Denmark Senior Soccer Club Conflict Resolution Policy

A guide for resolving disputes and grievances at Denmark Senior Soccer Club (DSSC)

Introduction

This document provides a policy and a procedure for resolving conflicts and grievances that may arise at or within DSSC (the Club). The policy aims to promote fair play, respect, and positive communication among club members, coaches, officials, and volunteers. The policy also aims to prevent and minimise the negative impacts of conflicts, such as stress, hostility, and disengagement, on the club's culture and performance. Should the conflict or grievance be deemed of significant impact or require intervention by the GSSA, then the complainant should be directed to the Great Southern Soccer Association (GSSA) for resolution process.

Scope

This policy applies to all club members, coaches, officials, and volunteers, who are involved in any club activities, such as training, competitions, social events, or meetings, including all online activities. The policy covers any low-level conflicts or grievances that may occur within the Club or between club members and external parties, such as other clubs, associations, or sponsors. The policy does not cover any conflicts or grievances that are subject to legal action, or GSSA or greater level disciplinary action, or are deemed severe enough to be raised at the GSSA or greater level.

Definitions

- **Conflict:** A situation where two or more parties have incompatible goals, interests, values, or expectations, which may result in disagreement, tension, or hostility.
- **Grievance:** A complaint or concern raised by a party who feels that they have been treated unfairly, unjustly, or disrespectfully by another party.
- **Party:** A person or a group of people who are involved in a conflict or a grievance, either as the complainant, the respondent, or a third party.
- **Resolution:** A process of finding a mutually acceptable solution or outcome for a conflict or a grievance, which restores or improves the relationship between the parties.
- **Mediator (informal):**
- **Mediator (formal):**

Policy Statement

The Club is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all club members, coaches, officials, and volunteers. The Club recognises that conflicts and grievances are inevitable and normal in any social setting, and that they can be resolved constructively and

positively. The Club encourages all parties to resolve their conflicts and grievances as early and as informally as possible, using the following principles:

- Respect: All parties should treat each other with respect, dignity, and courtesy, and avoid any behaviour that may cause harm, offence, or intimidation.
- Communication: All parties should communicate openly, honestly, and calmly, and listen to each other's perspectives and feelings, without interrupting, judging, or blaming.
- Cooperation: All parties should cooperate and collaborate with each other and seek to understand and address the underlying causes and issues of the conflict or grievance, rather than focusing on the symptoms or personalities.
- Compromise: All parties should be willing to compromise and negotiate and seek to find a solution or outcome that is acceptable and beneficial for all parties, rather than insisting on their own position or interest.
- Confidentiality: All parties should respect the privacy and confidentiality of each other, and only disclose or share information that is relevant and necessary for the resolution process, with the consent of the parties involved.

Procedure

The Club provides a four-step procedure for resolving conflicts and grievances, which follows a graduated and escalating approach, from informal to formal, depending on the nature, severity, and duration of the conflict or grievance. A flow diagram is provided in Appendix I to support the procedure provided which is as follows:

Step 1: **Self-resolution.** The parties should try to resolve the conflict or grievance by themselves, without involving any third parties, as soon as possible after the conflict or grievance arises. The parties should use the principles of respect, communication, cooperation, compromise, and confidentiality, and try to reach a resolution that is satisfactory for both parties.

NOTE: While there is no statute of limitations on the time required to raise a conflict or grievance it should be noted that incidents which occur prior to the season in progress are more challenging to investigate and resolve. As such, it is recommended that any conflict or grievance is made known as soon as practicable after the event which has caused the conflict or grievance to occur.

Step 2: **Assisted resolution / informal mediation**. If the parties are unable to resolve the conflict or grievance by themselves, or if the conflict or grievance persists or escalates, the parties should seek the assistance of a third party, such as a coach, an official, a volunteer, or a club committee member, who is unbiased to all parties and will act as an informal mediator to help the parties to reach a resolution.

Step 3: Formal resolution. If the parties are unable to resolve the conflict or grievance with the assistance of an informal third-party mediator, or if the conflict or grievance involves a serious breach of the Club's code of conduct, rules, or policies, the parties should submit a formal

complaint or grievance to the Club committee, in writing, with supporting evidence and documentation.

Should the conflict or grievance involve the Club's committee or a committee member, then the complainant should be directed to the **Great Southern Soccer Association, and their conflict resolution policy should be followed.**

For all other matters the Club committee will appoint an independent, formal mediator to review the complaint or grievance, and conduct a fair, impartial, and transparent investigation, following the principles of natural justice and due process. The Club committee should notify the parties of the outcome and the decision of the investigation, in writing, within 7days of the mediation concluding.

Step 4: External resolution. If the parties are not satisfied with the outcome or the decision of the Club committee, or if the conflict or grievance involves a legal, ethical, or regulatory matter, either parties may lodge an appeal. Should an appeal be lodged, the conflict will be escalated to the appropriate external body, such as the Great Southern Soccer Association (GSSA), Department of sports and rec, tribunal or a court. The Club committee should cooperate and comply with the external resolution process, and all parties should respect and abide by the final outcome or decision.

