



RUNNYMEDE ROYALS PICKLEBALL CLUB

CLUB DISCIPLINARY POLICY & COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This policy is designed to help and encourage all members of Runnymede Royals Pickleball Club (RRPC) to achieve and maintain standards of behaviour as expected under the Club's rules, policies and/or codes of conduct. The emphasis of this Disciplinary Policy is, in the first instance, on the improvement of the member's behaviour by working in partnership with them, and where relevant their parent/guardian, rather than just on imposing sanctions.

The Club will however, impose sanctions in the most serious cases or where improvement in the member's behaviour has not been forthcoming. The Club's aim is to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all members and no disciplinary action will be taken against a member until a full investigation as to the circumstances of the incident or matter has been conducted by the Club.

Principles

In any pickleball club, differences and misunderstandings may arise. Successful resolution of differences depends on the willingness of the parties involved to communicate with one another. Where possible, RRPC will look to resolve complaints informally at committee level.

Where a complaint cannot be resolved informally, a formal complaint should be made in writing, via email, to the Club Secretary. Formal complaints will be investigated by a panel appointed by the Club's Committee, in line with the content of this document.

It is intended that this complaints procedure should

- be easily accessible
- ensure that all complaints are fully and fairly investigated
- ensure that the complaints process supplies an effective response
- ensure that proper redress is made, where applicable

The Club will respect a complainants' desire for confidentiality wherever possible

The Club will use the feedback provided by both informal and formal complaints to ensure that its systems and services are improved.

What is a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with the conduct of the club, its committee(s), coaches, volunteer officers, players, or with alleged unfair practice in connection with the club.

Grounds for a complaint shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

- if the conduct of any individual, body, or organisation brings or is likely to bring the club into disrepute
- the violation of the Club's Constitution, Policies or Code of Conduct

A complaint may be made by:

- a member of the Club where the complaint concerns the Club
- the parent (or other person with parental responsibility) for a member of the Club under the age of 18 years on their behalf
- any third party where the complaint concerns the Club

No complaints may be made under this policy about decisions made by referees at competitions held under the authority of the Club. Appeals procedures exist in respect of these matters.

Informal Complaint

It is clearly desirable for any complaint to be resolved informally where possible and it is hoped that every attempt will be made to achieve this. An informal complaint can be made either verbally or in writing to the committee member or the committee of the Club directly. Every effort will be made to resolve informal complaints to the satisfaction of the complainant.

Where it has not been possible to resolve the matter informally, the Formal Complaints Procedure should be invoked. The request should be made in writing to the Club Secretary. If the complaint concerns the Club Secretary, the complaint should be made to the Club's Chair.

Initiating a Formal Complaint

A formal complaint should be made in writing to the Club Secretary where a complaint has not been resolved informally or where the matter is of a serious nature. Complaints of a serious nature would include gross misconduct, negligence or matters concerning the protection of young people or vulnerable adults. Verbal and anonymous complaints shall be reviewed for general improvement purposes but will not be investigated through the formal complaints procedure.

It shall be for the complainant to prove the complaint on a balance of probabilities.

A complaint must normally reach the Club Secretary no later than thirty days after the alleged incident that gave rise to it.

- Complaints about the protection of children or vulnerable adults may be referred to the Police or Social Services by a member or our Welfare Officer, in line with our Safeguarding Policy.
- Complaints alleging criminal activity may be referred to the Police.

Investigating a Formal Complaint

The Club Committee will appoint an Investigating Officer(s) to investigate the allegation. The Investigating Officer(s) will be independent of the matter being investigated and will remain impartial.

The Investigating Officer(s) shall have the power and discretion to co-opt, from time to time, other persons with specific skills or experience to help in the conducting of their duties.

The Investigating Officer(s) shall notify all interested persons and/or bodies at once of any decision by them, whether to allow a complaint to continue, setting out the reasons for the decision.

Appealing a Decision

The parties to the complaint shall be entitled to appeal against any such decision of the Investigating Officer(s) to the Club's Committee provided that the notice of appeal, setting out the grounds for appeal, is lodged with the Club Secretary within 14 days of the date upon which the Investigating Officer(s) sends the written notification of the decision.

