

Poultry Club of Great Britain - Grievance Procedure

Introduction

The Poultry Club of Great Britain (PCGB) aims to provide a pleasant and friendly environment for all members to enjoy their hobby of breeding and exhibiting poultry and eggs. However, we recognise that from time to time, members may feel the need to raise a concern about an aspect that is worrying them. The PCGB encourage all members of the PCGB to try and resolve any concerns through informal discussions in the first instance, as per the PCGB Constitution (section 13.6) *“the Council has the power to consider any complaint between members. However, the Poultry Club should not be drawn into disputes between fanciers when it is not covered in the PCGB rules and constitution”*.

It is therefore suggested that any grievance must be related to and covered in one of the following PCGB documents:

- PCGB Constitution
- PCGB Show Rules
- PCGB Bullying and Harassment Policy
- PCGB Code of Conduct

Furthermore, the PCGB Show Rules provide confirmation of the complaints procedure and process that must to be followed by a complainant at a show, on the day of the show. Unless a complaint has been raised during the show it is very difficult for the PCGB to investigate after the show has finished.

Informal procedure

If a member has a grievance or complaint regarding an aspect relating to being a member of the PCGB, the complainant should first talk the matter over on an informal basis with the PCGB Governance Committee Chair. Alternatively, a complainant may choose to speak with a Trustee regarding any concerns. The PCGB representative will discuss the concerns in confidence and, where appropriate, will make discreet investigations to attempt to resolve the matter speedily and fairly.

Formal Procedure - Stage 1

If concerns have not been resolved through informal discussions or the complainant wishes to discuss the grievance formally, the concerns will need to be put in writing and sent to the General Secretary. Where possible, the grievance should include all details, dates and the names of people involved, so that the matter can be properly investigated and resolved.

Upon receipt of the formal complaint, a formal grievance discussion will then be arranged so that the PCGB Governance Committee/ Chair can investigate the concerns. This may be in person, via telephone or email communication. If in person, the complainant has the right to be accompanied by a fellow member or legal representative (a legal representative should provide relevant identification) Due to potential conflicts of interest, PCGB Trustees are not able to act as companions to members during a grievance procedure. In addition, the PCGB may ask the complainant to select an alternative companion if there is a conflict of interest regarding the chosen companion.

The meeting may be postponed, at the complainant's request, and for up to fourteen days, if the chosen companion is not available to attend a meeting on the date originally set.

The PCGB Secretary will attend all formal grievance hearings to make sure that the grievance procedure is adhered to; to support the PCGB representative and the complainant, and to make a note of the meeting. The complainant should receive a copy of the meeting notes once they have been compiled.

Following the discussion, an investigation will be carried out into the allegations, which may include enquiries with fellow members, discussions with Trustees, reviewing documentation, etc. so that a judgement regarding the grievance can be made. The investigation may be conducted by the PCGB Governance Committee Chair. Alternatively another PCGB Trustee may be asked to carry out the investigation to make sure it is as objective as possible. The PCGB will aim to conduct the investigation as thoroughly and as quickly as possible, and will keep the complainant informed of its progress.

The PCGB General Secretary will support the Trustee carrying out the investigation and will make a record of all meetings which take place.

Once the investigation has been concluded, the Governance Committee will meet to agree and make a recommendation on the outcome of the grievance. This will be put forward to the full Board of Trustee meeting for approval. A letter will be written or emailed to inform the complainant of the Board's decision.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the grievance, they should put the reasons in writing within fourteen days and send them to the PCGB General Secretary.

Formal Procedure - Stage 2

On receipt of an appeal, the PCGB will contact the complainant to provide a list of five unconnected fellow members or Trustees who are willing to hear the appeal. Three of these individuals must be selected to form an Appeal Panel. If three individuals are not selected, the appeal cannot go ahead. The suggested five fellow members may consist of past Presidents, previous Chairs', retired Trustees, current Trustees, or current members who the PCGB Board of Trustees believe have the necessary skills and experience to be part of the Appeal Panel. The PCGB General Secretary will attend to make sure that the appeal hearing is fair and in accordance with PCGB policy statements, as well as making notes of the meeting, which the complainant is entitled to receive a typed copy of.

At the end of the appeal hearing, the three members of the Appeal Panel will review the discussions, and conduct any further investigations as necessary. The complainant will receive a written outcome of the appeal within twenty one days of the meeting. If there is a delay in decision making due to further investigation the complainant will be informed as soon as possible. The decision of the Appeal Panel is final.

Review

This procedure will be reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with changes in law and equality and diversity legislation.

Adopted on: 21st May 2019

To be reviewed: May 2021