



Whistle blowing Policy and Procedures

Ipswich Town Football Club and Ipswich Town Community Trust

Updated Version 3

Date of Last Review	Next Review	Who	Signature and Date
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Ipswich Town Whistle blowing Team

Whistle blowing Officer-

Denise Booth 01473 400595

Denise.booth@itfc.co.uk

Additional Contact Details

Advice, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)

For information and help on employment issues and dispute resolution.
0300 123 1100

Community Legal Service

The Community Legal Service Direct provides free information, help and advice direct to the public on a range of common legal issues.
0845 345 4345

Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS)

For advice on discrimination issues.
0808 800 0082

Liberty

For advice on human rights.
020 7329 5100 / 020 3145 0460

Citizens Advice Bureau

For general advice and information on a range of legal fields.
Wales: 0344 4772020
England: 03444 111444

Pay and Work Rights Helpline

For help and advice on government enforced rights.
0800 917 2368

Public Concern at Work

(Independent whistleblowing charity) Helpline: (020) 7404 6609
E-mail: whistle@pcaw.co.uk
Website: www.pcaw.co.uk

Trade Union Congress

For information on trade unions and guidance on workers' rights.
T. 020 7636 4030
E. info@tuc.org.uk

Your Employment Settlement Service (YESS)

For affordable legal advice on resolving problems at work without litigation.

T. 020 3701 7530
E. info@yesslaw.org.uk

Introduction

Whistle blowing can be used as an early warning system or when it's recognised that appropriate actions have not been taken. If standards ever fall short with poor practice or unacceptable behaviour, there's a framework in place to make sure we can deal with it. By reporting a concern you can help us make sure that the youth game stays safe and strong. It is about revealing and raising concerns over misconduct or malpractice within the club or within any structure associated with it. A culture of openness and accountability is essential in order to prevent such situations occurring or to address them when they do occur.

Ipswich Town Football Club and Ipswich Town Community Trust will ensure that any member of staff who makes a disclosure in such circumstances will not be penalised or suffer any adverse treatment for doing so. Any adult or young person with concerns about a child, colleague or member of ITFC/ ITCT staff can use whistle blowing. Anonymous concerns will be investigated and acted upon as the person receiving the concern sees fit, having regard to the seriousness of the issue raised, the credibility of the concern, the prospects of being able to investigate the matter, and fairness to any individual mentioned.

This policy is designed to provide you with information about the protections offered by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 ('PIDA'), the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as well as the process by which you may raise your concerns.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Club and Ipswich Town Community Trust, and other volunteers/workers undertaking activity on behalf of the Club. The aim of the policy is to:

- To encourage staff to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible, in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated as appropriate, and that their confidentiality will be respected.
- To provide staff with guidance as to how to raise those concerns.
- To reassure staff that they should be able to raise genuine concerns in good faith without fear of reprisals, even if they turn out to be mistaken and protect them in this situation.

N.B- This policy should not be used for complaints relating to your own personal circumstances, such as the way you have been treated at work. In those cases you should use the Grievance and Complaints Policy or Bullying Policy or discuss the matter with your line manager or HR.

What is Whistle blowing?

Whistle blowing is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work. This may include:

- (a) Criminal activity;
- (b) Miscarriages of justice- matters likely to lead to a wrongful conviction or the falsifying of information.

- (c) Danger to health and safety- this encompasses risks to *any* individual – i.e. whether they are a worker of the employer or not.
- (d) Damage to the environment;
- (e) Failure to comply with any legal or professional obligation or regulatory requirements- breach of any statutory requirement; contractual obligation; common law obligation (e.g. negligence, nuisance, defamation) or an administrative law requirement. (refer to Sexual Offences Act 2003 and The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998)
- (f) Bribery;
- (g) Financial fraud or mismanagement;
- (h) Negligence;
- (i) breach of our internal policies and procedures;
- (j) Conduct likely to damage our reputation;
- (k) Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information;
- (m) The deliberate concealment of any of the above matters.

A whistleblower is a person who raises a genuine concern in good faith relating to any of the above. If you have any genuine concerns related to suspected wrongdoing or danger affecting any of our activities (a whistle blowing concern) you should report it under this policy.

If you are uncertain whether something is within the scope of this policy you should seek advice from the Whistle blowing Officer, (Denise Booth) whose contact details are at the end of this policy.

Rules, Regulations & Legislation

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) is designed to ensure that workers are not unfairly discriminated against or punished for making a “protected” disclosure. Broadly, a protected disclosure is one where a worker makes a disclosure of information which shows that:

- (a) Either the employer or another worker has committed been, is committing, or is likely to be committing a criminal offence;
- (b) Likely to be committing a criminal offence;
- (c) Either the employer or another worker has failed to comply with a legal obligation;
- (d) There has been a miscarriage of justice;
- (e) The health and safety of individuals has been, is being, or is likely to be endangered;
- (f) The environment has been, is being, or is likely to be damaged;
- (g) Information relating to any of the above is being, has been or is likely to be deliberately concealed.

