



Registered Charity : Cumbria Rural Choirs
Number : 1168081

Whistleblowing Policy

Policy

Cumbria Singers is committed to being open, honest and accountable. It encourages a free and open culture in relationships between Trustees, Members, Associates, Volunteers and Supporters.

This Policy supports and enables individuals to raise serious concerns they may have about others in the organisation. They should do so both in confidence and without having to worry about being discriminated against or disadvantaged in any way as a result. The identity of the Whistleblower will remain confidential, known only to those directly involved in establishing an outcome.

Individuals knowingly or maliciously making an untrue allegation will be subject to appropriate sanction by the Trustees.

Having concerns formally investigated and recorded, protects the interests of both those needing to "blow the whistle" on malpractice and those against whom their concern is directed.

Possible issues of concern

This Policy is intended to deal with sensitive or serious concerns about unethical behaviours or unacceptable practices such as the following:

- criminal activity
- a failure to comply with a legal obligation
- health and safety risks in rehearsal and performance environments
- a failure in the protection of vulnerable adults and children
- financial impropriety, malpractice or fraud
- concealment of any of the above.

Raising a Concern

The raising of a concern should be made initially to the Chair of Trustees in writing or directly in person. Its receipt and consideration by the Chair will promptly invoke a due process of enquiry, recording and reporting. If not undertaken personally in resolving less serious concerns, then via a nominated Trustee - the "Whistleblowing Officer" - to establish the facts of more complex and serious concerns.

If the Whistleblower is uncomfortable about or reluctant to report to the Chair or via the Whistleblowing Officer, they can do so via other Trustees or, in exceptional circumstances, to the President of Cumbria Singers.

Suspected criminal activity will be referred immediately by the Chair to the Police or other relevant agencies, e.g. Social Services, and dealt in accordance with the Law.

Due Process

In instances of serious concern, the Whistleblowing Officer will meet with the Whistleblower at the earliest opportunity to establish their concern and have all the relevant details recorded. The whistleblower will be requested to respect the anonymity of those against whom their concern has been raised.

The person or persons identified by the Whistleblower as being the subject of concern will be informed as soon as practicable by the Whistleblowing Officer. Their right to anonymity will be established and reference made to the place and purpose of the enquiry being that of providing a fair and balanced report to the Chair of Trustees concerning an appropriate outcome. A record will be kept of all their responses to the allegations will be made.

The Whistleblower will be informed by post or email regarding progress in determining an outcome to their concern. Where the process is ongoing and becomes more extensive, and further meetings with the Whistleblowing Officer needed, additional timely reports will be posted to the Whistleblower.

When all avenues of enquiry are completed, the Whistleblowing Officer will discuss their draft report with the Whistleblower - a report made in good faith and without prejudice. Minor adjustments to the content as a consequence of these discussions may be made at this point.

The Whistleblower will be given the opportunity to agree or express dissatisfaction with any of the conclusions made by the Whistleblowing Officer before it being presented to the Chair.

The Chair will give consideration to the Whistleblowing Officer's report and its conclusions, taking note of the Whistleblower's acceptance or otherwise of the report.

The Chair, on behalf of Cumbria Singers, will then post formal notice of the report's conclusions and judgement made to the Whistleblower. The report may fully uphold the concern raised or establish reasons for not doing so. The content of the report will have taken into account the seriousness of the matter, the believability of the concerns raised and the presenting facts.

In the event of the concerns being corroborated, The Chair will write to the Whistleblower confirming that this was the case and to thank them for their help in sustaining the reputation of Cumbria Singers.

In the event of a serious concern being sustained, The Chair - in conjunction with other Trustees if considered appropriate - will write to the person or persons against whom the concern was raised and provide a clear statement of any sanction imposed including their future membership of Cumbria Singers.

