

## ***Complaints and suggestions***

Connected Voice is always looking at ways of improving its services, so we really appreciate feedback. You might be very satisfied with our service and want to let us know – it is always good for staff to hear where they have done well. Alternatively you might have some ideas for how to improve our services so we could make them better for others. Or you might be unhappy about something that we did, or didn't do.

Connected Voice aims to provide its members, organisations and individuals with the best possible service. However, we recognise that from time to time there may be occasions when users of our services feel that the quality or level of service provided falls short of what they could reasonably expect. In all relationships, things sometimes go wrong – mistakes are made, people are unhelpful or insensitive and very occasionally there are deliberate actions which are unacceptable. When these things happen, we need to know about them both to put things right for you, and to improve working practices for the benefit of other users. Your service will not be affected or withdrawn as a consequence of any complaint.

You should make your complaint within twelve months of the date of the event that you are complaining about, or as soon as you first knew about the problem. If there are special circumstances and your complaint was received after twelve months, then you can appeal to the Chair to allow the complaint to be investigated.

It is always best to try to resolve problems quickly and as near to the source of the problem as possible. Wherever possible, therefore, you should discuss your concern fully with the person concerned, or with their manager. The staff have all had instructions about how to deal with complaints. In most cases this should be sufficient to sort the matter out.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the informal complaint process, or if the complaint can't be dealt with on an informal basis, then you should make a complaint, by telephone or in writing the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will acknowledge in writing, within five working days the receipt of any complaint. The Chief Executive will investigate the complaint.

The Chief Executive will let you know the results of the investigation within 21 days; unless it is complex and needs further investigation. You will be kept up to date with what is happening with your complaint. If the complaint is found to be justified, Connected Voice will agree any necessary further action with you.

If you are not happy with the investigation outcome, you have the right to appeal by putting your case to a sub group of the Connected Voice Board of Trustees. You have 28 days to do this from the date you were informed of the outcome of the initial investigation. You will then be invited to a special meeting with at least three trustees chaired by either the Chair or one of the Vice Chairs. You may be accompanied by a friend if you wish.

If the complaint is found to be justified (upheld), Connected Voice will agree any necessary further action with you. If the Board does not consider the complaint justified (dismissed), they will provide you with their reasons. The trustees' decision is final and you will be informed of the trustees' decision in writing.

If the complaint is about the Chief Executive or a trustee, the complaint should be sent to Chair of Connected Voice Board of Trustees via the office, and marked private and confidential.

### ***If you want to make a complaint or a suggestion, please contact:***

Chief Executive  
Connected Voice  
One Strawberry Lane  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 4BX  
Telephone: 0191 232 7445  
Email: [lisa.goodwin@connectedvoice.org.uk](mailto:lisa.goodwin@connectedvoice.org.uk)

If you need additional support to make comments and participate fully in this process, please ask the Connected Voice Office Manager to arrange appropriate support.

Our complaints policy is on our website ([www.connectedvoice.org.uk](http://www.connectedvoice.org.uk)) or ask if you'd like a copy.