

Soar Sound Grievance Procedure

Contents

1 Document Information2

2 Introduction4

 2.1 Vision.....4

 2.2 Objects4

3 Purpose of the Policy5

 3.1 Primary Principles5

 3.2 Informal Discussion.....6

4 Reconciliation8

5 Formal Complaints Procedure9

 5.1 Stage 1 – Statement of Grievance9

 5.2 Stage 2 - Grievance Meeting.....9

 5.3 Stage 3 - Appeal.....11

6 Complaints Form12

 6.1 For Office Use14

7 Monitoring and Reporting.....15

1 Document Information

Policy: Soar Sound Grievance Procedure

Version: 1.0

Ratified: 9th March 2024

Status: Live

Issued: 9th March 2024

Website Link:

Approved By Directors: Yes

Consultation: None

Equality Impact Assessment Completed: No

Distribution: All individual members and group members' representative of the charity.

Implementation Date:

Planned Review Date: 5th March 2025

Author: Ian Green (People and Volunteer Director of Soar Sound)

Soar Sound's Safeguarding Officer:

Policy Validity Statement: Policy users should ensure that they are consulting the currently valid version of the documentation. This document will be reviewed one year from its issue date.

Approval: The policy will remain valid, including during its period of review. However, the policy must be reviewed next year and afterwards at least once in every three-year period.

2 Introduction

This policy sets out how Soar Sound will fulfil its statutory duties and responsibilities effectively, both within its own organisation, and for the affiliated groups and members that help with Soar Sound's not-for-profit vision and public purpose objectives.

2.1 Vision

Soar Sound seeks to provide broadcast radio and other online and legacy media services that are not for private gain, with any surplus or assets used principally for the benefit of the community.

2.2 Objects

The objects of the Company are to carry on activities which benefit the community and in particular (without limitation) to carry out radio broadcast and media production services that will benefit communities resident in Leicester and Leicestershire, and in particular, and without limitation, with a focus on public education, wellbeing, mental health, economic development and employment.

Soar Sound supports all services, projects and activities that meet our not-for-profit objectives, as above, through offering publicity in our Soar Sound radio service and other media services.

3 Purpose of the Policy

Soar Sound aims to provide the best possible advice, support, and services to their individual and group members. The directors of Soar Sound are accountable to Ofcom, Companies House and the CIC Commissioner. Occasionally, an individual member or member group may feel s/he has not had the best possible service that Soar Sound aim to provide. It is important that any member wishing to make a complaint knows how to do so. Soar Sound Board of Directors will respond to a complaint within reasonable time limits and in a courteous and efficient way. They will take members complaints seriously and the circumstances investigated, and necessary corrective action undertaken.

Soar Sound is committed to dealing with grievances fairly, consistently and without unreasonable delay. This policy sets out the way in which a volunteer member should make any complaints they have about work-related matters and the way in which the Soar Sound will resolve these complaints. This is a non-contractual policy and procedure and can be changed by Soar Sound at any time. If a volunteer member has any queries about this policy and procedure, they should contact a senior person on the Board of Directors.

3.1 Primary Principles

- a. Grievances will be dealt with confidentially so far as reasonably possible, and the volunteer member must keep information learnt during the process confidential.
- b. The purpose of a grievance or appeal meeting is for the volunteer member to explain their grievance and how they think that it should be resolved using evidence available to make representations, allowing the Soar Sound's representative to come to a decision.
- c. Volunteer members (and when applicable, Soar Sound directors) will not be subjected to a detriment for raising a grievance in good faith, even if the grievance is not upheld. However, the complainant should not use this policy to dispute a disciplinary or dismissal decision.

- d. Volunteer members will not normally be suspended during the grievance process, but the Soar Sound reserves the right to suspend if, in their discretion, this is helpful and reasonable. The volunteer members will continue to receive their normal benefits.
- e. The volunteer member has the right to appeal any decision made about a grievance as set out in the appeals section of this policy and procedure.
- f. The Soar Sound's representative processes personal data collected during informal discussions and the formal grievance procedure in accordance with its Data Protection Policy. In particular, data collected as part of informal discussions and the grievance procedure is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of responding to the grievance or conducting the grievance procedure.
- g. Inappropriate access or disclosure of the Volunteer member's data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the Soar Sound's Data Protection Policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the Soar Sound's Disciplinary Procedure.

3.2 Informal Discussion

- The Soar Sound promotes communication between volunteer members and, wherever possible, the volunteer member should try to resolve and grievance by firstly talking about it informally with another volunteer or trustee to try and agree a solution.
- If the grievance is too serious, if the volunteer or Soar Sound representative think it is not appropriate in the circumstances to deal with the grievance informally, or if discussing the grievance informally does not work, the volunteer's grievance will be dealt with formally.
- If the Soar Sound's representative thinks that an investigatory interview would be helpful at any stage during the grievance process before a formal meeting is held or continued, the Soar Sound may take statements from the volunteer or witnesses or review documents at the Soar Sound's representative's discretion.

- No decision will be taken until after a grievance hearing has been held. A volunteer does not normally have the right to bring a companion to an investigative interview. However, the Soar Sound representative may allow the volunteer to bring a companion at its absolute discretion.

4 Reconciliation

Any members who are dissatisfied with any aspect of the work of Soar Sound should contact the Secretary of Soar Sound in the first instance. The secretary will seek to satisfy any complaint by conciliation and clarification of the issues involved. Hopefully, most problems can be satisfied by this informal process. The secretary will reply to the complainant within fourteen days of receipt of the complaint. If the person making the complaint is not satisfied by the result of the above informal process, we would welcome them using the following more formal procedures.

