

# Whistleblowing and Confidential Concern Policy

## **Purpose of this Policy**

Westbury Harriers is committed to offering the highest quality of service provision across grassroots athletics and running in England.

Values of fun, integrity, inspiration, and inclusivity ensure our coaches and leaders work continually to achieve these benchmarks by working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect.

Westbury works hard to provide an efficient and effective service to all. However, we recognise that there may be occasions where we or others fall short of expectations and individuals may not be completely satisfied.

However, some complaints may need to be dealt with under a separate process. For example, Safeguarding issues or Athlete selection.

## **Scope**

This policy outlines the process by which any individual involved at any level of the sport of athletics can raise concerns with Westbury Harriers, England Athletics or UK Athletics for investigation.

This policy is intended to cover concerns that fall outside the scope of existing procedures. Westbury Harriers also has a range of policies, codes, and procedures, which set out the standards of behaviour expected of members, staff, and participants.

If you have a complaint about England Athletics services, policies, practices please refer to these policies and procedures

## **Definition**

'Whistle Blower' is a term commonly used to describe a person who alerts an authority to act of wrongdoing, usually by someone within the authority's jurisdiction. Whistle-blowers are witnesses to a malpractice and must not be penalised for any disclosure of information, in fact certain categories of whistle-blowers are protected by the law'. Westbury Harriers is committed to encouraging a culture of openness: to uphold the reputation of the organisation, maintain the sports and the public's confidence, and to protect its members (i.e., athletes, coaches, staff, officials, volunteers etc.). It is in the interests of the sport and its membership that individuals with genuine concerns can raise them in a confidential and effective way. This policy outlines the mechanism by which serious concerns can be lodged with Westbury Harriers and addressed appropriately. Anyone approaching Westbury Harriers, in good faith, with information regarding matters of wrongdoing, such as fraud, misappropriation, bad practice in child (and/or vulnerable adult) protection or safety, discrimination or breach of codes of conduct, by staff



# WESTBURY HARRIERS



(including contractors) or volunteers working for UK Athletics, will have the matter dealt with in an appropriate manner with a duty of care to all those involved.

## Process

If you discover any serious wrongdoing, and wish to whistle blow you should report it to the Club Welfare Officer via email to: [welfare@westburyharriers.co.uk](mailto:welfare@westburyharriers.co.uk)

Your concerns will normally then be considered and investigated by the Welfare Officer in the first instance, who will take any remedial action to rectify the situation or, make recommendations to take appropriate further steps. Any investigation will not, at any stage, be carried out by any person against whom allegations are made, and details will only be shared with those individuals who are considered vital to the effective functioning of any investigation.

In some instances, particularly those involving child safety, it may be necessary to refer the matter to an external authority, for example the police. If this is the case both the complainant and the person against whom the complaint has been made will be notified of this unless England Athletics is prohibited from doing so by law or at the direction of the external authority.

If after initial investigation it is felt, there is an example of serious misconduct the investigating officer will begin the Westbury Harriers' Disciplinary policy.

Any person approaching Westbury Harriers with genuine concerns will not be disadvantaged or discriminated against in any way because of the disclosure. However, Westbury Harriers will take a serious view and act, accordingly, including taking disciplinary action against appropriate parties, should it be found that the allegations have been intentionally portrayed as untrue or have been raised maliciously. Individuals are therefore encouraged to put their name to any disclosure. Allegations raised anonymously may be investigated depending on the seriousness of the issues raised, the credibility of the concern, and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

## Confidentiality

Where possible confidentiality will be maintained, although it must be stressed that in serious cases of fraud and in cases of child protection it will be not always be possible to maintain strict confidentiality if the concerns reach the investigation stage.

## Monitoring and Review

Westbury Harriers is committed to continuous improvement and will record and monitor complaints to enable a continual review of its processes and procedures.

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