# RICHMOND OPERATIC SOCIETY: WHISTLE-BLOWING POLICY

ROS wishes its members to be able to express their concerns if they believe something is seriously wrong in the society. Indeed, our members have a duty of trust to ROS and it is wrong for any member to withhold information necessary for the proper conduct of the organisation's affairs.

If something is troubling you that you think ROS should know about or look into, please use this procedure. It is sufficient that you have a reasonable belief that the information youare disclosing is correct.

This procedure aims to help you to disclose any concerns at an early stage and in the right way. Often concerns can be easily resolved but it may be that you have become aware of something seriously wrong, such as safeguarding, bullying and harassment or a major health and safety risk. We would rather that you raised the matter straightaway even if it is just a concern without any definite proof.

If you are unsure whether to use this procedure or you want impartial advice at any stage, you may contact any member of the Committee not involved in your concern.

#### The Public Interest Disclosure Act

The Public Interest Disclosure Act protects "whistle-blowers" from victimisation when they speak out within an agreed process such as this policy. Protection under the Act is primarily for concerns where the interests of others or the organisation are at risk, for example:

* Safeguarding issue
* Failure to comply with our Policies
* Bullying and harassment
* Health and safety
* Damage to the organisation’s reputation

If you raise a genuine concern under this procedure, you will not be at risk of discrimination, victimisation or suffering criticism just because you made the disclosure. Provided you are acting in good faith, it does not matter if you are mistaken.

If you ask us to keep your identity confidential, the Committee will not disclose it without your consent. If the situation arises where we are not able to resolve the concern without revealing your identity (for instance because your evidence is needed in court), we will discuss with you whether and how we can proceed.

#### Procedure

Put your concerns in letter marked “Private and Confidential" and send to the Secretary or Safeguarding officer. Please say if you want to raise the matter in confidence so that appropriate action can be taken.

The Committee will decide the nature, timescale and scope of the investigation and will write to people concerned setting out the arrangements.

Where the disclosure concerns the actions of the Secretary or Safeguarding Officer, the disclosure letter should be addressed to the Chairman or Vice-chairman of the Society who will decide how and by whom the investigation will be conducted.

You will be informed of who is handling the matter, how you can contact him/her and whether your further assistance may be needed. You may be asked how you think the matter might best be resolved.

If you have any personal interest in the matter, you should include this in your letter raising your concerns.

You will be kept informed of progress as far as possible though it may not be appropriate to tell you the full details of findings or actions taken if it infringes a requirement to maintain confidentiality for someone else.

Vs2. DEC 2019