Whistleblowing Policy

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Relevant to	Trustees and Volunteers	
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1. Policy Overview

Cornerstone Library Churchtown ('the library') applies and expects high standards of service delivery across the whole organisation. This requires the professional behaviour of its trustees, volunteers and associates across the organisation and probity and integrity in all organisational dealings with other agencies. This is a major part of the library's commitment to the public, service users and other stakeholders.

However, in any organisation it is possible to come across instances when these standards of conduct are not adhered to, or when malpractice takes place within the organisation.

The aim of this policy is to support any volunteer or trustee (hereafter referred to as volunteers) to come forward if they have serious concerns about any aspect of North Meols Association (NMLA) work.

Moreover, the NMLA accepts that discussing and revealing these concerns can only take place in a climate of openness, trust and positive acceptance of criticism about the organisation.

2. Aim

To support volunteers in raising concerns, by adhering to the following principles:

- The library will not tolerate any form of malpractice (i.e. abuse or mistreatment of library users), fraud, discrimination, harassment or significantly poor professional performance within the library.
- Any allegation of malpractice will be taken seriously and investigated promptly.
- Any attempt by a volunteer to intimidate or victimise a colleague who wishes to raise a legitimate concern about malpractice will be treated as a disciplinary offence. Likewise, a knowingly false or malicious allegation made against another person will be dealt with through disciplinary procedures.

- Expressed concerns will be treated confidentially and anonymity respected in the first instance. If anonymity has to be broken later in order to successfully complete an appropriate investigation, advice and support will be given to the volunteer who has raised the concern.
- The redress of malpractice will be seen as a learning outcome and wherever possible, positive action will result from any investigation.

3. Scope

This policy covers all volunteers and trustees. It outlines the process by which any library volunteer can safely report any aspect of organisational activity that has caused him/her concern, which cannot be readily addressed through normal line management channels, or other agreed policies.

4. Responsibilities

All volunteers and trustees, regardless of their position within the library, have a responsibility to report any serious concerns they have about any aspect of library or fundraising work.

5. Monitoring & Review

This policy and the associated procedure will be reviewed annually to ensure they remain fit for purpose and compliant with legislation and best practice.

6. Procedure

1. If possible, volunteers should in the first instance, raise any concerns about alleged malpractice with their immediate line manager / nominated contact.
2. When this is not possible (i.e. this person is not available for a confidential discussion, or the allegation refers specifically to this person's conduct) the allegation should be discussed with a member of the senior leadership group.
3. Volunteers and trustees adopting these procedures will continue to have regard for the NMLA Code of Confidentiality, and will not discuss these concerns outside the organisation or with colleagues.
4. Once an allegation has been made, the Trustee or line manager / nominated contact will immediately instigate an investigation to determine whether the allegation can be substantiated.
5. Where the allegation relates to a safeguarding issue, the NMLA Safeguarding Policy & Procedure must be immediately implemented.
6. If the allegation is proven or substantiated, then the volunteer will be asked to leave the library.
7. The investigating person will offer any volunteer making an allegation full and appropriate support, having regard to any equal opportunities or harassment issues.

8. The reporting volunteer will be informed at the end of the investigation whether the allegation has been substantiated and what action will be taken to remedy the situation.