

HARMSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Complaints Policy

Scope

The following procedure will be adopted for dealing with complaints about the Council's administration or its procedures. Complaints about a policy decision made by the Council will be referred back to the Council for consideration.

This procedure does not cover complaints about the conduct of a member of the Parish Council. Any complaint that a Councillor may have breached the Council's adopted code of conduct should be referred to the Monitoring Officer, North Kesteven District Council.

Grievances or disciplinary matters will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's separate grievance and disciplinary procedures.

Procedure

1. If a complaint about procedures, administration or the actions of any of the Council's employees is notified orally to a Councillor, or to the Clerk to the Council, the Councillor or Clerk should make a written record, noting the name and contact details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint.
2. The complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing in the form of a letter or e-mail to the Clerk to the Council. The complaint will be dealt with within 21 days of receipt.
3. If the complaint relates to the Clerk to the Council, the Complainant should write directly to the Chair. If the Clerk or any Councillor receives a written complaint about the Clerk, s/he must refer it directly to the Chair.
4. Every effort should be made to resolve the matter directly with the complainant at an early stage of the proceedings.

On receiving a written complaint, the Clerk to the Council or the Chair will notify any one complained about to give him or her opportunity for comment and seek to resolve the matter between the parties.

5. The Clerk to the Council (or Chair) will report any complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant to the next meeting of the Council.
6. The Clerk to the Council (or Chair) will refer any complaint that has not been resolved to the next meeting of the Council. The Clerk will notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered and the complainant will be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint to the Council orally.
7. The Council may consider whether the circumstances of any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public, but any decision on the complaint will be announced at the Council meeting in public.

8. As soon as possible after the decision has been made (and in any event not later than 10 days after the meeting) the complainant will be notified in writing of the decision and any action to be taken.
9. The Council may defer dealing with any complaint if it is of the opinion that issues arise on which further advice is necessary. The advice will be considered and the complaint dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.

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