

Mattersey Parish Council

Code of Practice for Handling Complaints

Introduction

This code of practice deals with the handling of complaints about the administration or procedures of Mattersey Parish Council.

Complaints about an employee (ie. the Clerk) should be dealt with as an employment matter and complainants can be assured that the matter will be dealt with internally and appropriate action taken.

Complaints about a Councillor should be addressed to Bassetlaw District Council's Monitoring Officer

¹ Additional information is also available from the Clerk to the Parish Council.

This code of practice is therefore primarily aimed at situations where a complaint is being made about the administration of the Parish Council or about its procedures. This code of practice is not an appropriate means to address a complaint against an individual and the provisions described above should instead be used.

The objective of this code of practice is to:

Achieve a satisfactory outcome, if possible, for all parties involved and to resolve the complaint at the earliest possible point in the process

Code of Practice

1. A complaint can be made in person, by phone, in writing or email to the clerk. Wherever possible the clerk will try to resolve the complaint immediately. If this is not possible the clerk will normally try to acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint through the clerk they may contact the Chair of the Council.
2. The clerk/Chair will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as required. You will be notified within 20 working days of the outcome of the investigation and what action (if any) the Council proposes to take. If you are dissatisfied with the response you may request your complaint be taken to full Council.
3. If the complaint involves the action of the clerk or a Councillor the person concerned will be notified and given an opportunity to comment on the manner in which it is proposed to settle the complaint. Where the Clerk or Chair receives a written complaint about their own actions, it will be referred to the Council.
4. Where a complaint is to be taken to full Council the complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation, or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The Council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting. These should be supplied seven clear days before the date of the meeting.

¹ At the time of preparing this document, the local Monitoring Officer is Ros Theakston, Bassetlaw District Council, Queens Buildings, Potter St, Worksop, Notts S80 2AH

Code of Practice: At the meeting

5. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
6. Chairman to introduce everyone and explain procedure.
7. Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint.
8. Councillors to ask any question of the complainant.
9. If relevant, Clerk to explain the Council's position.
10. Councillors to ask any question of the Clerk.
11. Clerk and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).
12. Clerk and complainant to be asked to leave the room while Councillors decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. (If a point of clarification is necessary, BOTH parties shall be invited back.)
13. Clerk and complainant return to hear decision or to be advised when decision will be made.

Code of Practice: After the meeting

Decision confirmed to the complainant in writing within seven working days with details of any action to be taken.

Signed (Chairman)

Min Ref

Date of Review 8th May 2019