The Club's Committee shall consider the grounds of appeal. In the case of an appeal against a decision of the Investigating Officer(s) to allow a complaint to continue, they may invite a written submission from the complainant. They may confirm or reverse the decision made by the Investigating Officer(s) and may grant or refuse permission to continue with the complaint. The decision of the Club's Committee shall be final.

Refusing a Complaint after Investigation

If the Investigating Officer(s) is not satisfied that it meets the criteria for a complaint they may refuse to allow it to continue.

Delayed Complaint Reporting

Where a complaint is lodged more than thirty days after an alleged incident giving rise to the complaint, and where the Investigating Officer(s) is satisfied that it is in the interest of the sport/club to do so, they may allow the complaint to continue. Before

arriving at a decision, they may require an explanation of the delay in making the complaint.

If the Club's Committee allows an appeal against the refusal of the Investigating Officer(s) to allow a complaint to continue on the grounds of the lateness of the complaint, the party against whom the complaint has been made may raise the lateness of the complaint as an issue at the hearing.

Complaints Panel

Where, following investigation under this process, a member is deemed to have breached a Club rule, policy or code of conduct or has otherwise acted in a way which the process has found to be in contrast to the spirit of this document and/or the Club's rules, the committee shall be at liberty to establish a Complaints Panel to determine the facts relating to the matter and take such measures as the Panel sees fit.

The Complaints Panel will consist of up to three members of the Club's committee plus (if relevant) the Club Welfare Officer, so long as none of them are the subject of the disciplinary action. The chair of the Complaints Panel shall have the casting vote if necessary.

Either the Club's committee or the member who is the subject of the hearing may request for an independent person to join the Complaints Panel. The independent person will be selected on the basis of mutual agreement, and shall - for the avoidance of doubt - not be someone who has served with the subject of the hearing on any board or committee, and shall ideally not be a member of the Club itself.

All members of the Complaints Panel shall treat its proceedings as confidential, unless the subject of the hearing waives that right directly, or violates the confidentiality through making public comment about its proceedings.

The Complaints Panel shall meet as soon as is practicable (where possible within seven days) after the Club's committee meeting which appointed the Complaints Panel. The Club Secretary shall notify the member concerned of the time, date and venue of the meeting in writing and invite them to attend or submit their version of events or mitigating circumstances. The member will be required to confirm attendance no later than 48 hours prior to the date of the meeting.

If the member is aged under 18, the member will be required to attend with their parent/guardian who may make a representation on their behalf. If the member is aged 18 or over, they may be accompanied by an independent representative who may make a representation on their behalf.

The Complaints Panel shall act honestly and equitably in assessing the facts of the disciplinary case before it and may recommend to the Committee such sanctions as it sees fit, including for example (this list is not exhaustive):

- suspension to allow more facts to be gathered, after which time a further meeting of the Complaints Panel Committee shall be held
- verbal warning
- written warning
- education
- mentoring
- exclusion from a specified number of sessions or matches
- exclusion from a specified number of training/coaching/drill sessions
- removal from a Club team for the remainder of the current season
- refusal to register with a team for the next season
- expulsion from the Club

If appropriate, the Complaints Panel may choose to impose no sanction.

The Complaints Panel will normally regard the following (which is not an exhaustive list) as gross misconduct:

- fighting
- assault on another person
- deliberate damage to Club property
- bringing the Club into disrepute by actions or words;
- serious negligence or disregard of a Club rule, policy or code of conduct that causes, or could have caused, unacceptable loss, damage or injury
- serious act of insubordination, including the failure to follow or observe reasonable instructions of a team coach/manager or other Club official

If the member concerned fails to either attend or submit their version of events or mitigating circumstances as envisaged above, the Complaints Panel can proceed and make such inferences as it sees fit from such non-attendance or no submission and the Complaints Panel meeting may proceed in the member's absence.

Appealing a Complaints Panel Decision

The member subject to the disciplinary hearing may appeal against the decision of the Complaints Panel within seven days of being notified of the decision. The appeal must be made to the Club Secretary in writing and must identify the specific decision being appealed and set out the grounds of appeal and the reasons why it would be substantially unfair not to alter the decision. If these requirements are met, the Club Secretary will arrange for an independent appeal panel to be appointed which will exclude anyone who sat on the initial Complaints Panel and, since this appeal panel will be independent of the Club, any decisions made by it will be binding on all parties with no right of further appeal.

