



NORTH WEALD BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Any complaint made against the Council is taken seriously and will be fully investigated. The Council recognises that there are different forms of potential complaint each of which may require a different method of resolution based on the individual nature and circumstances of the complaint.

2. Forms of complaint

- Against a decision of the full Council meeting
- Against a decision of a committee of the Council
- Against the actions of the Council
- Against an employee or employees of the Council
- Against a Councillor or group of Councillors

In the first instance, the matter will be considered by the Clerk and Chairman. If the complaint is against the Clerk, the Clerk will convene a meeting of the Personnel Committee to consider the nature and content of the complaint.

The Clerk and Chairman or Personnel Committee will ascertain if the complaint is valid, and whether or not is a complaint that justifies consideration by the Council. In doing so they may consider whether the complaint is actually against North Weald Bassett Parish Council, whether it is too trivial to be considered by the Council, or whether the matter has already been satisfactorily dealt with.

If the Clerk and Chairman or Personnel Committee considers that the complaint justifies consideration by the full Council, it will then be determined what form of complaint it is, and refer it to full Council for consideration.

3. Process

a) Against a decision of the full Council meeting

As there is no higher body within the Council than the full Council itself, such an issue will be considered at a full meeting of the Parish Council.

b) Against a decision of a committee of the Council

Any such Complaint will be dealt with in the first instance by the Clerk, and should the response not be sufficient for the complainant, it will be passed to the Full Council for consideration.

c) Against the actions of the Council

Any such Complaint will be dealt with in the first instance by the Clerk, and should the response not be sufficient for the complainant, it will be passed to the Full Council for

consideration.

d) Against an employee of the Council

Any such Complaint will be dealt with by the Personnel Committee.

e) Against a Councillor or Councillors

The Clerk and Chairman to decide whether or not the matter should be referred to joint Standards Committee for consideration, or whether or not a written apology from the said Councillor(s) would be an appropriate means of resolution.

Verbal Complaint

If a verbal complaint, the complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk.

Time Frame

The Clerk shall acknowledge receipt of any complaint within 7 days. The Clerk should then discuss the nature of the complaint with the Chairman, and an appropriate course of action agreed. In all cases, the complainant shall receive a more formal response confirming any agreed action within 31 days of receipt.

Vexatious and Persistent Behaviour

We will always treat you with respect and we expect staff to be treated the same way. Rude, violent or abusive behaviour towards staff will never be tolerated. If we consider behaviour to be unreasonable or vexatious, we will explain why and request the complainant modifies their behaviour and warn them that contact will be restricted if it continues. This includes behaviour such as refusal to follow the appropriate process, an aggressive style of communication, repeatedly contacting officers and councillors unnecessarily and refusing to accept a decision without providing any necessary or new evidence. If it appears to the Parish Council that a complaint continues to be trivial, vexatious, repetitive or frivolous, no further correspondence related to it shall be entered into members or officers.

Parish Councillors will be made aware of any issues that have been deemed vexatious by officers.