

<https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/news/whistleblowing-charity-plans-anonymity-policy-change-after-complaint.html>

Whistleblowing charity plans anonymity policy change after complaint

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A whistleblowing charity is considering amending its complaints procedure so that anonymity is offered to all complainants, after its chief executive was accused of mishandling a concern raised about one of the trustees.

Jamie Klingler, co-founder of women's safety group Reclaim these Streets, raised a concern with whistleblowing charity Parrhesia after learning that journalist Martin Bright sat on its board.

In January, [the Press Gazette reported](#) that Bright's friend and fellow journalist Nick Cohen had left the Observer on health grounds, after being investigated for allegations made against him by former female colleagues, which he had described as "vile and untrue".

That month, [Bright wrote on social media](#) that Cohen was "an old friend" and that his "trial by social media has been horrible to watch".

The [New York Times published further details](#) about the sexual misconduct allegations against Cohen in May.

Klingler raised her concern with Parrhesia this month over Bright's role as a trustee, which she said was a potential "conflict of interest for the charity" and that his tweet could put women off from reporting to it.

This week, [Byline Times reported](#) that Parrhesia's CEO Ian Foxley gave Klingler's name to Bright, and encouraged her to speak directly with him.

Klingler said her expectation had been that the charity would instead look into how trustees publicly tweet.

She told Civil Society that the charity did "not understand the complaint" and felt "dismissed", which was why she went to Byline Times.

Foxley told Civil Society that an internal investigation has been conducted following Klingler's complaint of how her concern was handled and a report forwarded to all the trustees for their consideration.

He said the charity has now proposed to amend its complaints procedure to ensure that anonymity is offered to all complainants.

Klingler told Civil Society it was "baffling" that any complaint to a whistleblowing organisation was not already anonymous.

She said: "Whistleblowing charity ratifies policy to make complaints confidential' sounds like a headline on the Onion."

Klingler described the last few days as "bruising" and said the board should think about training.

Asked about his social media post, Bright told Byline Times: "I have only ever felt sadness about this awful situation. At no point have I downplayed the seriousness of the allegations."

- See more at: <https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/news/whistleblowing-charity-plans-anonymity-policy-change-after-complaint.html#sthash.6P2cyWHu.dpuf>