

# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE POLICY

## LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY EAGLES FOOTBALL CLUB

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### 1. Purpose

This procedure ensures that all complaints relating to the Club, its officials, volunteers, players, parents or activities are handled fairly, consistently and transparently. It applies to all members and parents/carers of youth players.

The Club encourages concerns to be raised early so they can be resolved quickly and informally wherever possible.

### 2. What Counts as a Complaint

A "complaint" is any expression of dissatisfaction about:

- Conduct, behaviour or decisions of Club officials, coaches, volunteers or players.
- Alleged breaches of Club policies, rules or Codes of Conduct.
- Actions that may bring the Club into disrepute.

What is not covered by this policy document:

- Referee decisions (handled through league/competition appeals).
- Safeguarding concerns that indicate risk of harm (must be escalated immediately – see Section 7).

### 3. Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, complaints should first be raised informally with:

- The relevant Team Manager, or
- The Club's Football Secretary

These Club representatives will attempt to resolve informal complaints promptly and constructively, within a reasonable timeframe. If informal resolution is not possible or appropriate, the formal process should be used.

### 4. Submitting a Formal Complaint

Formal complaints must be submitted in writing to the Club's Football Secretary via email [complaints@letchwortheagles.org.uk](mailto:complaints@letchwortheagles.org.uk). Receipt shall be acknowledged within 72 hours.

If the complaint concerns the Football Secretary, it should be sent to the Club's Chair and Vice Chair.

The complaint should include:

- What happened, when and where and who was involved.
- Names of any witnesses.
- Any evidence available.
- The outcome sought by the complainant.

Anonymous complaints will be recorded, but the Club may be limited in its ability to investigate.

### 5. Acknowledgement & Initial Review (Formal Complaint)

The Football Secretary will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint.
- Review the information and determine whether immediate safeguarding or welfare action is required.
- Appoint an independent complaints panel. This should exclude the Club's Chair for the purposes of appeal.

## **6. Investigation Process**

The appointed investigator/panel will:

- Gather statements from relevant parties.
- Meet with the complainant to clarify details.
- Meet with the subject of the complaint.
- Review evidence, Club policies, Codes of Conduct and FA guidance.
- Reach a decision based on the balance of probabilities.

Once concluded, the complainant will receive a written outcome and any actions or sanctions applied. The Club will record the complaint, investigation and outcome within normal Club processes.

## **7. Safeguarding & Criminal Concerns**

If the complaint involves:

- Immediate risk of harm → contact Police (999).
- Child protection concerns → contact NSPCC 0808 800 5000 or the Herts FA Safeguarding Team.
- Criminal allegations → refer to Police, who are best placed to investigate.

Safeguarding concerns are not handled through the standard complaints process.

## **8. Confidentiality**

The Club will respect confidentiality wherever possible, but may need to share information with those involved to ensure fairness and allow individuals to respond to allegations. Where anonymity is requested, formal action may not be possible, but behaviour may still be addressed informally.

## **9. Outcomes & Sanctions**

Outcomes may include:

- No further action.
- Informal advice or guidance.
- Formal warnings.
- Temporary or permanent removal from a role.
- Referral to the League or County FA.

Sanctions will align with the Club's Code of Conduct and FA Grassroots Code.

## **10. Appeals**

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may submit an appeal in writing to the Club's Chair and Vice Chair within 14 days of the outcome communication from the Football Secretary. The appeal will then be reviewed by a panel not involved in the original investigation.

## **11. Learning & Improvement**

The Club will use feedback from complaints to improve systems, communication, behaviour standards and governance.

## **12. Review of Procedure**

This procedure will be reviewed annually, unless required by changes in FA guidance or Club governance.

**Version:** 1  
**Review date:** June 2027  
**Approved by:** Approved by Club Committee meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2026  
**Signed by:**



**Simon Efford**  
(Club Chair)



**Emma Rowe**  
(Club Secretary)