**APPLICANT (EMPLOYEE & RESIDENT) COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE**

**POLICY**

* It is the policy of Dorchester Municipal Charities (DMC, the Charity) to enable any Applicant (employee or resident) to make complaints freely and easily.
* Applicants who complain are listened to and treated with courtesy and empathy
* Applicants will never be disadvantaged as a result of making a complaint
* Complaints are investigated promptly, thoroughly, honestly and openly
* Apologies are given as appropriate
* All complaints are dealt with as confidential and in accordance with the Charity’s Privacy Notice.
* DMC accepts complaints from individuals or an authorised advocate eg a family member, carer or professional advocate.
* Complaints are reviewed regularly and used to improve the Applicant journey.
* Information about the number of complaints, their nature and outcomes is published each year.
* If a complaint is pursued unreasonably or where an Applicant’s actions or behaviours are deemed to be unreasonable, the Charity reserves the right to close the complaint. The Charity may take further action if a complainant displays threatening or abusive behaviour or language (whether verbal or written), that causes Staff or Trustees to feel threatened, abused and/or continues to contact the Charity with unreasonable demands during/following a complaint investigation.
* In cases where Trustees consider a complainant is being unreasonable and overly persistent and decide to bring the complaint to an end, they will inform the complainant of their reasons.

**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

* The Applicant completes a complaints form, available from the Clerk’s Office.
* The General Manager shares the form with the relevant working group: Welfare Group (Resident Applicants) or Management Team (Employee Applicants).
* The Applicant will be advised of progress on a weekly basis.
* If the matter concerns the General Manager, the Applicant may contact a Trustee from the relevant Working Group to discuss their complaint. A list of Trustees is available from the Clerk’s Office.
* The Trustees may make arrangements to meet with the Applicant and any other parties involved at their discretion.
* After the matter has been discussed the Trustees will write to the Applicant within 4 weeks to advise of action taken to resolve the complaint and to notify the Applicant of the outcome.
* If the outcome of this investigation is not satisfactory, the Applicant may ask for the matter to be considered further by the whole Board of Trustees.

**CHARITY COMMISSION**

* Dorchester Municipal Charities, Charity reference number: 201387 (Chubb, Whetstone and Napper’s Almshouses), is a Registered Charity with the Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities that provides regulatory guidance.
* The Charity Commission does not act as a complaints service and most complaints should be dealt with by the Charity directly. However, the Charity Commission will investigate issues such as those listed:
  + a charity not following the law, with damaging consequences to its reputation and public trust in charities generally
  + serious harm to the people the charity helps or other people who come into contact with the charity through its work
  + a person or organisation receiving significant financial benefit from a charity
  + criminal, illegal or terrorist activity
  + a charity set up for illegal or improper purposes
  + a charity losing significant amounts of money
  + a charity losing significant assets, for example land or buildings
* Applicants may contact The Charity Commission with evidence of their concern:

Online form: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>

Address: Charity Commission, PO Box 211, Bootle, L20 7YX

Telephone: 0300 066 9197

* Please note that the Charity Commission may not take further action if there is no evidence of the concern.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Almshouse Association, Complaints Model Policy, September 2019

Charity Commission, *Complain about a Charity,* [*https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity*](https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity), accessed December 2019