

KLDDC Complaints procedure

For the purposes of this document the following definitions apply:

The **club** is the King's Lynn and District Camera Club.

Complainer refers to any person making a formal complaint against the club or any member of the club.

Complainee refers to any person or persons against whom such a complaint is made.

Trustees are the trustees of the club i.e. the committee.

Receipt of complaints:

Any member of the club receiving a complaint should pass it promptly to the Chairman, Vice-Chairman or Secretary. All concerned should maintain confidentiality regarding the enquiry into the complaint, commensurate with achieving a just solution

Complaints should be made in writing. If the above officers of the club receive any complaint that is not in writing, they should advise the complainer that the complaint must be put in writing before it can be dealt with under this procedure.

The Secretary, or in his or her absence the Chairman or Vice-Chairman will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 7 days whenever possible, together with a copy of this procedure.

The Chairman will decide whether the complaint shall be dealt with initially by stage I or, in the case of sufficiently serious or complex complaints should proceed directly to the stage II

Stage I

The Chairman shall appoint two trustees to form a panel to consider the complaint. This shall not include any trustee if they are also complainer or complainee. In the event of no appropriate trustees being available, panel members may be drawn from the general membership.

The panel will invite written evidence from the complainer and complainee and from any other relevant parties as they see fit. In the case of the complainer, this evidence may consist of the initial written complaint.

The panel will consider this evidence and endeavour to reach a conclusion.

The conclusion of the panel may include any or all of the following:

- That the all or part of the complaint is not substantiated
- A refund of all or part of a member's subscription.
- An apology on behalf of the club
- Advice to a member with regard to a possible apology and to future conduct
- To recommend that the investigation proceeds to the stage II

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The conclusion of the panel will be sent in writing by the secretary to the complainer and complainee. They should be informed that, if they are dissatisfied with the conclusion of the panel, they should notify the secretary in writing within 14 days of receipt of the conclusion and the investigation will automatically proceed to the stage II.

If no such notification is received and the panel have not recommended proceeding to stage II, the investigation will terminate and the conclusions of the panel will be implemented.

The panel should aim to complete stage I within two weeks of receipt of the initial complaint.

Stage II

The investigation will proceed to stage II if:

- The Chairman, on receipt of the initial complaint, determines that the case is sufficiently serious or complex.
- The stage I panel recommends it.
- Either the complainer and complainee notify the secretary within seven days that they are dissatisfied with the conclusion of the stage I panel.

The chairman shall appoint three trustees to form a board to consider the complaint. This shall not include any trustee if they are also the complainer or complainee. In the event of no appropriate trustee being available, board members may be drawn from the general membership. The board may include none, one or both members of the stage I panel

The board may call for further written evidence.

The board may at its discretion invite the complainer and/or complainee, any witnesses to give evidence in person.

If not called by the board the, the complainer and/or complainee may if they so wish, make a oral statement to the board.

The complainer and/or complainee giving oral evidence or a statement to the board may be accompanied by a "friend" who may advise them or speak on their behalf.

The conclusion of the board may include any or all of the following:

- That the all or part of the complaint are not substantiated
- A refund of all or part of a member's subscription.
- An apology on behalf of the club
- Advice to a member with regard to a possible apology and to future conduct
- To recommend to the trustees that the membership of one or more members be discontinued.

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- To advise that a trustee shall resign. In this case they will be eligible to stand for re-election

The board should aim to complete stage II within four weeks of receipt of the initial complaint or within two weeks of receipt notification of dissatisfaction with the result of stage I, whichever is the later.

Confidentiality and reporting.

Proceedings of the panel and board will remain confidential except as follows.

The written conclusions of the panel and the board will be sent to complainer, complainee and all trustees.

Supplementary documentation will be available to all trustees after the conclusions have been reported unless they are disqualified on the grounds that they are either complainer or complainee.

A copy of this procedure shall be posted on the club website and available on request from the Secretary.

Agreed by committee 12th March 2010