5 Formal Complaints Procedure

5.1 Stage 1 – Statement of Grievance

- i. To raise the matter formally, the Soar Sound’s representative should write to the Board of Directors (Chair or Secretary) setting out the facts of the grievance, avoiding insulting or abusive language and trying to give specific examples of the complaint, copies of documents, names of witnesses and dates where possible.
- ii. Where an employee’s grievance is against the Chair and Secretary of the Board of Directors, the volunteer should write to someone else on the Board of Directors who is not the subject of the grievance.

5.2 Stage 2 - Grievance Meeting

- iii. Within five working days, the Soar Sound’s representative will usually hold the meeting (unless they are the subject of the grievance, or it is not reasonably practicable for the Soar Sound’s representative to hold the meeting).
- iv. The Soar Sound’s representative will usually hold the meeting (unless they are the subject of the grievance, or it is not reasonably practicable for the Soar Sound’s representative to hold the meeting).
- v. Five working days’ notice of the meeting will usually be provided to the volunteer, and they will be informed of their right to be accompanied by a companion.
- vi. The volunteer’s choice of companion will be agreed to if the companion is either a colleague, a trade union official or a trade union representative (which if not an employed official, must be certified by their union as competent to accompany a worker) and under the circumstances the volunteer has made a reasonable request to be accompanied.
- vii. The volunteer should advise the employer of the identity of the companion (or any change in their choice of companion) and whether they will require any special adjustments to be made for their or their companion’s attendance, at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting.

- viii. The Soar Sound encourages the volunteer to bring their choice of colleague, trade union representative or trade union official to formal meetings under this procedure, but the volunteer should bear in mind how practical it is for their choice of companion to attend and consider if there is a suitable and available individual who is geographically close to where the meeting is to be held, rather than first considering an individual geographically based further away.
- ix. The role of the companion in a formal meeting is to make notes, confer with the volunteer and, if the volunteer requests it, to address the hearing to state the volunteer's case and respond to any views expressed at the meeting. The companion does not have the right to answer questions or address the hearing if the volunteer does not request this and must not prevent the Soar Sound's representative from explaining its case.
- x. If the volunteer or their companion is unable to attend the meeting at the time, date and place specified by the Soar Sound's representative, they must notify the chair of the meeting as soon as possible in writing.
- xi. Except in the case of an emergency, this should be at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting and the volunteer should advise of the time when they and their choice of companion will be available within five working days of the original proposed meeting and provided this is reasonable, the new meeting time will be agreed.
- xii. Those involved must make every effort to attend any scheduled meetings under this procedure. If you are unable to attend more than two scheduled meetings, the Soar Sound's representative reserves the right to decide about your grievance using available evidence but in your absence.
- xiii. If the Soar Sound or volunteers will be referring to any documentation during the formal meeting, this should be sent to the other party at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting, so that they have a reasonable chance to prepare.
- xiv. The Soar Sound's representative may in its absolute discretion adjourn a meeting to carry out further investigations, after which the meeting will usually reconvene.

- xv. After the meeting, the Soar Sound's representative will give the volunteer a decision in writing, normally within 24 hours.

5.3 Stage 3 - Appeal

- xvi. If the volunteer is unhappy with the Soar Sound's representative's decision and they wish to appeal, they should write to a more senior trustee within five working days of the date of the decision saying that they disagree with the decision and giving their reason(s) why and providing any new evidence they seek to rely on.
- xvii. The volunteer will be invited to an appeal meeting, normally within ten working days of the Soar Sound receiving the volunteer's letter of appeal.
- xviii. The volunteer's appeal will be heard by an impartial trustee or, if necessary, an independent HR advisor who has not been part of the process until the appeal stage. The volunteer's appeal will either be a review of the grievance decision made or a complete rehearing at the Soar Sound's discretion. The right to be accompanied to the appeal meeting is the same as set out in Stage Two above.
- xix. After the meeting, the volunteer will be given a decision, normally within 24 hours. The Trustee's decision is final and there is no further right to appeal.

6 Complaints Form

To proceed with a complaint, please complete this form and return to the Chair or Secretary of Soar Sound. This form will enable the complaint to be dealt with appropriately.

Your Name:

Your contact telephone number:

Your e-mail address:

Your Address:

Postcode:

Please provide details of any special needs we need to bear in mind when we are dealing with your complaint and communicating with you:

Date & Time Incident Occurred:

Please provide details of your complaint, stating names of staff wherever possible. Please continue using a separate sheet if necessary

If you have already verbally spoken to a person regarding your complaint, please give the name of that person:

What do you think should be done to put things right?

Please note that in investigating your complaint Soar Sound may require that you provide any named persons with details of the complaint so as to give them a fair opportunity to respond.

Your signature:

Date:

6.1 For Office Use

Date Received:

Date Acknowledgement Sent:

Date Outcome of investigation Communicated to the complainant:

Outcome of the investigation:

Signature:

Date:

7 Monitoring and Reporting

All complaints and feedback to Soar Sound will be fully recorded, and a report made to the Trustee Board on any complaints or grievances dealt with via this procedure. A written record will be retained of all complaints.

Signed: Ian Green

Position: People and Volunteering Director

Date: 9th March 2024

Review Date: 5th March 2025

Soar Sound