The Club is bound by PIDA and the Club is fully committed to ensuring that any protected disclosure made by a member of staff is handled in a proper and efficient manner. In particular, the Club and FFCF is committed to ensuring that any member of staff who makes a protected disclosure is not unfairly treated or discriminated against

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 is designed to ensure that all employees and volunteers understand their positions of trust within the club. When an individual accepts a role at Ipswich Town and Ipswich Town Community Trust that involves working or volunteering with children or adults at risk, he/she must understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent in the role. A relationship of trust can be described as one in which one party has power and influence over the other by virtue of their work and the nature of the activity. A member of staff, volunteer or any child, young person or adult may abuse a position of trust and The Sexual Offences Act 2003 outlines this as:

“A person aged 18 or over who is in a position of trust who intentionally touches another person in a sexual manner.”

(See ITFC Safeguarding Children Policy for further details)

Investigation and outcome

If you wish to make a protected disclosure to the Club or Ipswich Town Community Trust, you may do so either by email, letter, telephone or in person to the Club’s Whistle blowing Officer Denise Booth. Whilst a protected disclosure may be made anonymously, we would encourage staff to reveal their identity where possible in order to ensure that the issue may be investigated properly and feedback may be given by the Club on the steps it has taken. All protected disclosures will be treated very seriously and will be dealt with appropriately.

Upon receiving a disclosure, the relevant department manager will arrange an investigation of the matter with Denise Booth in HR (Whistle blowing Officer). Where possible the person responsible for dealing with the protected disclosure will have no conflict of interests. The investigation may involve the individual giving a written statement. The person’s disclosure statement will be taken into account and they will be asked to comment on any additional evidence obtained.

The Whistle blowing officer will then report the matter to the Safeguarding Manager Mark Andrews (if appropriate and no conflict of interests exists) which will then take any necessary action, including reporting the matter to any appropriate government department or regulatory agency.

If disciplinary action is required, the individual investigating the matter should follow the ITFC Disciplinary Policy. On conclusion of any investigation, the individual who has made the disclosure will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and what has been done, or proposes to do. If no action is to be taken, a reason for this will also be provided.

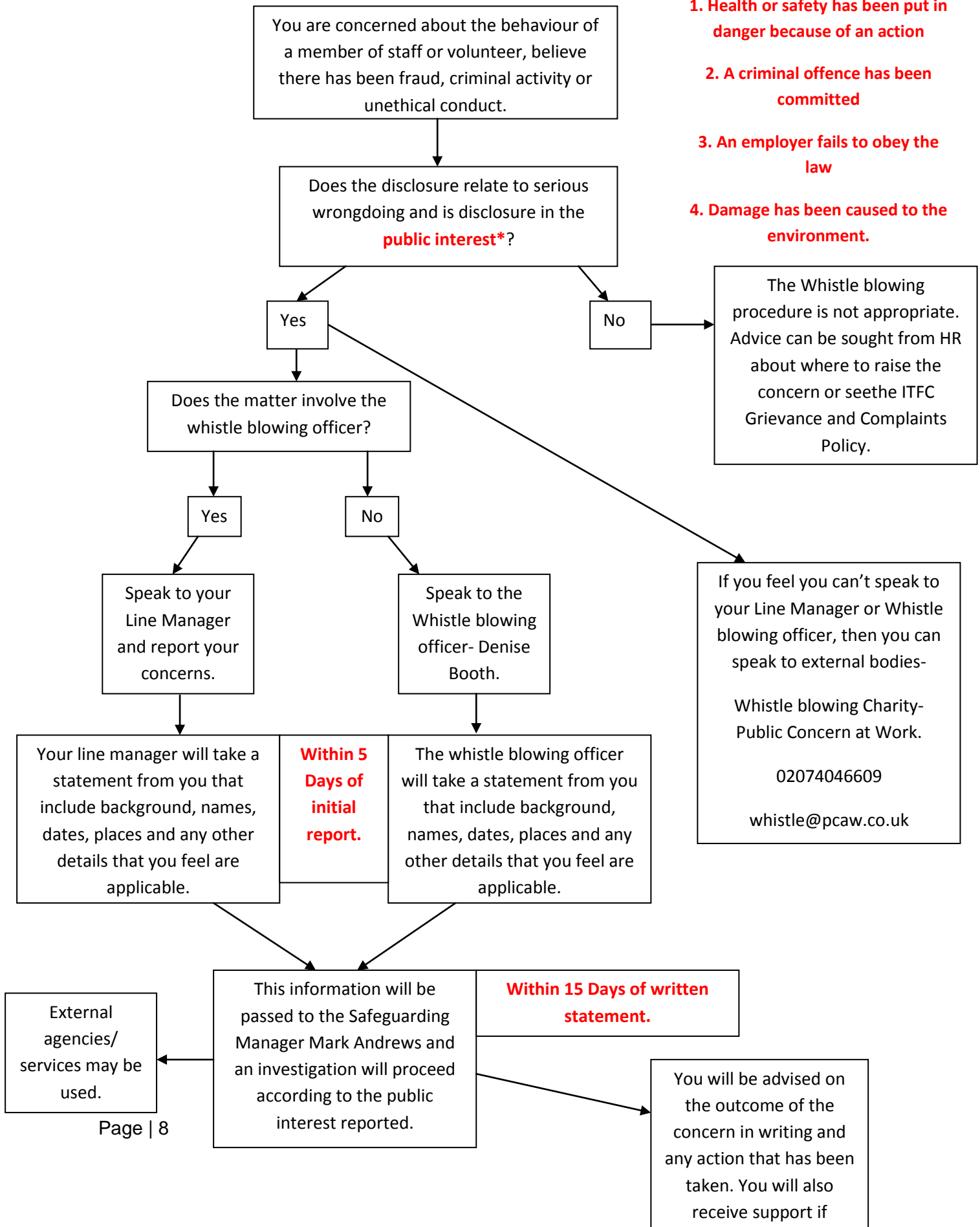
The Club will look to treat any protected disclosures made in the strictest confidence, however staff should be aware that action taken as a result of their disclosure could in some circumstances lead to their identity being revealed (either by inference or as required, for example, in legal or disciplinary proceedings). We will aim to keep you informed of the progress of the investigation and its likely timescale. However, sometimes the need for confidentiality may prevent us giving you specific details of the investigation or any disciplinary action taken as a result. You should treat any information about the investigation as confidential.

