

READ PARISH COUNCIL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The purpose of a complaints procedure is to put things right if things go wrong.

In the first instance the individual receiving the complaint should attempt to resolve the matter informally. If this is not possible because of the serious nature or complexity of the complaint, then he/she should forward the matter to the Clerk who will consult the Chairman of the Parish Council (or in his/her absence the Vice Chairman) and the Chairman of the Personnel Committee.

The identity of a complainant should only be made known to those who need to consider a complaint.

The written response on behalf of the Parish Council should include a full and frank response to the concerns raised by the complainant and an apology where appropriate.

The response should be made within 2 working days of receipt wherever possible. If the investigation requires more time then an initial response explaining the reason for a delay should be sent to the complainant within 2 working days.

The following procedure is designed for those complaints which cannot be satisfied by less formal measures or initial explanations provided to the complainant by the clerk or chairman.

The clerk (or other nominated officer) will represent the position of the council. If the clerk (or other nominated officer) puts forward justification for the action or procedure complained of, he or she should not advise the council or committee, as they need to determine the matter themselves.

At all times, the rules of natural justice will apply. In other words, all parties should be treated fairly and the process should be reasonable, accessible and transparent.

1. The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the clerk or other nominated officer outlining their remaining concerns.

2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the clerk or other nominated officer, he or she should be advised to address it to the chairman of the council.

3. The clerk or other nominated officer shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 2 working days and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the council or by the Personnel subcommittee established for the purposes of hearing complaints. The complainant should also be advised whether the complaint will be treated as confidential or whether, for example, notice of it will be given in the usual way (if, for example, the complaint is to be heard by the Parish Council).

4. The complainant shall be invited to attend a meeting and to bring with them a representative if they wish.

5. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied on. The clerk shall provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which the council

wish to rely at the meeting and shall do so promptly, allowing the complainant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.

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