Milford Tennis & Squash Club

Whistleblowing Policy

1. Introduction

Milford Tennis & Squash Club (MTSC) is committed to developing a culture where all individuals are encouraged to raise any concerns about unacceptable practice and misconduct. It is the duty of everyone to speak up about genuine concerns. MTSC takes any forms of misconduct seriously and has introduced this policy to enable all employees, workers and contractors (referred to as 'colleagues' as appropriate), players, parents, accredited coaches, volunteers and officials to raise concerns early and in the right way.

2. Raising a Concern

2.1 If you have a concern you should report it in the first instance to your manager or if this is not appropriate to the Chair of MTSC. The individual raising the concern should tell the person they are reporting the matter to whether they wish to raise the matter in confidence so that appropriate arrangements are made.

2.2 If you do not feel comfortable reporting your concern to your manager or the Chair of MTSC - you should call the following independent confidential reporting service, provided by Safecall:

safecall
0800 915 1571

Alternatively, a report can be made online: **www.safecall.co.uk/report**. This service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year (calls are not audio recorded).

2.3 MTSC Grievance procedure should be used to raise personal matters in relation to an employee's own contract of employment.

3. What is Whistleblowing?

3.1 When reporting a concern, the individual must reasonably believe two things:

- That they are acting in the public interest;
- That the disclosure may fall under one or more of the following areas:
  - a risk to health and safety;
  - a criminal offence or a miscarriage of justice;
  - bullying, harassment or discrimination;
  - risk or actual damage to the environment;
  - covering up wrongdoing;
  - bribery, betting, corrupt conduct, inside information and match fixing;
  - conduct likely to damage MTSC reputation;
  - unauthorised disclosure of confidential information; or ○ concealment of any of the above;

3.2 It is not necessary for the individual to have proof that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed – a reasonable belief raised in good faith is sufficient.

4 Commitment

4.1 We believe in putting the whistle-blower first, giving them the opportunity to report wrongdoing on their terms, in a way which makes them feel comfortable and confident, in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously, and dealt with quickly and confidentially

4.2 MTSC is committed to this policy. If a genuine concern is disclosed under it, MTSC will use all reasonable endeavours to protect the position of the individual concerned, provided they are acting in good faith. This assurance does not apply to someone who maliciously raises a concern that they know is untrue.

4.3 A worker who makes such a protected disclosure has the right not to be dismissed, subjected to any other detriment, or victimised, because they have made a disclosure. Any direct or indirect harassment or victimisation will not be tolerated and if appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against those concerned.

4.4 We understand that reporting a concern can be a challenging decision for the individual. If the individual feels their situation is intolerable before, during or on conclusion of any

investigation discussions will be held with them. The purpose of the discussion will be to consider any reasonable steps to support the individual – for example redeployment, changing their environment or ensuring they are not disadvantaged as a result of raising their concern.

5 Confidentiality

5.1 MTSC recognises that individuals may wish to raise their concern anonymously. In these circumstances their identity will not be disclosed without their consent. If a concern is reported through the Safecall service the individual can choose to remain anonymous if they wish. If a situation develops where MTSC is not able to resolve a concern without revealing their identity (for example if evidence is required in court) we will consult with the individual concerned.

6 Procedure

6.1 If a report concerning MTSC is received via Safecall it will be sent to the LTA People Director in the first instance, who will then send the report onto the MTSC Chair to address. The LTA People Director, in this situation will act as a 'post box' for MTSC senior management. The appropriate person will follow the MTSC Complaints Procedure accordingly.

6.2 Where possible, the individual will be informed of who is handling their concern, including any timescales and whether any further information or assistance may be required from them. Where appropriate and if confidentiality allows, the individual will be kept informed. The individual may also be asked how they feel the matter might best be resolved. If the individual chose to remain anonymous when they reported their concern to Safecall, they will be advised by Safecall at the time of the call to get back in touch with them should they wish to obtain an update on their report.

6.3 Any information shared with the individual about the investigation must be treated as confidential. On conclusion of an investigation, where possible (i.e. where not anonymous), the individual will be informed of the outcome including any steps taken to resolve the concern.

6.4 If MTSC concludes that a whistle-blower has made false allegations maliciously, in bad faith or with a view to personal gain, the individual may be subject to disciplinary action or other appropriate measures in accordance with MTSC Policies.

7 External Disclosures

7.1 The law recognises that, in some circumstances, it may be appropriate for individuals to report certain categories of concerns directly to a regulatory authority (e.g. medical profession). The individual must report any concerns involving criminal misconduct, child

or vulnerable adult abuse or safeguarding to the relevant regulatory authorities. In certain situations the MTSC may also have a duty to report matters to external statutory bodies.

7.2 It will very rarely (if ever) be appropriate to alert the media to a whistleblowing concern. If an individual reports their concern to the media without first exhausting the internal procedure set out in this policy, in most cases the individual will lose any whistleblowing protection and they may also be subject to disciplinary action or other appropriate measures in accordance with MTSC Policies.

7.3 If you are unsure whether to report a concern or if you are considering reporting a concern to a regulatory authority you can contact 'Protect' on 020 3117 2520 (https://protect-advice.org.uk/) to obtain independent and confidential advice.

If you have any questions about this policy please contact the MTSC Chair.