

## **Section: 13**

### **Barnet Homes Board Directors Whistle Blowing Policy**

#### **Scope of the Policy**

Barnet Homes are committed to the highest possible standards of openness and probity. Board Directors are encouraged to report wrongdoing, and have the right to be heard and taken seriously when they do so.

This is about reporting:

- crime
- fraud
- corruption
- illegality
- miscarriages of justice
- danger to health and safety
- damage to the environment
- deliberate concealment of the above or serious failure to deliver service

It is not about raising issues affecting you as an individual Board Director.

#### **Reporting wrongdoing**

You must always report wrongdoing within Barnet Homes. Failure to do so may be seen as a breach of the Board Directors Code of Conduct. You are encouraged to report wrongdoing, and you will always be listened to and treated seriously and sensitively.

You should report wrongdoing:

- To the Board's Chair or the Vice Chairs or
- If you prefer to the Chief Executive Officer, Deputy Chief Executive Officer or Company Secretary

Who you report to will be potentially influenced by who the report is about.

The Chief Executive Officer has a personal duty to Barnet Homes to deal with illegality, maladministration and wrongdoing, and is responsible for the overall operation and maintenance of the whistle blowing policy. He or she will make sure that your concerns are addressed.

Whenever you report wrongdoing:

- Everything possible will be done to respect your confidentiality, if that is what you want. Sometimes, it is necessary to take a statement as part of the investigation and enforcement process. In that case the issues will be discussed with you beforehand.
- Completely anonymous reports carry much less weight. They will only be acted upon at the discretion of Barnet Homes, having regard to the

seriousness of the issues, the credibility of the report and the likelihood of obtaining confirmation elsewhere.

- The earlier you express concerns the easier it is to take action.
- You will not be required to prove your allegation, but you will be asked to provide as much detail as possible. It is better to do this in writing but as an alternative you can arrange to meet privately one of the persons identified above under reporting wrongdoing.

After you report:-

- Initial enquiries will be made to determine whether your concerns can be resolved without further investigation and whether the report should be referred elsewhere.
- If they are not resolved, they can be investigated internally, referred to an outside agency like the police, external auditor or the Health and Safety Executive for investigation or in exceptional cases form the subject of an independent inquiry.
- You will receive a letter within ten working days acknowledging your report, saying what is being done, and giving an estimate for a full response if one cannot be given at this stage. You will be told in writing what enquiries have been made and what investigations or further steps are proposed.
- You will be told if your help is needed in an investigation (for example to give evidence in court) and given help, information and support.
- You will be told the outcome when the matter is completed unless this is not possible for legal reasons. Sometimes this can take a long time, especially if there is a long investigation or court proceedings are involved.

### **Protection from reprisal**

Anyone who makes a report in good faith will be protected from victimisation or reprisal. No action will be taken against you under the Code of Conduct if you make a report in good faith but it is not confirmed by the investigation. Board Directors however should not make reports - which they do not reasonably believe to be true, or which are vexatious or malicious.

If you are the subject of action under the Code of Conduct they will not necessarily be halted as a result of your whistle blowing.

### **If you are not satisfied**

If you are not satisfied with the response to your whistle blowing report you can contact the Chief Executive Officer or other officers listed above who will

arrange a formal review of the outcome by the Standards and Ethics Committee (SEC). See also the Standards and Ethics Committee procedure.