The appeal will take place as soon as possible after the member concerned has requested it, and no later than 28 days following the date of receipt of the request for an appeal hearing.

The Club Secretary will communicate the final decision to the member only after the conclusion of the appeal, or when the date for the lodging of an appeal has passed

without such appeal being lodged. No member of the Complaints Panel shall make any comment about the proceedings publicly.

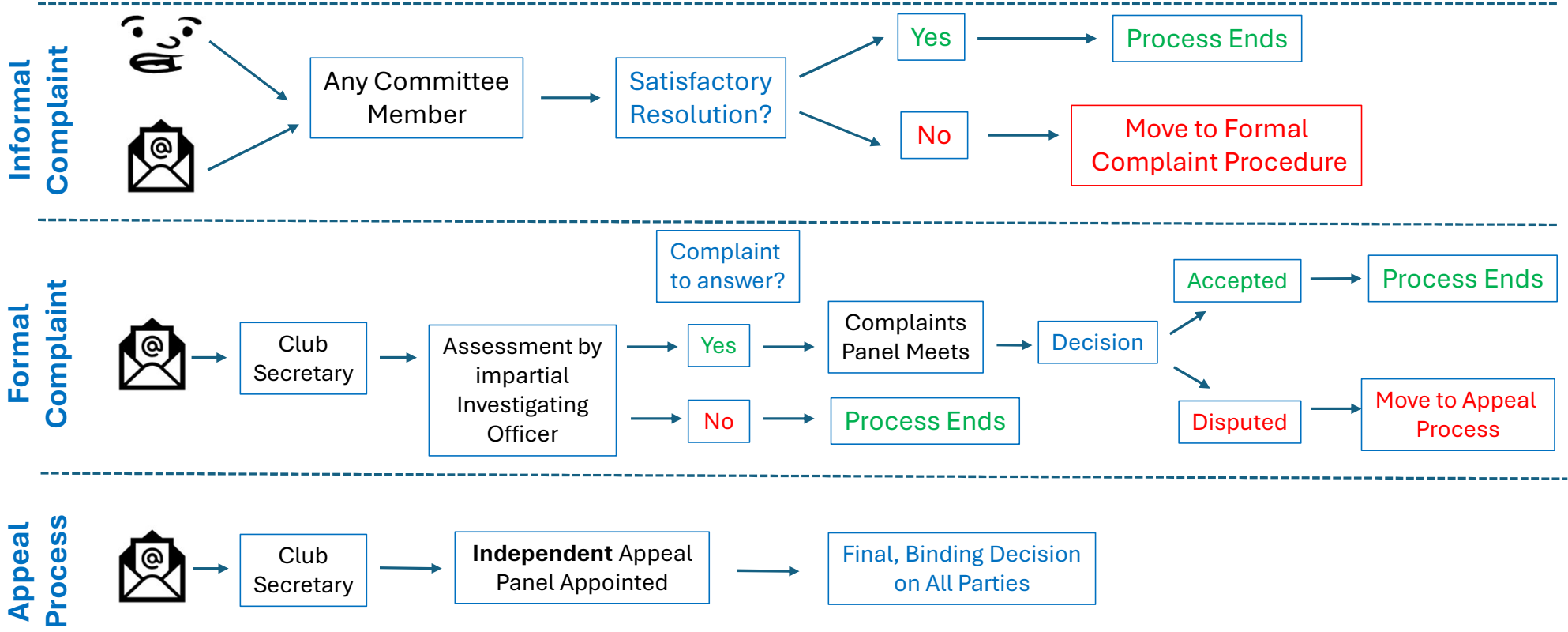
No member expelled from membership shall be readmitted except by a special resolution of the Club in general meeting.

Confidentiality

As far as is practical, confidentiality shall be preserved in the investigation of a complaint. Such an approach is in the interest of both the complainant and any other person or persons involved. If, however, another person is named in a complaint, we believe that normally they should know what is said about them and who is making the complaint. The Club may also act if a complaint is found to be malicious.

----- ENDS -----

RRPC Disciplinary Process



Note: It shall be for the complainant to prove the complaint on a balance of probabilities.

v1.0 February 2026