

Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Whistleblowing Policy

Purpose of this document

This policy sets out Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's commitment to work effectively together to create a culture which is open and transparent. A culture in which individuals are supported to report concerns and safety issues, and are treated fairly, with empathy and consideration, when they have been involved in an incident or have raised a concern. Wherever possible the identity of the whistleblower will be protected.

This document sets out the procedure that staff, volunteers and board members of Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough can use to raise a concern about activity that is deemed illegal, unethical, or not correct. This might be classified as violation of company policy/rules, law, regulation, as well as fraud, and corruption (whistleblowing). Members of staff, volunteers and Directors will not be disadvantaged in any way as a result of whistleblowing.

This policy sets out the procedure to follow when Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is contacted by a potential whistleblower regarding service provision.

Concerns

1. Wherever possible, concerns should be raised with your immediate line manager. If you do not feel comfortable doing so, then with the Chief Executive Officer, or if this is the same person, the Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Chair. Failing that, concerns can be raised with another member of the Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Board.

Contacts:

CEO – Jess Slater

jess.slater@healthwatchcambspboro.co.uk

Acting Chair – Jonathan Jelley

Jonathan.jelley@healthwatchcambspboro.co.uk

2. The CEO or an appointed Investigating Officer will oversee the process. The Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Chair will oversee any issues involving the CEO.
3. Within five working days of raising your concern the Investigating Officer will contact you to:
 - Introduce themselves
 - Provide their contact details
 - Confirm whether any further details will be required
 - Provide you with a written summary of the concern
 - Indicate how the investigation will be handled and an initial estimation of the timescale.
4. You will be:
 - Kept informed of the timetable for the investigation
 - Supplied with information on support available to you
 - Informed whether further investigations will take place and if not, why not
 - Have an outcome of the concerns raised provided in writing.

Further concerns

If you consider that the cause for concern has not been resolved by the investigation then you should inform the Chair of the Board who will then appoint a Member of the Board or independent person or organisation to review the concern and the outcome of the investigation and consider whether further steps need to be taken to prevent further dangerous, illegal or improper activity.

If the concern involves a criminal act, it will be escalated to the local police. The whistleblower's identity will remain protected unless disclosure is required by law.

Safeguarding concerns

Where the concern relates to safeguarding the appropriate Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Policy will also be invoked.

To be reviewed by Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Board of Directors

Date: March 2025

Next Review

Date: March 2028

Responsible Officer

Chief Executive Officer of Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough