

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

What is Whistleblowing?

Employees, helpers/volunteers are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within the League. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal either to their colleagues, or to the League itself. They may also fear the harassment or victimisation that could follow such an action. In these circumstances, it is often easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may be a suspicion of malpractice.

The Whistleblowing Policy (also known as Confidential Reporting Policy) makes it clear that you can report concerns without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. This Whistleblowing Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns within the League rather than overlooking a problem or 'blowing the whistle' outside.

Our Whistleblowing Policy

Peterborough & District Football League are committed to running our club/group with honesty and integrity. We do, however, understand that things can sometimes go wrong. If they do, we want you and your colleagues to let us know as soon as possible.

Just as we want to help you report wrongdoing, we would ask that you maintain high standards yourself. Any suspected wrongdoing should be reported as soon as possible.

This policy tells you how you can report any wrongdoing you see in our organisation. It also sets out what you can expect of Peterborough & District Football League if you do report wrongdoing. Together, we can work towards a more open and transparent organisation.

Our policy covers all employees, volunteers/helpers and members.

The Aims of our Whistleblowing Policy

1. To encourage you to feel confident in raising concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice.
2. To provide avenues for you to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken.
3. To ensure that you receive a response to your concerns and that you are aware of how to pursue them if you are not satisfied.
4. To reassure you that you will be protected from possible reprisal or victimisation if you have a responsible belief that you have made any disclosure in good faith.

How to Raise a Concern

We hope that in many cases you will be able to raise any concerns with the League Secretary, committee member or Director. However, if you prefer not to raise it with them for any reason, you should contact the Public Concern at Work [Whistleblowing Officer (Wendy Newey)] [or the League Chairman (Alan Poulain)]. Contact details are at the end of this policy. We'd rather you reported wrongdoing to someone rather than no one.

If you report a wrongdoing, we will arrange a meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss your concern. You will never be expected to report the alleged wrongdoing to the person you believe has committed it. If you would like to, you can bring a colleague or representative to any meetings. All we would ask if you do bring a companion to a meeting is that they respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

Confidentiality

We hope that you will feel able to voice your whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. However, completely anonymous disclosures are difficult to investigate. If you want to raise your concern confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret and only reveal it where necessary to those involved in investigating your concern.

If you are worried about what might happen to you if you raise a whistleblowing concern, please don't. We hope that the section below headed 'Protection and Support for Whistleblowers' will give you the reassurance you need to disclose your concerns.

External Disclosures

The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases you should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally; if

necessary, the club/group would report concerns externally on your behalf. Peterborough & District Football League hopes that you will be satisfied with the action taken.

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body, such as the Police (theft), Charities Commission (fraud), Health & Safety (HSE), Social Services (abuse) and sport's governing bodies. If you wish to report these concerns to an external body, consider seeking advice first from, for example: Public Concern At Work, who operate a confidential helpline; or Citizen's Advice Bureau, who may also be able to help. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

Protection and Support for Whistleblowers

We aim to encourage openness and will support you if you raise genuine whistleblowing concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

If you raise a genuine concern, you will not suffer any detrimental treatment (such as being bullied, victimised, discriminated against or disadvantaged in any way) as a result of raising that concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform [the Whistleblowing Officer Wendy Newey] immediately. If you still believe you have not had a satisfactory outcome from [the Whistleblowing Officer Wendy Newey], you should raise it formally using our Grievance Procedure.

Just as we will seek to protect you as a whistleblower, you must not threaten or retaliate against other whistleblowers in any way. If you are involved in such conduct, you may be subject to disciplinary action. We hope that this will not become necessary.

However, to stop abuse of the whistleblowing procedure, if we decide that you have made false allegations maliciously or with a view to personal gain, you may be subject to disciplinary action.

Public Concern At Work operates a confidential helpline. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

Contacts

Whistleblowing Officer Wendy Newey
07890518457

League Chairman Alan Poulain
07852813510

Public Concern at Work
(independent whistleblowing charity) Helpline: 0207 404 6609
E-mail: whistle@pcaw.co.uk
Website: www.pcaw.co.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau Helpline: 03444 111 444
Website: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk>

Review of this policy

The Chairman of the League will keep this policy under review which will be yearly.

The League encourages staff to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved or ask any questions if they are unsure about any part of this policy or how it is applied by contacting the Trust.

Alan Poulain
Chairman

First approved - 14th November 2022

Reviewed – 11th September 2023

Reviewed – 13th April 2026