



COMPLAINTS POLICY

ABINGDON SQUASH and RACKBALL CLUB

This document sets out the procedure for complaints by members or guests of the ASRC (the “Club”) against other persons on club premises or the direct environs; and with regards to the Club’s other Policies.

Applicability of the procedure

This procedure applies where a Club member or visitor believes that another Club member has acted in a way that causes them distress.

Definition of the “Committee”

If the subject(s) of a Complaint (the “Respondent(s)”) is one or more member(s) of the Committee, then the references to the “Committee” in this procedure are to the members of the Committee excluding the Respondent(s).

General

Time limits in this procedure should usually be met by all parties. Time limits may only be extended by the Committee where it is necessary to do so in order to ensure a fair outcome (for example, where more time is needed because of a party’s illness, or during holidays).

Complaints will be dealt with confidentially by all parties involved, except where it is necessary to disclose information to carry out a fair investigation (e.g. the identity of the person making the Complaint will usually be disclosed to the Respondent).

The Committee may decline to consider malicious, vexatious or frivolous complaints.

Informal resolution

The person making the complaint should consider taking steps to resolve the matter informally before making a formal complaint. This might include discussing the matter with the Respondent, and/or seeking advice from the Chairperson or other Committee members.

Referring a Complaint

A formal Complaint should be made to the Chairperson within 14 days of the conduct complained of (the “Complaint”). The chairperson may invite the complainant to seek informal resolution of the complaint if this has not been tried.

The Complaint should be in writing and should include:

- A detailed description of the event(s) complained of;
- The outcome that is sought;
- Statements by any people who witnessed the event(s) or were affected by them; and
- Any other documents or evidence relied upon in support of the Complaint;

If the Complaint includes an anonymous statement from a witness or refers to an individual without disclosing their identity, it must include the reasons why anonymity is requested in each case.

Interim measures

If it is necessary to do so to protect either or both parties and/or other club members from a risk of harm and/or distress, the Committee may suspend the Respondent's Club membership or guest's invitation and access to Club events or facilities for up to 21 days pending proceedings under this procedure.

Response to the Complaint

Within 7 days of receipt of the Complaint, the Committee will write to the Respondent attaching the Complaint, all of the accompanying evidence and a copy of this procedure and stating that the Respondent has 10 days to provide written representations and any evidence in response to the Complaint (the "Response").

If the Response includes an anonymous statement from a witness or refers to an individual without disclosing their identity, it must include the reasons why anonymity is requested in each case.

If the complaint is not accompanied by supportive witness statements it will be returned to the Complainant and not considered until these are forthcoming.

Further Enquiries

Upon receipt of the Response, the Committee may make any further enquiries of any party that they consider necessary or desirable.

If the Complaint is likely to result in removal of membership, the discussions of the Committee must involve the club chairperson.

Decision:

The Committee shall record its decision and the reasons for it in writing and shall send a copy of the reasoned decision to the parties within 10 days of the deadline for the Response.

Sanctions

The sanctions that may be imposed under this procedure if the complaint is upheld include:

- Letter of censure – advising the respondent that any further breach may lead to a harsher penalty
- Suspension of membership and use of the Club's events or facilities for a fixed period;
- Removal from office;
- Removal of membership of the Club for a fixed period or indefinitely
- If a visitor, removal of the invitation as a guest of another member or supporter/family member of a member or competitor at the club for a fixed period or indefinitely

The complainant may be sanctioned as above if the claim proves to be vexatious or unfounded.

If the complaint is not upheld both parties will be advised.

Appeal

Upon receipt of the letter of outcome, the respondent has 5 days to appeal the decision to the chairperson, who together with one other committee member will consider the appeal and within a further 5 days give their decision. The appeal may result in the sanction being reduced or increased and this decision is final.