

## **Whistleblowing Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Bristol Together CIC is committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and accountability. This Whistleblowing Policy outlines the procedures and protections in place for employees, contractors, and stakeholders to report any suspected wrongdoing, unethical behaviour, or legal violations. We encourage all individuals to raise concerns without fear of retaliation and ensure that such concerns are properly investigated and addressed.

### **2. Purpose**

- 2.1 Provide a clear procedure for reporting concerns related to illegal, unethical, or improper conduct within the organisation.
- 2.2 Protect whistleblowers from retaliation or victimisation for raising concerns in good faith.
- 2.3 Ensure that reported concerns are investigated thoroughly, fairly, and promptly.
- 2.4 Promote a culture of openness, accountability, and integrity within Bristol Together CIC.

### **3. Scope**

- 3.1 All employees of Bristol Together CIC, including full-time, part-time, and temporary staff.
- 3.2 Contractors, suppliers, and other third parties involved with Bristol Together CIC.
- 3.3 Any person connected to the organisation who has a genuine concern about improper conduct.

### **4. Principles**

- 4.1. Confidentiality
- 4.11 All whistleblowing reports will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality, and the identity of the whistleblower will not be disclosed without their consent, unless required by law.
- 4.2. Protection Against Retaliation

4.21 Any employee or individual who raises concerns in good faith will be protected from retaliation, victimisation, or discrimination. Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who retaliates against a whistleblower.

#### 4.3. Good Faith Reporting

4.31 Concerns should be raised in good faith, with reasonable belief that the information disclosed is accurate and reflects misconduct or unethical behaviour. Malicious or false allegations may result in disciplinary action.

#### 4.4. Fair Investigation

4.41 All concerns raised will be investigated fairly, impartially, and in a timely manner, ensuring that both the whistleblower and the accused party are treated with respect and due process.

### **5. Reporting Procedures**

#### 5.1. How to Raise a Concern

5.11 Concerns can be raised through the following channels:

5.12 **Manager:** Employees may report concerns directly to their immediate supervisor or manager.

5.13 **Designated Whistleblowing Officer:** If the concern involves the employee's manager or they feel uncomfortable reporting to them, they may raise the concern with the designated Whistleblowing Officer, via email or phone.

5.14 **Anonymous Reporting:** Individuals can submit concerns anonymously if they feel unable to disclose their identity. However, this may limit the ability to investigate the concern thoroughly.

#### 5.2. Information to Provide

5.21 The nature of the suspected wrongdoing.

5.22 Dates, times, and locations of any relevant incidents.

5.23 Names of individuals involved or witnesses, if known.

5.24 Any supporting documentation or evidence.

#### 5.3. Confidentiality

- 5.31 All information disclosed will be treated confidentially, and the whistleblower's identity will not be revealed without their permission unless disclosure is required by law or is necessary for the investigation. In such cases, we will make every effort to inform the whistleblower before any disclosure is made.

## **6. Investigation Process**

- 6.1 **Acknowledgment:** Upon receiving a report, the designated Whistleblowing Officer will acknowledge the receipt of the concern within five working days, unless the concern is made anonymously.
- 6.2 **Preliminary Review:** A preliminary review will be conducted to determine whether the concern requires a formal investigation and the appropriate course of action.
- 6.3 **Investigation:** If an investigation is required, it will be carried out by an impartial team or individual with relevant expertise. The investigation will aim to gather facts, review evidence, and interview relevant parties.
- 6.4 **Outcome:** Upon completion of the investigation, appropriate action will be taken based on the findings. This may include disciplinary action, legal action, or changes to policies and procedures.
- 6.5 **Feedback:** If possible and appropriate, the whistleblower will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. However, certain outcomes may remain confidential due to legal or privacy concerns.

## **7. Protection and Support for Whistleblowers**

- 7.1. **Protection from Retaliation**
- 7.11 Bristol Together CIC strictly prohibits any form of retaliation, victimisation, or harassment against individuals who raise concerns in good faith. Any employee found retaliating against a whistleblower will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
- 7.2. **Anonymity and Confidentiality**
- 7.21 Whistleblowers have the right to remain anonymous. However, providing contact details may facilitate the investigation process. All disclosures will be treated in strict confidence.

## **8. False or Malicious Allegations**

8.1 Bristol Together CIC takes all allegations seriously. However, if it is found that an individual has deliberately made a false or malicious claim, this may result in disciplinary action. Good faith concerns raised that turn out to be unfounded will not result in any action against the whistleblower.

## **9. Responsibilities**

9.1. Whistleblowing Officer

9.11 The designated Whistleblowing Officer is responsible for:

9.12 Receiving and managing whistleblowing reports.

9.13 Ensuring the confidentiality and protection of whistleblowers.

9.14 Overseeing investigations and ensuring they are carried out fairly and impartially.

9.15 Providing feedback to whistleblowers when appropriate.

9.2. Management

9.21 Promoting an open and supportive culture where employees feel safe to raise concerns.

9.22 Ensuring that whistleblowers are protected from retaliation or victimisation.

9.23 Cooperating fully with investigations.

9.3. Employees

9.31 Raise concerns in good faith if they suspect any misconduct or unethical behaviour.

9.32 Cooperate fully with any investigations when required.

## **10. Monitoring and Review**

10.1 This Whistleblowing Policy will be reviewed annually or as needed to ensure it remains effective and up to date with legal requirements and best practices. Feedback from employees and stakeholders will be considered during the review process.

## **11. Conclusion**

11.1 Bristol Together CIC is committed to maintaining the highest ethical standards. By encouraging open and honest communication, we aim to create a transparent and



accountable work environment. We value the courage of individuals who speak up and will ensure they are supported and protected throughout the process.

Paul Morgan, Managing Director

Bristol Together CIC

For inquiries or to raise concerns related to this Whistleblower policy, please contact Paul Morgan at [paulmorgan@bristoltogether.co.uk](mailto:paulmorgan@bristoltogether.co.uk).

<b>Review Cycle:</b>	<b>Date of Review:</b>	<b>Reviewed by:</b>	<b>Next Date of Review:</b>
Annual	01/08/2024	Paul Morgan – Managing Director	01/08/2025