

# **SCBF– Complaints Procedure**

**Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of the complaints procedure is to ensure that applicants and others who have dealings concerning Shetland Community Benefit Fund have an easily accessible and straightforward means of raising a complaint to SCBF, and which offers prompt action and speedy resolution of complaints.

**Initial contact**

All cases of a potential complaint, including those raised initially with a SCBF directors, should be referred to the SCBF administration officer or one of the officers, with all available details.

**Informal Complaint**

An informal complaint is an initial approach outlining dissatisfaction with an aspect of SCBF’s service or actions, or of others directly or indirectly concerned with SCBF's grant schemes or other activities. This would usually be in person, by telephone or may also be in writing or email.

The administration officer is likely to deal with such initial informal complaints and attempt to resolve concerns in the first instance. These types of complaints are usually a request for action, information or reporting a problem. The administration officer will provide information or arrange action to satisfy the customer but where necessary would escalate to the SCBF chair or other officers.

At this stage, the emphasis is on resolving the complaint wherever possible.

**Formal Complaint**

A formal complaint usually arises when the complainant is unhappy with the outcome of SCBF’s response at an informal level or when the complaint is of a severe nature in the first instance leading directly to the formal stage.

All formal complaints must be made in writing, or email, to SCBF and it will be referred to the audit and governance committee of SCBF, who will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days and undertake any investigation that is necessary. A full written response to the complaint would normally be made within 15 working days with any delay and explanation informed in writing.

**Further Stages**

It is hoped the vast majority of complaints are resolved within these two stages, however, if the complainant is still not satisfied, they may appeal the outcome within 14 days by writing to the Chair of SCBF. The Chair will then nominate three directors of SCBF to investigate the appeal. A response will be sent within 15 working days. Their decision will be final.

Grant application appeals are covered separately under the appeals process.

**Reporting of complaints**

A report on all complaints dealt with by the administration officer, the SCBF officers or the audit and governance committee, stating the actions taken and the outcome will be given to SCBF Directors. The complaint should remain anonymous in the report unless special circumstances determine the complaint's details should be given to directors. These special circumstances should be explained in the report.

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