Responsibilities

All club members, coaches, officials, and volunteers have the following responsibilities in relation to this policy:

- To comply with the Club's code of conduct, rules, and policies, and uphold the club's values and objectives.
- To prevent and avoid any conflicts or grievances that may harm the Club's culture and performance, or the well-being of the Club members, coaches, officials, and volunteers.
- To report and address any conflicts or grievances that may arise, in a timely, respectful, and constructive manner, following this policy and the procedure provided wherein.
- To participate and cooperate in the resolution process, in good faith and with an open mind, and respect the views and feelings of the other parties.
- To accept and implement the resolution, and move on from the conflict or grievance, without holding any grudges or resentment.
- To provide feedback and suggestions to the club committee on how to improve the policy and the procedure and prevent or reduce future conflicts or grievances.

Responsibilities of Mediators, both informal and formal:

- Maintain neutrality and avoid taking sides to ensure a fair resolution process through active listening to all parties to understand their perspectives and concerns. Guide the discussion constructively, helping parties communicate effectively and find common ground.

- Assess the root causes of the conflict and identify underlying issues where possible. Encourage collaborative problem-solving and help parties develop mutually acceptable solutions.
- Respect the privacy of all parties involved and keep all discussions confidential.
- Record the details of the conflict/grievance using the provided Mediation report attached in Appendix II and submit to the Club's committee upon conclusion of mediation process.

Three Strikes clause

To maintain a respectful and productive environment, the Club will implement a "Three Strikes clause" into this conflict resolution policy. This ensures that all parties involved in a conflict are given ample opportunity to resolve their differences amicably, however a member who is implicated in numerous offences over a seven-year period may be subject to disciplinary action by the Clubs committee at the time of their third offence.

The first strike involves a formal warning and a mediated discussion to address the issue. If the conflict persists, the second strike entails a more structured intervention, including mandatory conflict resolution training. Should the issue remain unresolved after these steps, the third strike will result in disciplinary action, which may include suspension or termination, depending on the severity of the conflict. This policy aims to foster a culture of accountability and mutual respect, ensuring that conflicts are managed effectively and fairly.

Records shall be kept for a period of seven (7) years and any member found to have accumulated three (3) strikes over this period may be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined above. The strikes may be allocated within the same conflict or grievance event, or over numerous events in this seven-year period.

Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Club committee on an annual basis, or as required, to ensure that it is relevant, effective, and compliant with the Club's code of conduct, rules, and policies, and the applicable laws and regulations. The Club committee will consult with the Club members, coaches, officials, and volunteers, and seek their input and feedback, on any proposed changes or amendments to the policy. The Club committee will communicate and disseminate any changes or amendments to the policy to all club members, coaches, officials, and volunteers, and provide them with training and education on the policy and the procedure as required.

The Club's committee will also update the contacts list and make this available to all members to ensure that appropriate contacts are provided.

Contacts:

Team: Coach | Captain(s)

