

# Complaints Policy

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<b>Approved by:</b>	Ryan Sparks Signature:
<b>Confidentiality level:</b>	Internal, Public

## Amendment History

Date	Version	Author	Details of Amendment
November 2018	1	Paula Watson	Initial Release
July 2019	2	Paula Watson	Update to bring in line all policy annual reviews
September 2020	3	Lee-Ann Brewer	Annual Review and addition of compliments policy
March 2021	4	Paula Watson	New CEO
August 2021	5	Marco Townson	Appointment of a Supporters Liaison Officer & Customer Service Tiered System
August 2022	6	Paula Watson	Annual review

## 1) Policy Statement

Bradford City AFC welcomes comments and complaints from all members of the Clubs community. We use this process to improve our commitment to the players and staff (including volunteers) so we can provide a safe and enjoyable environment in which people can develop.

Bradford City AFC is committed to the continuous improvement of the services it provides. We recognise that, occasionally, mistakes will be made and this will not always meet the individual's requirements or expectations. For these reasons it is Club policy that all complaints should be:

- 1.1 Received positively, treated seriously and in an open manner.
- 1.2 Acknowledged immediately, preferably in writing.

1.3 Investigated

1.4 Resolved, wherever that is reasonably practical, within no longer than 13 working weeks.

1.5 A source of learning with feedback used to ensure continuous improvement of the environment which the Club offers.

No complainant bringing a complaint under this procedure will be treated less favourably by any member of staff. If there is evidence to the contrary, the member of staff may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

## **2) Scope**

The policy applies to all members of the Club community but does not replace procedures for, staff grievances and disciplinary action; those procedures should be used where appropriate.

## **Safeguarding**

Any complaints or concerns raised which relate to an individual's conduct or behaviour and have potential safeguarding implications for any individual (child or adult) will be directed to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Senior Safeguarding Manager. Where appropriate, these concerns will then be managed through Bradford City AFC's Safeguarding and Children Protection Policy or Safeguarding Adults Policy and procedures. To report directly to a member of the safeguarding team please email [safeguarding@bradfordcityafc.com](mailto:safeguarding@bradfordcityafc.com)

## **3) Responsibilities**

**3.1 The Club's Supporter Liaison Officer (SLO)** has responsibility for receiving complaints, escalating and involving appropriate persons where necessary, treating them seriously and dealing with them promptly and courteously in accordance with the procedure set out below.

**3.2 ALL CLUB STAFF** have responsibility for receiving complaints, treating them seriously and passing them to the supporter liaison officer, promptly and courteously in accordance with the procedure set out below.

**3.3 The Club's Designated Safeguarding Officer** has responsibility for resolving a complaint and leading or contributing to an investigation into a complaint when this is considered appropriate.

**3.4 The Academy Manager and/or Senior safeguarding Manager** are responsible for resolving complaints that have not been resolved during the previous two stages. The decision made by the Academy Manager or Senior safeguarding manager is final.

**3.5 The Club Board** is responsible for ensuring that the complaints policy and procedure are operating effectively and may become directly involved if a complaint is directed against the Designated Safeguarding Officer, Senior Safeguarding Manager or The Academy Manager.

## **4) Action to Implement and Develop Policy**

### **4.1 Tier One**

The Club expects complaints to be made informally to a member of staff in the first instance. These concerns should be recorded by the member of staff and advice sought immediately if any safeguarding concerns are suspected or apparent. It is hoped that most complaints can be resolved at this level and any agreed action is captured in a record that is agreed by all parties.

Where it is not possible to address issues informally with an appropriate manager or initial staff responses do not result in satisfactory resolutions, the complaint should be submitted in writing to the Club's Supporter Liaison Officer, Marco Townson.

**Contact details:**

Email: [marcotownson@bradfordcityafc.com](mailto:marcotownson@bradfordcityafc.com)

Phone: 01274 773355 ext 223

The Club usually expects complaints to be made by the person concerned. BCAFC will, however, always consider complaints made by a parent or advocate as it is acknowledged that there are many reasons (including imbalances of power) that block people from making a complaint themselves.

It is very difficult to investigate anonymous complaints as there will always be information that cannot be gathered or clarified. Any complaints relating to potential safeguarding risks will however be taken seriously, including those which fall under the umbrella of the club's whistleblowing policy and procedures.

The Supporter Liaison Officer will acknowledge receipt within one working week, and escalate to the relevant department or persons, or tier required.

**4.2 Tier Two**

The allocated independent staff member will respond in writing within one working week explaining what has happened as a result of the complaint. Where this involves a member of staff, specific details of action taken will not be made available. This is to ensure that our employees are afforded appropriate confidentiality and respect for their dignity at work.

If the complaint requires further investigation that cannot be carried out within the week, the investigating staff member shall keep the complainant informed and indicate the expected timescale for a response to be provided.

**4.3 Tier Three**

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the relevant investigating staff member's response, then the complaint will be forwarded to a member of the Club's Senior Management to resolve.

The Senior Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and respond to the complainant within 8 working weeks to allow time for any further information gathering and investigations to be undertaken.

**4.4 Tier Four**

**Complaints against the Supporter Liaison Officer, Designated Safeguarding Officer, Senior Safeguarding Manager or Academy Manager**

Complaints against the Supporter Liaison Officer, Designated Safeguarding Officer, Senior Safeguarding Manager or Academy Manager should be marked as 'FAO: CEO RYAN SPARKS' and sent to [helpdesk@bradfordcityafc.com](mailto:helpdesk@bradfordcityafc.com)

#### **4.5 Tier Five**

If the complainant is still dissatisfied they have the right to follow the English Football League (EFL) complaints procedure

Complaints should be made in writing and may be submitted by post to:

**The Independent Football Ombudsman**

Suite 49, 33 Great George Street, LEEDS LS1 3AJ.

or by e-mail to: [contact@theifo.co.uk](mailto:contact@theifo.co.uk)

or via the website: [www.theifo.co.uk](http://www.theifo.co.uk)

#### **5. Monitoring and evaluation**

The club will maintain a confidential record of all complaints, appeals and outcomes and consider the learning from issues raised in order to assess what action if any would create a more positive experience and environment for those involved in participating in or providing club activities and to promote a safer environment. Themes and issues arising during each season will be collated and fed back to the Board to inform planning and priorities for the following season.

#### **Compliments Policy**

We value and encourage all kinds of feedback. Anyone who has a relationship with Bradford City AFC can compliment a member of staff, a team or the organisation. Compliments are passed on to staff and their line manager and are used to identify areas of good practice that we can learn from and further develop.

Compliments can be submitted verbally to any member of staff who will record and share this or can be submitted via email to [helpdesk@bradfordcityafc.com](mailto:helpdesk@bradfordcityafc.com) or in writing to the stadium.

Compliments are used to enable service development and as part of individual performance development. Employees receiving compliments will be recognised appropriately.

# Complaints Handling Process

