

# Complaints Procedure

- 1.0 Introduction:-
- 1.1 This document aims to identify a fair approach in dealing with any grievance a member of public or an individual may have with the services provided by Northill Parish Council.
- 1.2 The document gives weight and expands upon Northill Parish Council Standing Orders and should be read in conjunction with this document.
- 2.0 Complaints concerning the Council's procedures or administration:-
- 2.1 If a member of the public has a complaint about the Parish Council's procedures or administration, this has to be put in writing to the Clerk.
- 2.2 If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the clerk, they can be advised to put this in writing to the Chairman of the Council.
- 2.3 The clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council or a committee.
- 2.4 The complainant will be informed of the date and the time of the meeting, and can attend and bring a representative with them should they wish to do so.
- 2.5 The complainant must provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence which they wish to refer to at the meeting, at least 5 clear working days prior to the meeting.
- 2.6 The Council will provide any written reports similarly to the complainant, prior to the meeting.
- 2.7 The Council shall consider whether exclusion of the public and press is essential in each circumstance. The decision on a complaint shall be announced at the council meeting in public.
- 2.8 Procedure at the meeting
  - 2.8.1 Complainant asked to outline the grounds of the complaint by the Chairman
  - 2.8.2 Members are able to ask any relevant questions of the complainant
  - 2.8.3 The Clerk will explain how the matter giving rise to the complaint was handled. If relevant, the clerk will explain the Council's legal position and that of best practice
  - 2.8.4 Members may ask questions of the clerk
  - 2.8.5 The clerk and complainant are to be offered an opportunity of the last word(in this order)
  - 2.8.6 Clerk and complainant may be asked to leave the room while members decide whether grounds for the complaint have been made
  - 2.8.7 Clerk and complainant asked to return to hear the decision or to be advised when a decision is to be made.
- 2.9 The Council is to confirm its decision within 7 working days together with any details of any action to be taken.

- 3.0 Complaints from members of the public about employment issues
  - 3.1 The Chairman shall report any complaint to a duly convened meeting of the Council (or Committee) and the matter should be resolved by Council after the employee has been given the opportunity to explain personally, or by a representative, the complaint orally at the Council meeting.
  - 3.2 The Council shall consider any application with the absence of press and public.
  - 3.3 Before any disciplinary action is taken by the Council, a notice in writing, signed by the Chairman and authorised by the Council, shall be given to the employee, and the employee shall be given a full opportunity to answer the complaint at a meeting of the Council (or Committee) with the exclusion of the press and the public.
- 4.0 Discipline and Grievance procedures – staff issues
  - 4.1 This procedure should be read in conjunction with the employee's terms and conditions in their contract of employment with the Council and NALC LTN 22.
  - 4.2 If there is a complaint from any employee of the Council, the employee must apply in writing to the Chairman for redress of any grievance relating to their employment, or if they are dissatisfied with any disciplinary decision relating to their employment.
- 5.0 Code of Conduct- Councillors
  - 5.1` Please refer to Northill Parish Council Standing Orders re the Code of Conduct requirements signed at appointment.  
  
Complaints about Councillors
  - 5.2 If the clerk receives a complaint about a Councillor, complainants will be advised to contact Central Bedfordshire Unitary Council's Monitoring Officer and the Standards Board.
  - 5.3 Any complaint received will be managed by the Standards Committee
  - 5.4 A full procedure is available from the Monitoring Officer, Central Beds Council.

L Bacon 17.10.11

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