

SHOREHAM FOODBANK COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS POLICY

APPROVED BY TRUSTEES: NOV 2021

POLICY STATEMENT

Our Foodbanks are committed to providing high standards of service in their operations, by:

- **Employing suitably qualified and experienced staff**
- **Providing volunteers and staff with the training and support required to carry out their duties to a high standard**
- **Operating in line with regulatory requirements and current best practice**
- **Working to resolve complaints at first point of contact**

We recognise that on occasions foodbank users or partners may feel that the expected standards of service delivery have not been met and consequently may make a complaint. On other occasions customers may wish to highlight positive experiences via a compliment.

This policy sets out the framework within which feedback through all complaints and compliments will be managed.

POLICY AIMS

- All complaints are dealt with satisfactorily and within reasonable timescales
- Users are aware of their rights and responsibilities and have realistic expectations of potential outcomes
- Complaints are seen as a positive learning experience and used to continually improve our services
- Trustees, Staff and Volunteers are aware of their responsibilities and action required when dealing with a complaint
- Compliments are logged and used as a way of recognising the appreciation for the services we provide

THE POLICY

We define a formal complaint as:

“A statement of dissatisfaction about an action, lack of action or about the standard of service provided by the organisation that the user wishes to formalise”

Our response will be to put things right and recover the service wherever possible, as well as look for opportunities to learn from the complaint.

We define a compliment as:

“An appreciation of the service received, a thank you to an individual or team working or volunteering for a ‘Care for Our City’ Foodbank”

PATHWAY FOR COMPLAINTS / COMPLIMENTS

Informal Stage 0

An informal complaint which meets the definition of a complaint (above) but the complainant does not wish to formalise at this point. This could be raised to any staff, trustee or volunteer member of the organisation, and the Foodbank's aim will be for that individual to deal with the complaint in a sympathetic and cooperative manner, in conjunction with the Project Lead.

Stage 1

A formal Stage 1 complaint must be made within 3 months of the event giving rise to the complaint. Complaints should be made via email or letter, and should be directed to:

- The Project Lead in most cases, except
- To the Chair of Trustees in cases where the complaint is directed against the Project Lead

We will issue an acknowledgement within 2 working days and aim to respond to all Stage 1 complaints within 7 working days of receipt.

Stage 2

A formal Stage 2 complaint must be made within 8 weeks of the Stage 1 response, or 8 weeks after the final proposed

action/resolution identified in the Stage 1 response (whichever is longer). Complaints should be made via email or letter, and should be directed to the Chair of Trustees.

Foodbank users/partners must advise why they are not satisfied with the Stage 1 response, detailing any evidence or considerations which have been overlooked. They must also advise what resolution they are seeking and why they feel this is appropriate. New evidence that was not available at the time of the Stage 1 investigation can be considered at Stage 2.

EXCEPTIONS

- **This does not address complaints by staff of any ‘*Care for Our City*’ Foodbank (see grievance policy)**
- **This policy does not address general correspondence not directly related to a complaint**
- **The use of Social Media as a method of expressing dissatisfaction is becoming a more accessible and frequent way to voice concerns. We do not encourage or accept formal complaints via this method, and would encourage complainants to use the channels outlined above. Only the Project Lead has the authority to respond via social media**
- **Anonymous complaints – these are not dealt with through this complaints policy and procedure. However, depending on the nature of the complaint, it may be necessary to investigate the matter in order to protect the Foodbank’s interests, especially if the matter could cause serious detriment**

UNREASONABLE, INTENSIVE & VEXATIOUS COMPLAINANTS

There are occasions when a Foodbank user/partner might act in a way that an employee or volunteer considers unacceptable. We expect all our employees to be treated in a respectful manner. Whilst it is understood that people sometimes get frustrated, we will not tolerate behaviour which is deemed unacceptable, threatening, abusive or unreasonably persistent.

REPORTING / MONITORING

We will record all complaints (informal and formal) within our systems.

CONTACT DETAILS

Complaints and compliments should be directed to:

Foodbank Project Lead care@weareemmanuel.com

Chair of Trustees oakstrustees@weareemmanuel.com