Donington Community Centre: Complaints Handling Policy

This policy outlines the procedure for submitting, investigating, and resolving formal complaints regarding the facilities, the Committee's actions, or the conduct of hirers/volunteers at the Donington Community Centre.

1. Scope and Principles

- **Scope:** This policy covers formal complaints received from members of the public, hirers, volunteers, or Committee members.
- **Exclusions:** Matters covered by other specific policies (e.g., safeguarding allegations, which follow the Safeguarding Policy) are handled separately.
- **Principles:** All complaints will be handled **confidentially, impartially, and promptly** by the Committee.

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2. Complaints Procedure

Stage 1: Initial Submission (Informal/Formal)

1. **Submission:** The complainant must submit their complaint in writing (email or letter) to the **Committee Secretary**. If the complaint involves the Secretary, it must be addressed to the **Committee Chair**.
2. **Required Information:** The submission must include:
    - The complainant's full name and contact details.
    - The date and time the incident occurred.
    - A detailed description of the complaint.
    - Specific action the complainant wishes the Committee to take.
3. **Acknowledgement:** The Committee Secretary will acknowledge receipt of the complaint **within 7 calendar days** of receiving it.

Stage 2: Investigation

1. **Designated Lead:** The Committee will designate two (2) members (who are not involved in the complaint) to act as investigators. The Committee Chair will oversee this process.
2. **Investigation Period:** The investigators will conduct a thorough investigation, which may involve speaking to witnesses, reviewing hire agreements, and consulting relevant policies. The investigation should be completed **within 21 calendar days** of the acknowledgement date.

3. **Conflict of Interest:** Any Committee member named in the complaint or who has a conflict of interest must step away from all discussions and decisions related to the investigation.

Stage 3: Resolution and Response

1. **Decision:** The investigating members will present their findings and a recommended course of action to the full Committee. The Committee will then decide on the final resolution.
2. **Formal Response:** The Committee Chair will provide a formal, written response to the complainant outlining the findings, the decision, and any actions taken by the Centre **within 7 calendar days** of the decision being made.

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3. Record Keeping

- All documentation related to a complaint (original submission, witness statements, investigation notes, and the final response) will be filed securely by the Secretary for a minimum of **three (3) years**.
- The Committee will use records of complaints to identify recurring issues (e.g., noise, cleaning problems) to improve the Centre's services and policies.