



Salisbury Diocesan Guild of Ringers

Disciplinary Procedures



Rule 9 DENIAL, SUSPENSION and WITHDRAWAL OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership may be denied, suspended or withdrawn at the discretion of the Executive. There shall be a right of appeal to that body.

9.1 A person known to be on the Sex Offenders Register may be denied membership after formal consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

9.2 Every Member shall comply with the Aims and Rules of the SDGR.

9.3 Any conduct which in the opinion of the Executive is either unworthy of a Member or otherwise injurious to the interests of the SDGR shall render a Member liable to expulsion by the Executive.

9.4 Expulsion from the SDGR shall occur only after the Member has been given the opportunity, accompanied by a third party (if so required), to attend an Executive Committee Meeting to discuss their alleged unworthy or injurious conduct. Alternatively, the Member may resign their membership.

9.5 The vote on a resolution for expulsion shall be by secret ballot, and the resolution shall only be carried if not less than two-thirds of the Executive Committee present vote in favour of the resolution.

9.6 During the period between allegations of misconduct being made and an Executive Committee decision SDGR membership of the Member involved will be suspended.

9.7 A person so expelled shall not be eligible for future membership except by resolution of the Executive Committee.

This document lays out the process to investigate and recommend a way forward in relation to any potential disciplinary matter involving any member of the SDGR. This covers all potential disciplinary related matters including those of a safeguarding nature.

Overview

Wherever possible, matters of dispute should be resolved locally and informally, perhaps involving the Branch Chair and/ or another Branch Officer. However, where this is not possible, or if the alleged matter is of a more serious nature, then it must be referred formally using this procedure.

All alleged disciplinary matters will be:

- Dealt with fairly and consistently
- Investigated fully to get as much information as possible, this will include formal interviews with the key parties
- Members interviewed may be accompanied by anyone of their choice
- Everyone will have a chance to have their say before decisions are made
- An appeal against any decision will be permitted
- At all times the alleged disciplinary matter, its investigation and its outcome will be confidential between the parties and the workgroup
- Following any appeal, the decision will be final

Commencing the Disciplinary Process

On becoming aware of the alleged disciplinary matter, the Executive will appoint a workgroup to investigate the matter. The workgroup shall usually consist of the President, Master, Secretary and Safeguarding

Officer; however, consideration will be given to any conflicts of interest when appointing the workgroup. The workgroup shall have the power to seek advice as deemed appropriate.

Investigating the Matter

All reasonable attempts to gather relevant evidence will be made, this will include interviews with all directly involved parties. Where necessary other people relevant to the matter may be interviewed. Those interviewed may be accompanied by anyone of their choice.

Determining the Outcome

After reviewing all the available evidence an opinion will be formed, by those hearing the matter, on the best way forward for all. They will take into consideration the impact of their decision on all affected parties including the wider membership, the relevant Branch and the SDGR itself. Where relevant they will also consider the impact on the home tower(s) and Churches of the parties, and where necessary discuss the outcome confidentially with relevant incumbents.

Remedies

There are several remedies possible, depending on the severity of the disciplinary matter.

These include:

1. A letter from the Master confirming the findings, explaining that these are not consistent with the SDGR Aims and or Rules. Such a letter will clarify that any repeat may lead to more serious outcomes.
2. Where relevant, withdrawal of special category membership status, removal from any Branch or SDGR office, cancelling of SDGR Membership.

Where either of the remedies above are proposed, the remedy will be recommended to the Executive for final decision as per rule 9.5. It is not within the gift of the SDGR to prevent an expelled member from continuing to ring or participate in local tower activities, however in these cases:

- The local incumbent will be confidentially advised of the individual's expulsion, together with the reasons why. It will be for the incumbent to take any local action on whether the individual should continue ringing in their tower or not
- Any peal, quarter peal, date touch, etc., rung including an expelled member (after expulsion) will not be permitted to be accredited to the SDGR

Safeguarding Issues

In the case of a disciplinary matter involving a safeguarding issue, any remedy will be in support of, and consistent with the approach being taken by relevant officials managing the Safeguarding Issue, such as the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, the Parish/Benefice Incumbent and Safeguarding Officer or the Police. In these cases, the Master will discuss and agree the SDGR's recommended remedy with those relevant authorities with due regard to confidentiality.

Communicating the Outcome

The outcome will be communicated by the chair of the workgroup in writing confidentially to all relevant parties. The letter will give clarity on whether an issue leading to a disciplinary outcome has been found to have been committed or not, and what course of action or remedy has been determined as appropriate.

Appeal

On receipt of the outcome letter either party may appeal against the decision or the remedies. Such appeal should be in writing within 28 days to the sender of the outcome. The appeal will be considered by a second workgroup appointed by the Executive consisting of one Vice President and a minimum of five Executive members in Rule 8.1, excluding any member of the original workgroup. Consideration must be given to any conflict of interest when appointing the appeal workgroup. The workgroup considering the appeal will take such advice, or conduct such other investigation as required before reaching a decision on the appeal. Following the review, a decision on the appeal will be communicated to the relevant parties by the chair of the appeal workgroup. No further appeal will be permitted.