improvement.

Note

8. a. 'a fix' is an action which deals with the current issue;
b. 'a solution' addresses the cause of the problem to prevent it happening again;