



# Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum

## WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum (RMNF) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) established for the public benefit and to advance the education of the public without distinction of ability, sex, sexual orientation, race or political, religious or other opinions. The objects of the CIO are:

1. To promote high standards of planning and architecture in or affecting the area of benefit.
2. To educate the public in the geography, history, natural history, culture and architecture of the area of benefit.
3. To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features or areas of historic or public interest in the area of benefit.

In furtherance of the above objects but not otherwise the trustees shall have the power to establish a neighbourhood forum for the area of benefit to promote and or improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area..

We take our responsibility seriously and continually strive to embed good practice across the organisation and beyond.

It is important that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing identified by the RMNF trustees, officers, members and volunteers and others working with or on behalf of the charity is reported and properly dealt with. We therefore require all individuals connected with RMNF to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the charity or the way in which our organisation and external partnership organisations are run.

This policy sets out the way in which you may raise any concerns and how those concerns will be dealt with.

### Background

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 amended the Employment Rights Act 1996 to provide protection for workers who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters in the public interest. These are called "qualifying disclosures". A qualifying disclosure is one made by an individual who has a reasonable belief that:

- a criminal offence;
- a miscarriage of justice;
- an act creating risk to health and safety;
- an act causing damage to the environment;
- a breach of any other legal obligation; or
- concealment of any of the above;

is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed. It is not necessary for you to have proof that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed - a reasonable belief is sufficient. You have no responsibility for investigating the matter - it is the charity's responsibility to ensure that an investigation takes place.

If you make a protected disclosure you have the right not to be expelled from RMNF, subjected to any other detriment, or victimised, because you have made a disclosure. We encourage you to raise your concerns under this procedure in the first instance.

### Principles

- Everyone should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing in our organisation and its activities. Trustees, officers, members and volunteers and others working with or on behalf of the charity should be watchful for illegal or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature that they become aware of
- Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation reported back to the person who raised the issue



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- No trustees, officers, members, volunteers and others working with or on behalf of the charity will be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that the continued membership and opportunities for future involvement with RMNF will not be prejudiced because they have raised a legitimate concern
- Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualified disclosure will be an offence that will result in the perpetrator being expelled from RMNF
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure our Complaints Policy will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures
- Maliciously making a false allegation is an offence that will result in the perpetrator being expelled from RMNF

An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself an offence. If told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a trustee, you should not agree to remain silent. You should report the matter to the Chair of the Trustees.

### Procedure

This procedure is for disclosures about matters concerning RMNF and other external and / or partnership organisations.

**Stage 1:** In the first instance, any concerns should be raised with the Secretary, who will arrange an investigation of the matter. The investigation may involve you and other individuals involved giving a written statement. Any investigation will be carried out in accordance with the principles set out above. Your statement will be taken into account, and you will be asked to comment on any additional evidence obtained. The Secretary will take any necessary action, including reporting the matter to any appropriate government department or regulatory agency. The Secretary will also invoke any corrective action required. On conclusion of any investigation, you will be told the outcome and what the charity has done, or proposes to do, about it. If no action is to be taken, the reason for this will be explained.

**Stage 2:** If you are concerned that the Secretary is involved in the wrongdoing, has failed to make a proper investigation or has failed to report the outcome of the investigations to the relevant person, you should escalate the matter to the Chair of the Trustees. The Chair will arrange for a review of the investigation to be carried out, make any necessary enquiries and make their own report to the Trustees.

**Stage 3:** If on conclusion of stages 1 and 2 you reasonably believe that the appropriate action has not been taken, you should report the matter to the relevant body. This includes:

- HM Revenue & Customs
- The Health and Safety Executive
- The Environment Agency
- The Serious Fraud Office
- The Charity Commission
- The Pensions Regulator
- The Information Commissioner
- The Financial Conduct Authority
- Companies House

You can find the full list in The Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order 2014:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/496899/BIS-16-79-blowing-the-whistle-to-a-prescribed-person.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496899/BIS-16-79-blowing-the-whistle-to-a-prescribed-person.pdf)



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### HOW TO MAKE A DISCLOSURE

You can contact the Secretary by calling 07970715904 to leave a message or by emailing [info@RMNF.org.uk](mailto:info@RMNF.org.uk) or, you can write directly to:

Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum  
Owd House  
Fern Hill Lane  
Rochdale  
OL12 6BW

If you wish to escalate the matter to the Chair of the Trustees, you can do this by email to: [info@RMNF.org.uk](mailto:info@RMNF.org.uk)

### Data protection

When an individual makes a disclosure, we will process any personal data collected in accordance with our data protection policy. Data collected from the point at which the individual makes the report is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of dealing with the disclosure.