



## **First Light Festival C.I.C Whistleblowing Policy**

### **1. Purpose**

Following the enforcement of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 in July 1999, it is necessary to have a policy to encourage people to unburden grievance concerns without fear of discrimination.

The term “whistleblower” is used to describe any person, usually a member of staff, which may include employees, freelance staff or volunteers, who becomes aware of a serious problem in the organisation and raises the matter so it may be investigated and, if necessary, corrected.

Sometimes this may involve bringing the problem to wider attention. Early disclosure may give First Light Festival C.I.C the opportunity to rectify the problem.

### **2. Persons affected**

First Light Festival C.I.C core team

Freelance staff and facilitators

Volunteers

Participants

Suppliers

Stakeholders

### **3. Policy**

First Light Festival C.I.C is committed to the highest standards of quality, openness and accountability.

This commitment is evidenced through Board meetings, regular staff meetings, including freelance staff taken on to fulfil contracts, complaints procedure, disciplinary and grievance procedures etc.

As part of that commitment, we encourage anyone with serious concerns about any aspect of the work to come forward and express their concerns. In many cases, concerns or complaints will be dealt with through the procedures mentioned.

#### **4. Procedure**

The following procedures are proposed to make provision for anyone to disclose information of suspected malpractice within First Light Festival C.I.C on a confidential basis and to be protected against victimisation or dismissal. The openness and accountability to which we commit relates to any concerns regarding any of the following:

- A criminal offence
- Financial frauds and malpractice
- Other types of corruption
- Attempts to deliberately cover up information
- Abuse or neglect of vulnerable people and children
- Damage to the environment
- Failure to deliver proper standards of service
- Damaging personal conflicts at senior level
- Bullying, harassment or victimisation in the work place
- Breach of a legal obligation
- Danger to health or safety of an individual

Concerns should be reported at an early stage before problems have a chance to become serious. We will support concerned persons and protect them from reprisals or victimisation. Confidentiality will be respected.

Anyone found trying to discourage concerned persons from coming forward to express a concern will be subject to disciplinary action. In the same way, any member of staff criticising or victimising an employee, volunteer, supplier or service user as a result of a concern being expressed will also face disciplinary action.

#### **Who to Contact**

In the first instance, anyone wishing to report a concern should do so, in confidence, to the First Light Festival C.I.C Chair of Directors. If for some reason this is not possible, (e.g. the concern relates to the Chair of Directors) then they should report it to another member of the board of Directors.

If anyone wishes to seek advice or clarification before reporting any matter they should speak with one of the First Light Festival C.I.C Directors.

If policy and procedures within the organisation are working properly there should be no need for contact to be made with an external agency to express concerns. However, if these internal procedures have been exhausted, then the concerns may be reported as follows:

- if the problem involved a very senior member of staff of the organisation - contact the Chair of the Board of Directors.
- In the case of criminal offence – contact the police – and notify the Chair of the Board of Directors.
- In the case of abuse of children and vulnerable people – the local authority social services and notify the trustee lead for safeguarding who will then notify the Chair of the Board of Directors.
- In the case of abuse of public funds – contact Companies House – and notify the Chair of the Board of Directors.
- In the case of any fraud – contact the independent examiner – and notify the Chair of the Board of Directors.

Matters should not be raised with the press or other media (to do so will result in a disciplinary action).

### Contact Details

Board of Directors:

Genevieve Christie, [Genevieve@flipsideuk.org](mailto:Genevieve@flipsideuk.org), 07443 429876

Clare Matterson, [cematterson@gmail.com](mailto:cematterson@gmail.com), cematterson@gmail.com

Mary Graham, [mary@yellobelly.co.uk](mailto:mary@yellobelly.co.uk), 01728 684 450

Wayne Hemingway, [wayne@hemingwaydesign.co.uk](mailto:wayne@hemingwaydesign.co.uk), 07831317888

### Independent Examiner

### Dealing with Concerns

All concerns will be investigated carefully and thoroughly.

If appropriate, results of investigations and any action that is proposed will be passed on to the person expressing the initial concern. However, confidentiality needs to be maintained at all times. If it is found that malicious, unfounded allegations have been made this will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

### Policy Review Table

The Board of Directors will review this policy annually, or as and when there is a change in legislation.

Date	Approved by (print name)	Approved by (signature)	Role in organisation
1 December 2019	Genevieve Christie		Director
22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2020			
22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2021			

A signed and printed copy of this policy is kept on file at our registered office.