Denmark Senior Soccer Club: Committee | MPIO

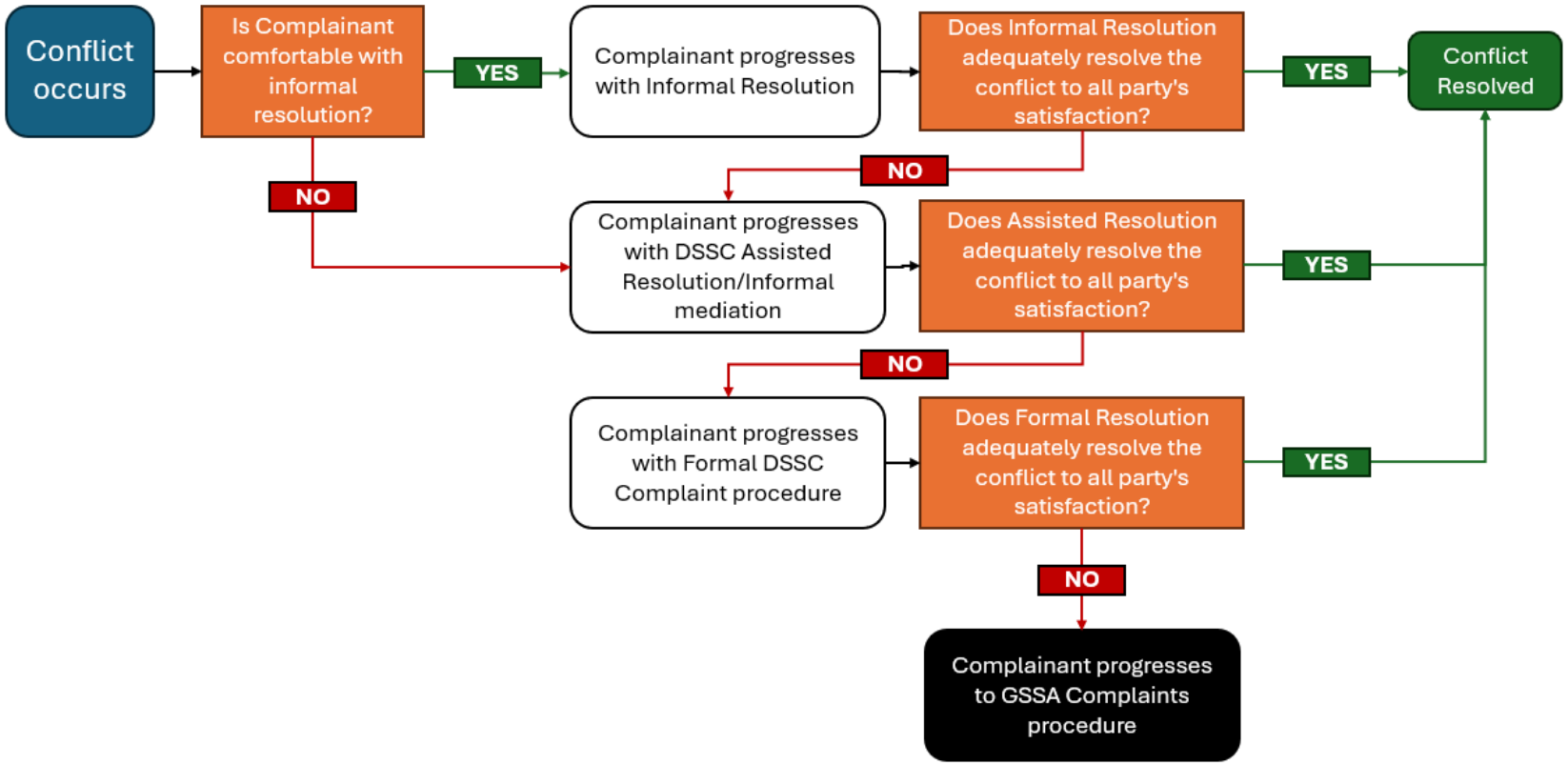
Great Southern Soccer Association (GSSA): Committee | MPIO

Football West: Complaints officer

External Contacts | Mediators: DLSC | External Mediator

Appendix I: Conflict Resolution Procedure Flow Diagram

Denmark Senior Soccer Club Conflict Resolution Process



Step 1: Informal resolution	The person who has a conflict or grievance (the complainant) should try to resolve it directly and respectfully with the other person involved (the respondent).
If the complainant is not comfortable directly approaching the respondent or satisfied with the informal resolution, they can proceed to Step 2.	
Step 2: Assisted resolution / Informal mediation	The complainant should seek support from an impartial third party, this may include but is not limited to, a Coach, Captain(s), Club Committee member, Club MPIO or external personnel. The selected third party should have no conflict of interest regarding providing un-biased support to all party's involved in the process. Assisted resolution should commence no more than 14days post conflict event.
If any party is not satisfied with the assisted resolution outcome, or if there is no outcome obtained, they can proceed to Step 3.	
Step 3: Formal complaint	The complainant should submit a written complaint to the club committee, describing the nature, details, and impact of the conflict or grievance, and the desired outcome. Should the complaint pertain to the Club Committee itself then the complainant should be directed to the GSSA Committee and follow the GSSA Complaints framework in this instance.
	The club committee will acknowledge the receipt of the complaint within 3days and appoint an impartial person (the mediator) to investigate and mediate the issue.
	The mediator will contact the complainant and the respondent and arrange a meeting or a mediation session to discuss the issue and seek a mutually acceptable solution, which will be documented and provided to all parties including the Clubs committee within 7days of the mediation. Should either party not be willing to attend the mediation session, the mediator's resolution will still be considered valid, and their outcome documented and provided to the absent party for consideration and right of appeal.
If any party does not agree with the mediator's solution, they have the right of appeal and should proceed to Step 4.	
Step 4: Appeal	If the complainant or the respondent is not satisfied with the outcome of the mediation, they can appeal to the club committee within 14 days of receiving the mediator's report.
	The club committee will review the appeal and the mediator's report and make a final decision on the matter.
	The club committee will notify the complainant and the respondent of the appeal outcome in writing within 3days of the review.

Appendix II: Mediation Report Template

This template is to be used by the mediator (both informal and formal) to document the mediation process and outcome between the complainant and the respondent. The mediator should fill out this report after each mediation session and submit it to the club committee for review and record keeping.

Date of mediation session:			
Name of mediator:			
Name(s) of complainant:			
Name(s) of respondent:			
Nature of the complaint:			
Summary of the mediation outcome:			
Recommendations for follow-up actions:			
Signature of mediator:		Date	
Signature of complainant:		Date	
Signature of respondent:		Date	