



# CARDIFF DRAGONS FC

## CPD DDREIGIAU CAERDYDD

### Complaints and Disciplinary Policy

The aim of this policy is to provide instructions on how to handle complaints and how best to process matters of ill discipline. This policy covers events for both members and committee members.

#### INTRODUCTION

1. The club is essentially a social club and as such, it must be remembered that complaints and ill-discipline should be dealt with in a proactive manner and not in a judicial sense.
2. The elected club committee are responsible for the management of this policy and all actions held with in although in the first instance the club's Social Secretary and Welfare Officer (if elected) are the primary users of this policy.

#### SOCIAL SECRETARY AND WELFARE OFFICER

1. The Social Secretary (SS) and Welfare Officer (WO) are elected positions as directed by the constitution.
2. The WO is responsible to all members, both committee, playing and non-playing for the handling of complaints. S/he will represent the member plaintiff in the case of complaints against the committee and will represent an un-biased argument in the case of member plaintiff against member plaintiff.
3. The WO will issue disciplinary instruction as requested by the club committee.
4. The SS is responsible for the creation and management of official club social events.
5. Should the SS and/or WO positions become vacant then all responsibilities pass to the club Secretary.

#### DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SOCIAL SECRETARY AND WELFARE OFFICER

1. The WO has two primary roles:
  - a. To ensure that all members are content with the running of the club and that take primary care of member's welfare whilst on club duty.
  - b. To ensure all complaints follow this policy and that disciplinary action is justified and correct.
2. The SS will be responsible for arranging social activities for the clubs members. These will be well balanced throughout the year and will try to encompass as many members as possible whilst suiting the majority of the members' wishes.
3. The SS will form a Social Sub Committee who will include the regional GFSN representative (with their consent) and the Press & Marketing Officer (if elected). The clubs Treasurer will also be invited to attend meetings where club funding is being requested. Meetings should be minuted for transparency, and minutes should be made available through the website.
4. All social events are regulated where possible by this policy; however this in no way contravenes local law.
5. The SS is responsible for ensuring that all social activities present the club in a respectable light and that no "illegal" activity is undertaken with their knowledge during official social events.
6. There is no guaranteed funding for social events and the SS will approach the club committee to seek funding approval before committing to any purchase.
7. It is the responsibility of the WO to handle all complaints unless the complaint is against the WO, in this case the complaint should be handled by the club Chairperson.



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8. The WO will regularly check on the welfare of all members and ensure that they are aware of this policy and the complaints procedure. The WO primary focus regarding welfare is on discrimination and bullying. The club will tolerate neither of which. The WO will also be available to all members to discuss matters in a confidential manner however members must be aware that this is not legally binding and should the WO be informed of a person breaking the law, s/he has a moral obligation to inform the policing authorities.
9. The duty of the WO will also incorporate giving character evidence during investigations and s/he will always represent a member plaintiff in an investigation by the club Committee.
10. The WO will represent an un-biased opinion and will not be held individually accountable for the defence of any individual since it is his/her duty to do so.

### COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Any member, committee or otherwise, will address all complaints about another individual to the WO in the first instance. In the case that the plaintiff is, or is against, the WO then the complaint will be addressed to the Chairperson.
2. The WO will at the earliest opportunity obtain a written account of the complaint from the plaintiff. This can be hand written or typed but must be signed by the plaintiff in ink.
3. The WO is allowed some leeway in deciding the best solution for the complaint. S/he will need to consider if a complaint is of a personal nature that would cause un-required embarrassment to an individual or create an escalation of complaints. Should the WO feel that either of these is the case then s/he will inform the Chairperson of the basic detail, omitting names, and tell the Chairperson how s/he wishes to handle the complaint. The Chairperson may give council but the WO is not obligated to follow it.
4. Should the plaintiff demand, or make clear that the complaint needs to be actioned and followed up, then the WO is bound by this policy to do so.
5. All plaintiff demanded resolutions are to be announced at the next available committee meeting with the WO's update. At the AGM the WO will inform the member body of the total number of complaints dealt with however no details will be given.
6. Should a complaint be made to any other committee member, it is their responsibility to pass the information on to the WO, unless the complaint regards them in which case it should be passed to the Chairperson. During the complaint, only the WO will communicate with the various parties involved in the complaint. The WO will keep the Chairperson informed of his/her decisions and update the committee as s/he feels is required.
7. The overall intention of any complaint must be to resolve the issue to the satisfaction of all parties involved and to try and ensure all parties remain members of the club. The WO is not permitted to dismiss members from the club nor is s/he allowed to express an opinion of the club without consultation with the Chairperson.
8. All complaints must be noted although specific details may be omitted if they are of a sensitive nature.
9. Complaints about the football team in general and the playing or training of football should be presented to the Football Manager or his assistants. Should a member feel that their complaint is not being dealt with then they should speak with the WO about their complaint.
10. The club recognises two distinct types of complaint:
  - a. The un-official complaint
  - b. The official complaint



