

## Speaking Up! Grievance Procedure

An employee or volunteer who has a grievance about some aspects of their employment should use the following stages:

Please note the term 'employee' is a generic term to cover paid staff and volunteers.

### **Stage One**

The employee has the right to raise the matter with any one member of the committee and should ensure that this is also in writing. If the matter is not resolved within a mutually agreed period, it should be referred to stage two. This will be submitted in writing to the committee within 5 working days of the end of stage one.

### **Stage Two**

There will be a meeting between the employee and two or three appointed members of the management committee within 10 working days (this will not include any members that are involved in the dispute). The discussion and plans for action will be recorded and copies kept by both the employee and the committee. If the matter is still not resolved within a mutually agreed period it should be referred to stage three. If the employee is dissatisfied with the decision at stage two, they have the right to refer the matter to stage three. This must be submitted in writing to the committee within 10 working days of the end of stage two.

### **Stage Three**

The matter will now be referred to the next meeting of the committee provided that if a meeting is not due within 15 working days, a special meeting will be held within that time. The employee concerned has the right to attend the meeting to give their point of view, but not to be present while the decision is reached. After the meeting, the committee will inform the employee of the decision. If the employee is dissatisfied with the decision of stage three, they may appeal within 15 days of receiving written notification of the decision.

### **Appeals**

After stage three of the grievance procedure where the employee is still unhappy with the decision, the employee will be informed of their right to appeal. Application must be made in writing to the committee within 15 days of notification of the decision about the grievance. The committee will appoint members to hear the appeal. As far as is practicable, the members appointed to hear an appeal will not be the same members who acted for the committee during stage two of the process.

The committee may at its discretion appoint an independent inquiry panel. The employee has the right to appear before the Appeals panel with a representative. The Appeals panel will now make a recommendation to the committee and the decision of the full committee following this recommendation is final.

**Notes**

In all stages the employee has the right to be represented by a trade union official or a person of their choice. If a grievance procedure has been started, it must be allowed to run its course without any disciplinary proceedings being taken on the matter. The one exception is in the case of gross misconduct.

When a matter relating to terms and conditions of employment is raised by more than one member of staff, the issue should become a matter for collective bargaining with the union, if a union has been recognised by the employer for such purposes. However, where there is no recognised union, a group grievance procedure will be set up along the lines of the above.

Stage one will be conducted by two or three of the committee involved if this is the case. Before any grievance procedure is initiated, all members of staff involved must attempt to sort out matters informally. This informal method should mean that the grievance is discussed between those concerned with the assistance of other staff or supportive people as is thought appropriate.