

NOTTON PARISH COUNCIL

CODE OF PRACTICE IN HANDLING COMPLAINTS

INTRODUCTION

This Policy sets out procedures for dealing with any complaints that anyone may have about the Notton Parish Council's administration and procedures. It applies to the Notton Parish Council's employees. Councillors are covered by Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 5th January (Council Minute No 013/0117).

1. Complaints against policy decisions made by the Parish Council shall be referred back to Parish Council.
2. If a complaint about procedures or administration as practised by the Parish Council's employees is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk to the Council, they should seek to satisfy the complaint fully. If that fails, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk to the Council and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt.
3. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk to the Council he or she should be advised to put it to the Chairman of Parish Council.
4. On receipt of a written complaint the Chairman of Parish Council or the Clerk to the Council (except where the complaint is about his or her own actions), shall try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This shall not be done without first notifying the person complained against and giving him or her opportunity to comment. Efforts should be made to attempt to settle the complaint at this stage.
5. Where the Clerk to the Council or the Chairman of Parish Council receives a written complaint about the Clerk to the Council's own actions, he or she shall refer the complaint to the Chairman of Parish Council. The Clerk to the Council shall be notified and given an opportunity to comment.
6. The Clerk to the Council or Chairman of Parish Council shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
7. The Clerk to the Council or Chairman of Parish Council shall bring any written complaint that has not been settled to the next meeting of the Council. The Clerk to the Council shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered and the complainant shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally. (Unless such a matter may be related to Grievance, Disciplinary or Standard Board proceedings that are taking, or likely to take place when such a hearing may prejudice those hearings when the complaint will have to be heard under Exempt Business to exclude any member of the public or the press, or deferred on appropriate advice received).

8. The Parish Council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Parish Council meeting in public.
9. As soon as may be after the decision has been made it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
10. A Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.
11. In the event of serial facetious, vexatious or malicious complaints from a member of the public the Parish Council should consider taking legal advice before writing any letters to the complainant.
12. All correspondence and documentation will be managed in accordance with the May 2018 Data Protection requirements

Written complaints should be forwarded to either: -

Julia Talbot /Parish Clerk
51, Bleakley Lane
Notton
Wakefield
WF4 2NU

Parish Councillor Peter Taylor
Chair to Notton Parish Council
1, High Ash Close
Notton
Wakefield
WF4 2PF

March 2017
Reviewed July2018