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11. The un-official complaint will be noted by the WO. This will assist the committee in dealing with unrest in the member body. The WO will comment at Committee meetings on all un-official complaints made during the preceding month. These complaints may, at Committee insistence, be investigated formally.
12. The official complaint will always require an investigation and a follow up. In the case of the complaint being against a committee member the Chairperson has the right to suspend the committee member should s/he feel it responsible to do so.
13. The investigation procedure is laid out in this policy.
14. The complaints procedure allows the WO to make autonomous decisions however should the plaintiff feel that these decisions are incorrect then the plaintiff should speak to the Chairperson.
15. A complaint against any member of the committee is always an official complaint. It is probable that more complaints will be against the Football Manager and the club committee should remember that the nature of this role will receive more complaints.
16. Should a plaintiff be totally unsatisfied with the WO handling of the complaint, and has already taken the complaint to the Chairperson and still feels aggrieved, then the plaintiff can call for an EGM. The complaint will be made fully public with both sides able to put their cases forward. The plaintiff will make his/her case first; the WO will represent the plaintiff. Once the case is heard the EGM may vote on the outcome as per the Constitution. Should the outcome of the EGM show that the committee incorrectly handled the complaint then the plaintiff may call for a "vote of no-confidence" in any or all of the committee should they wish to, including the Chairperson.
17. Complaints are not deemed incremental and one complaint does not substantiate another. Each individual is required to make their own complaint and complaints en masse are not recognised. Each person's complaint holds the same gravity and each are to be dealt with individually. Should several un-official complaints be made about the same person then the WO should make this an official complaint.

### INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

1. Some complaints or events that require a disciplinary action to be taken will require an investigation.
2. An investigation panel will comprise of three people one of whom will be the Chairperson, Secretary or the Football Manager. One of the other two positions must be a non-committee member. The final position can be any other member. These will be nominated by the Chairperson from available and willing members.
3. The investigation is instigated when the Chairperson decides that there is just cause to warrant an investigation and that the member body deserve to know the events surrounding the situation.
4. The investigation panel will be given carte blanche to speak to any member they so wish and all members are obligated to assist the panel.
5. The Chairperson will detail the period the investigation panel has to hold their investigation.
6. The investigation panel will only report at a committee meeting their findings or at an EGM should the investigation involve any member of the committee.
7. The investigation panel may only discuss their findings with each other and no other person has any right to the information before it is published. The investigation panel will publish their findings electronically.

### DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

1. All members will follow both the Members Code of Conduct. All players will follow the Players Code of Conduct.
2. The Secretary is responsible for the Members Code of Conduct. The Football Manager is responsible for the Players Code of Conduct.



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3. The club is not permitted to give physical punishment to any member. The club is not allowed to hold a “Kangaroo Court” and the committee’s decision is final.
4. The WO will record each member’s disciplinary status.
5. Depending on severity of the incident and the findings of the investigation panel the clubs response to an act of ill-discipline (or breach of either Code of Conduct) is:
  - a. Issue verbal warning
  - b. Issue Written warning
  - c. Suspend from fixtures
  - d. Suspend from training
  - e. Dismiss member
  - f. Lifetime Ban lodged with GFSN league.
6. Any member of the committee who believe that a member has acted inappropriately can give Verbal warnings. The WO must be notified of all verbal warnings given. A member who received two verbal warnings within 3 months of each must be given a written warning. Verbal warnings are to be removed from the member’s disciplinary record 6 months after being given.
7. When a committee member issues a verbal warning, they must state “This is a verbal warning and it is going to be recorded on a disciplinary file; do you understand?”. The member does not have to acknowledge the warning; however the member should be advised to seek further clarity from the WO.
8. Should a person have received two or more verbal warnings within three months of the first, or who a committee member believes to be acting wholly inappropriately, or who has committed (or is about to commit) an offence that the club committee deem inappropriate, then a written warning will be drafted by the WO. The written warning will be agreed with the Chairperson prior to committee.
9. Before a written warning is issued, the club committee will be informed and asked to vote in agreement to the proposed warning. The person’s Disciplinary file will be updated.
10. Should a member receive two or more written warnings within a period of 6 months from the first then the Committee are to suspend the member for a period no less than one calendar week and no more than four calendar weeks, the length of which should be deemed appropriate for the infraction. The player must be informed of the reason for this suspension. Should a player have committed an act that the committee deem grossly inappropriate they may suspend a member without prior warnings being given. Suspension can be from just Fixtures should the offence be committed under the Players Code of Conduct, or from training, socials and fixtures, if the offence committed under the Members Code of Conduct.
11. Before a suspension is issued, the club committee will be informed and asked to vote in agreement to the proposed suspension. The person’s Disciplinary file will be updated.
12. Should a member receive more than two club suspensions within a season (marked as the period between two AGMs) then the only appropriate action is to dismiss the member from the club. The Chairperson makes this decision, and his/her decision is final.
13. Should any member show total disregard to safety, be of a discriminative nature, overtly and physically hostile, or commit an illegal act then the member will be permanently dismissed from the club, and the relevant leagues informed, with the intent of giving a lifetime ban.



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14. Specific league disciplinary guidelines are sacrosanct and cannot be overturned by the club. Any league fines relating to foul play are the player's responsibility; the club will pay the fine(s) in the first instance, but will receive the money back from the individual player concerned.
15. Should any disciplinary be disputed, this shall be raised as a complaint to the WO; if the WO issued the disciplinary, then the issue may be taken to the Chairperson. The disciplinary will be investigated as per the complaints procedure, then affirmed or overturned. If the decision is overturned, then the disciplinary must be expunged from records within 7 days, and the decision reported to the Committee at the next available meeting. After this point, the member will be informed of the decision.

### VERSION CONTROL

Version 1: Ratified by Committee on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2010