

ALMELEY PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Adopted by the Parish Council at a Meeting on 14 March 2018, Item 6.4 – Reviewed 8th May 2019

This Policy document sets out procedures for dealing with any complaints made about the Almeley Parish Council's administration and procedures

1. If a complaint about the Council's procedures or administration is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk, they should seek to satisfy the complaint fully. If that fails the complainant must be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk and be assured that it will be acknowledged within 14 days after receipt.
2. The complainant must be asked if s/he wishes the complaint to be dealt with confidentially.
3. The Clerk will advise the complainant that the complaint will be included on the Agenda and dealt with by the Councillors at the next scheduled Council Meeting and the date and time of that Meeting.
4. Any oral or written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant shall be reported to the next Meeting of the Council.
5. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk, s/he shall be advised to put it to the Chairman of the Council.
6. On receipt of a written complaint the Clerk or the Chairman shall, except where the complaint is about his/her own actions, try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. If the complaint is about the behaviour of the Clerk or a Councillor, the person complained of must be notified before the matter is dealt with further. The person complained of must be given an opportunity to comment on the manner it is intended to attempt to settle the complaint.
7. If the Clerk or Chairman receives a written complaint about his/her actions, s/he must refer the complaint to the Council.
8. The Clerk or the Chairman must bring any written complaint that has not been settled to the next Meeting of the Council. The Clerk 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.
9. If the complaint is related to Grievance, Disciplinary or Standards Board proceedings that are ongoing or likely to take place and public discussion is likely to prejudice those proceedings, then the complaint must be heard under Exempt Business to exclude any member of the public or press or deferred until appropriate advice is received by the Council.
10. The Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary. In the event the decision regarding the complaint is deferred, it shall be dealt with at the next Meeting after advice has been received.
11. The Council shall consider whether any complaint warrants the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public. The matter will proceed on the basis considered appropriate by the Council.
12. Any decision on a complaint will be announced publically at the Council Meeting.
13. As soon as practicable after a decision has been made, the decision and any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
14. In the event of serial facetious, vexatious or malicious complaints from a member of the public, the Council shall consider taking legal advice before responding formally to the complainant.