If we conclude that a whistleblower has made false allegations maliciously, in bad faith or with a view to personal gain, the whistleblower will be subject to disciplinary action.

***Public interest may include:**

- 1. Health or safety has been put in danger because of an action**
- 2. A criminal offence has been committed**
- 3. An employer fails to obey the law**
- 4. Damage has been caused to the environment.**

Flowchart for the investigation procedure



External disclosures

The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases you should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body such as a regulator. It will very rarely if ever be appropriate to alert the media. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external. The independent whistle blowing charity, Public Concern at Work, operates a confidential helpline. They also have a list of prescribed regulators for reporting certain types of concern. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

Whistle blowing concerns usually relate to the conduct of our staff, but they may sometimes relate to the actions of a third party, such as a customer, supplier or service provider. The law allows you to raise a concern in good faith with a third party, where you reasonably believe it relates mainly to their actions or something that is legally their responsibility. However, we encourage you to report such concerns internally first. You should contact your line manager or the Whistle blowing Officer.

If you are not Satisfied

While we cannot always guarantee the outcome you are seeking, we will try to deal with your concern fairly and in an appropriate way. By using this policy you can help us to achieve this. If you are not happy with the way in which your concern has been handled, you can raise it with the Whistle blowing Officer Denise Booth. Alternatively you may contact the Managing Director Ian Milne.

Protection and Support

It is understandable that whistleblowers are sometimes worried about possible repercussions. We aim to encourage openness and will support staff that raise genuine concerns in good faith under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken. As part of the Employment Rights Act 1996 and The Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 everyone is entitled to report a concern despite there being evidence or truth. However, Protection under the Whistle blowing Policy does not extend to employees who act in bad faith or raise malicious, vexatious or knowingly untrue concerns.

Staff will be protected and must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a concern in good faith. Detrimental treatment includes dismissal, disciplinary action, threats or other unfavourable treatment connected with raising a concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform the Whistle blowing Officer immediately. If the matter is not remedied you should raise it formally using our Grievance Procedure.

As a member of staff/volunteer at Ipswich Town Football Club and Ipswich Town Community Trust, everyone has the right to not be subjected to any detriment or act by another employee or employer. Staff must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way. Anyone involved in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action. (For further guidance see Employment Rights Act 1996 and ITFC Grievance and Complaints Policies)

If you feel that you cannot make a protected disclosure to the Club because you reasonably believe that they:

- (a) Will cover the issue up
- (b) Will treat you unfairly or discriminate against you as a result;
- (c) Or will not (or has not) address the issue

You should take advice from an independent person or body (such as ACAS) about making a protected disclosure to a person or body outside the Club. In the event that you wish to discuss any issue relating to this policy, please contact Denise Booth in the Human Resources department in the first instance.

Responsibility for the success of this policy

The board has overall responsibility for this policy, and for reviewing the effectiveness of actions taken in response to concerns raised under this policy.

The Whistle blowing Officer has day-to-day operational responsibility for this policy, and must ensure that all managers and other staff who may deal with concerns or investigations under this policy receive regular and appropriate training.

All staff are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they use it to disclose any suspected danger or wrongdoing. Staff are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved. Comments, suggestions and queries should be addressed to the Whistle blowing Officer Denise Booth..