

Soar Sound Disciplinary Committee

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1 Document Information

Policy: Soar Sound Disciplinary Committee Policy

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

Implementation Date:

Planned Review Date: 5th March 2025

Author: Rob Watson (Organisation Development 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 Policy

Soar Sound is committed to providing a work environment free from harassment and bullying and ensuring that all volunteers (and staff, as we develop employed staff) are treated, and treat others with dignity and respect. As a volunteer-led community radio station, a properly constituted and organised disciplinary committee is essential. It ensures that all participants in the station's operations work within a framework of mutual respect and dignity. Such a committee upholds the values of fairness and integrity, providing a structured approach to resolving conflicts and misconduct. This contributes to a positive and inclusive environment, which is crucial for fostering creativity, collaboration, and the overall success of the station. Moreover, it reinforces the station's commitment to ethical standards and professionalism, vital for maintaining trust with listeners and stakeholders.

3.1 What Does This Policy Cover?

- This policy is an extension of the Soar Sound Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy. It outlines the mechanisms by which the disciplinary committee will be constituted and structured, the complaint handling process, the format of disciplinary hearings, and the types of disciplinary actions available to the committee.

4 Disciplinary Committee Function and Purpose

A disciplinary committee at Soar Sound, best constituted by peer-volunteers, ensures impartiality and fairness in addressing disciplinary matters. These volunteers, understanding the community's ethos and operational dynamics, can judiciously evaluate evidence and concerns. Their impartial stance upholds Soar Sound's reputation for fairness and transparency, crucial for maintaining trust and integrity within the community and its stakeholders. This approach aligns with the station's commitment to fostering a respectful and collaborative environment.

The disciplinary Consisting of at least two members of the volunteers' committee, and if deemed necessary one director.

4.1 Guidelines for the Disciplinary Committee's Operation

- i. **Receipt of Complaint:** Upon receiving a complaint, the committee must acknowledge it promptly and inform the complainant of the process and timeline.
- ii. **Confidentiality:** Maintain strict confidentiality throughout the process to protect all parties involved.
- iii. **Investigation:** Conduct a thorough and impartial investigation, collecting evidence and interviewing witnesses as necessary.
- iv. **Fair Hearing:** Ensure the accused has the opportunity to respond to the allegations, present evidence, and call witnesses.
- v. **Decision-Making:** The committee should deliberate and make a decision based on the evidence gathered during the investigation.
- vi. **Disciplinary Actions:** If the complaint is upheld, determine appropriate disciplinary actions in line with the organisation's policies.
- vii. **Documentation:** Keep detailed records of the complaint, investigation, hearing, decision, and any disciplinary actions taken.
- viii. **Feedback:** Inform both the complainant and the accused of the outcome, maintaining confidentiality.
- ix. **Appeals Process:** Provide information on the appeals process, if applicable.
- x. **Review and Improvement:** Regularly review procedures and outcomes to improve the effectiveness of the disciplinary process.

5 Complaint Process

Any written complaint will be heard within fourteen calendar days.

Based on the nature of the complaint, the person concerned could be required to be temporarily taken off air, or removed from their duties, pending the outcome of the hearing.

Within seven days of receipt of the complaint, a copy will be made available to the person concerned.

The person affected will be allowed one person, a companion, of their choice with them at the disciplinary hearing.

The companion is allowed to speak and ask questions on behalf of the presenter.

Prior to the hearing, members of the disciplinary committee will review all available material that is relevant to the complaint, such as recordings, written statements, images, and so on.

5.1 Hearing Format

The hearing will be supported by a notetaker who will record a record of the discussion. The hearing will consist of:

- a. Formal reading of the complaint.
- b. Response from the presenter concerned.
- c. Any arising questions and answers.
- d. Review of evidence.
- e. Deliberation by the disciplinary committee. With the presenter concerned waits outside of the room being used for the hearing.
- f. Verbal verdict, with the decision of the disciplinary committee being forwarded, in writing, to the presenter concerned and the author of the complaint.

5.2 Disciplinary Action Available to The Committee

Several actions are available to the committee:

- No fault. (Allowing the disciplinary committee to recommend that Soar Sound rules and policies are amended. Therefore, preventing any similar incident being referred to the disciplinary committee).
- No fault – No action.
- Written warning.
- Probation. For a minimum of ten hours and a maximum of twenty-five hours. During the probation period, the broadcasts of the offending presenter will be closely monitored.
- Retraining and testing on OFCOM rules.
- Temporary suspension. For a minimum of four hours and a maximum of twenty hours.
- Suspension for six months, after such time the offending presenter will have to reapply to be a presenter.
- A ten-year ban from Soar Sound.

5.3 Appeals

An appeal may be made to the station director's in writing, but must be within seven days of the date of the outcome of the disciplinary hearing.

5.4 Keeping Records

Information regarding any complaints made by or about a member of staff may be recorded on their personnel file, along with a record of the outcome and of any notes or other documents compiled during the process. Such data will be processed in accordance with Soar Sound Data Protection Policy.

This Anti-Harassment and Bully Policy was created using a document from Rocket Lawyer <https://www.rocketlawyer.com/gb/en>

6 Monitoring and Review

Soar Sound will monitor and evaluate the information that is appropriately collected in relation to the prevention of bullying and harassment duties, and will make periodic reports to the Director Board, making recommendations for improvements and changes to the Soar Sound's activities and communications.

Signed: Rob Watson

Position: Organisation Development Director

Date: 9th March 2024

Review Date: 5th March 2025

Soar Sound

