

Bovingdon Parish Council

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COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURES for STAFF

1. Introduction

If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk and they cannot satisfy the complainant fully forthwith the complainant shall be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt. The complaint shall include the following:

- 1.1. Complainant's full name
- 1.2. Complainant's postal address
- 1.3. Telephone number(s), and/or email address
- 1.4. To help us resolve the complaint as quickly as possible the following information would be helpful:
 - What happened
 - When and where it happened
 - Who was involved
 - What was said or done
 - Details of any witnesses
 - Was there any damage or injury caused
 - any other information that may assist with the inquiry

2. If a complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk, he/she shall be advised to put it to the Chairman

3. On receipt of a written complaint:

- 3.1. The Clerk or Chairman, as the case may be, shall (except where the complaint is about his/her own actions) try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This is often referred to as 'Informal Resolution'. Informal Resolution is a process which is used to try to reach agreement about the best way to deal with the issues raised without the need for a 'Formal Resolution'. For complaints in respect of the Clerk or a Councillor this will not be done without first notifying the person(s) complained of and giving those
- 3.2. person(s) an opportunity for comment on the manner for which it is intended to attempt to settle the complaint
- 3.3. Where the Clerk or Chairman receives a written complaint about his or her own actions he or she shall forthwith refer the complaint to the Council

4. The Clerk or Chairman shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by Informal Resolution with the complainant.

5. The Clerk or Chairman shall bring any written complaint which has not been settled by Informal Resolution to the next meeting of the Council and the Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered at which time the complainant shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally.

6. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.

7. As soon as practicable after the decision has been made it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.

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8. The Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary from Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.
9. This policy will be reviewed every second year at the 1st Personnel Committee meeting after the May Parish Council meeting or earlier if so required by legislation or additional material.
10. The fact that a complaint has been substantiated against a member of the Council (including paid staff) to be recorded on that member of staff's personal record?
11. All records/documents/exhibits relating to the complaint, are to be retained in accordance with the Council's Retention Policy.

This policy will be reviewed every year or earlier if required by legislation or additional material.