

LYTHE PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Introduction

Through dealing with and responding to, accusations or instances of poor performance or service delivery, the Parish Council has the opportunity to address them and improve.

Exclusions

This policy does not cover complaints about the conduct of a Member of the Parish Council, any such complaint should be raised with the Monitoring Officer at Scarborough Borough Council.

This policy does not cover internal complaints made by the employees of the Council about fellow employees or about the Council as their employer. Such internal complaints are termed grievances and are dealt with separately.

The procedure

The following procedure is for dealing with complaints from members of the public about the Council's administration or its procedures. Complaints about a policy decision made by the Council will be referred back to the Council, or to the relevant Committee as appropriate, for consideration.

If a complaint about procedures, administration or the actions of any of the Council's employees is notified verbally to a Councillor, or to the Clerk, a written record of the complaint will be made, noting the name and contact details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint.

The complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing by letter or email to the Clerk. The complaint will be acknowledged in writing by letter or email and will be dealt with within 10 working days following the next scheduled Council meeting.

If the complainant prefers not to refer the complaint to the Clerk, because the matter relates to the Clerk, they should be advised to put their complaint in writing by letter or email to the Chairman of the Council.

On receipt of a written complaint, the Clerk (except where the complaint is about them), or Chairman (if the complaint relates to the Clerk), will seek to settle the complaint directly with complainant. This will not be done without first notifying any person complained about and giving them the opportunity to comment. Efforts should be made to resolve the complaint at this stage.

The Clerk, will include any complaint on the agenda of the next scheduled Council meeting and the Clerk or Chairman will notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered.

The Council may consider whether the circumstances of the complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public and without being recorded. Any decision following the investigation on the complaint will be announced at a Council meeting in public.

As soon as possible after the decision has been made, not later than 10 working days after the meeting, the complainant must be notified in writing of the decision and any follow up action taken.

The Council or relevant Committee may defer dealing with any complaint if it is of the opinion that issues arise on which further advice is necessary. Relevant advice will be obtained and the complaint will be considered at the next Council or relevant Committee meeting after the advice has been received. The complainant must be informed of this.

Adopted by Lythe Parish Council at the meeting held on 1 February 2016, minute reference 3.15. Reviewed May 2017, this version confirmed at the Annual Parish Council meeting on 8 May 2017, minute reference 8.1. Reviewed September 2021, this version confirmed at the Parish Council meeting on 5 October 2021, minute reference 3.9.

Records should be kept of all complaints and the outcomes. The Council must monitor and review complaints and, if necessary, amend its policies and procedures.

Where the outcome of a complaint is that the policies/procedures within the Council have not been properly followed by the Council's staff, or the Council, the Council should inform the complainant in writing and advise of steps taken to ensure that it doesn't recur. The Council should also take appropriate steps to prevent similar errors recurring.

Review

This policy/procedure will be reviewed annually, or more frequently if required by changes to legislation or good practice.