



DITTON PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

When a complaint is received it will be logged, acknowledged and passed to the Clerk of the Council.

Whenever possible, complaints should be made in writing. Complaints regarding staff or councillors **MUST** be made in writing.

The Clerk, or in her absence her deputy, will determine the seriousness and urgency of the complaint and the action to be taken. This may be any of the following:-

- Pass to relevant committee clerk for investigation
- Place on appropriate Agenda for Council decision
- Pass to relevant authority if not within the Parish Council's remit & advise the complainant accordingly

Wherever possible, complaints will be dealt with by officers no later than the next working day after receipt unless they require a Council decision.

The officer will try to deal fairly and in confidence and do their best to:

- sort out problems
- try to ensure they do not recur
- improve on services

If the complaint is justified the officer will:

- give a written apology
- take corrective action

If a complaint requires a Council decision, the Clerk will advise the complainant and place the matter before the Council at the earliest opportunity. The Clerk will then carry out the action required in accordance with the decision of the Council.

If a complaint is made by a member of the public against a Member of staff, this will be thoroughly investigated by the Clerk and, if appropriate, dealt with in accordance with the Council's disciplinary procedure.

If a complaint is made by a member of staff against another member of staff this will be dealt with in accordance with the grievance procedure.

If a complaint is made against the Clerk, this will be passed to the Chairman of the Council to investigate and, if appropriate, dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedure.

Complaints made under the Freedom of Information Act

Complaints relating to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act should, in the first instance, be made to the Clerk of the Council who will investigate the complaint and respond in accordance with the Council's complaints procedure and requirements of the Act.

If a request for information under the Act is refused a reason/explanation will be given. Appeals against refusal can be made in writing to the Clerk of the Council. If the applicant is still not satisfied with the reason/explanation they will be advised to appeal to the Information Commissioner.

In all instances the complainant will receive an acknowledgment within 2 working days and will be advised of the outcome of their complaint.

If the complainant is still unhappy at the conclusion and outcome of the investigations, they may request a meeting with Members of the Council to discuss the matter further.