



Spofforth with Stockeld Parish Council

Complaints Procedure

This procedure is intended for situations where a complaint has been made about the administration of the council or about its procedures.

Complaints made about the clerk to the council will be dealt with as an employment matter by the Parish Council. The complainant can be assured that the matter will be dealt with internally and appropriate action taken as required.

Complaints about parish councillors having failed to comply with the Code of Conduct are subject to an assessment by a panel of the Standards Committee of North Yorkshire Council.

Individuals who wish to make a complaint of this nature are advised to write to the Monitoring Officer for North Yorkshire Council who will acknowledge the complaint and provide information about the process for dealing with the matter.

The Parish Council complaints procedure is envisaged as a means of ensuring that people who have a complaint about the council can feel satisfied that at least their grievance has been properly and fully considered. It is designed for those complaints that cannot be resolved by less formal measures or explanations provided to the complainant by the clerk or chairman. It may be that the clerk at the meeting convened to consider a complaint represents the position of the council. If the clerk is putting forward the justification for the action or procedure complained of, she will not advise the council.

It is the intention of the council that all parties should be treated fairly and the process should be reasonable, accessible and transparent.

THE PROCEDURE

Before the Meeting

1. The complainant will be asked to put their complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the clerk.
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the clerk, they are advised to put it to the chairman of the council.
3. The clerk will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the council.
4. The complainant will be invited to attend the meeting and bring a representative with them if they wish.
5. At least 7 clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant will provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The council will provide the complainant with copies of any documentation on which they wish to rely at the meeting.

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At the Meeting

6. The council will consider whether the circumstances warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. However, any decision about a complaint will be announced at the council meeting in public.
7. The chairman will introduce everyone.
8. The chairman will explain the procedure.
9. The complainant or their representative will outline the grounds for their complaint.
10. Councillors will ask any questions of the complainant.
11. If relevant, the clerk will explain the council's position.
12. Councillors will ask any questions of the clerk.
13. The chairman will offer the clerk and then the complainant the opportunity of a final word on the matter.
14. The clerk and complainant will be asked to leave the room whilst the Parish Council decide whether the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is required, both parties will be invited back into the meeting.
15. When the decision has been reached, the clerk and the complainant will be invited to return to hear the decision, or to be advised when the decision will be made.

After the Meeting

16. The decision will be confirmed in writing within seven working days of the meeting together with details of any action to be taken.