

## **Sherburn in Elmet Community Trust**

### **WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY & PROCEDURE**

It is the duty of any employee or volunteer to speak up about genuine concerns in relation to criminal activity, breach of a legal obligation (including negligence, breach of contract, breach of administrative law), miscarriage of justice, danger to health and safety or the environment, and the cover up of any of these in the workplace. It applies whether or not the information is confidential.

Personal grievances (for example bullying, harassment, discrimination) are not covered by whistleblowing.

Sherburn in Elmet Community Trust is committed to ensuring that any concerns of this nature will be taken seriously and investigated. A disclosure to Sherburn in Elmet Community Trust will be protected if there is a reasonable suspicion that the malpractice has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur. Persons who raise concerns reasonably and responsibly will not be penalised in any way.

#### **Who this policy is for?**

This policy is for people employed by or volunteering with Sherburn in Elmet Community Trust.

#### **Procedure**

Any individual who has reasonable suspicions of malpractice should initially take their concerns to their line manager. If they do not feel that this is the appropriate person, they should contact a Trustee, Line Manager, Volunteer Manager, Community Centre Manager or a member of the appropriate Management Committee. It is recognised that for some individuals, raising a concern under this procedure may be a daunting and difficult experience. An individual may choose to be accompanied or represented by a friend or colleague at any stage of this procedure. All reported incidents will be investigated. All reports will be dealt with in confidence, with only people who need to know, being informed.

The Trustee, Line Manager, Volunteer Manager, Community Centre Manager or Management Committee member will establish and record the basis of the concerns that have been raised and establish what further actions are required. The individual raising the concern will be advised of the outcome of the investigation as soon as possible, normally within two weeks of the date of their disclosure. Where a longer period is needed for investigation, the individual concerned will be informed in writing.

The Chair of Trustees will be informed of all reported disclosures and the actions being taken. In the case of disclosures on alleged fraud and corruption, Sherburn in Elmet Community Trust's Treasurer and Auditors will be informed by the Chair.

If an individual is not satisfied with the response received and any subsequent action taken, they should put their concerns in writing to the Chair of Trustees (or another appropriate Trustee/Committee Member) who will arrange any further investigation as he/she thinks appropriate. The Chair will send a written response to the individual concerned.

## **Guiding principles**

To ensure that this policy is adhered to, and that the concern will be taken seriously, Sherburn in Elmet Community Trust will:

- Not allow the person raising the concern to be victimised for doing so
- Treat victimisation of whistle blowers as a serious matter that may lead to disciplinary action, including possible dismissal.
- Not attempt to conceal evidence of poor or unacceptable practice
- Take disciplinary action if anyone destroys or conceals evidence of poor or unacceptable practice or misconduct
- Ensure confidentiality clauses in employment contracts do not restrict, forbid or penalise whistle blowing
- Liaise with the other organisations (see section below) to whom staff report malpractice

## **Independent advice and further reading**

Further Information for charitable organisations can be found on the Charity Commission's website on:

[http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/Our\\_regulatory\\_activity/Reporting\\_issues/Trustee\\_employee\\_and\\_volunteer\\_guidance\\_index.aspx](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/Our_regulatory_activity/Reporting_issues/Trustee_employee_and_volunteer_guidance_index.aspx)

## **Amendment agreed at Trustees meeting 24/10/2022**