

Pontesbury Parish Council

Complaints Procedure

1. Pontesbury Parish Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or are visitors to the locality. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from this council, or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by this council, this Complaints Procedure sets out how you may complain to the council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.
2. This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.
3. This Complaints Procedure does **NOT** apply to:
 - 3.1. complaints by one council employee against another council employee, or between a council employee and the council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.
 - 3.2. Complaints about Councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council with effect from 1st July 2012. If you wish to make a formal complaint about a Councillor please write or email to-

The Monitoring Officer
Shropshire Council
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury,
SY2 6ND
 - 3.3. The appropriate time for influencing Council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the Council debates and votes on a matter. You may do this by writing to the Council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There may also be the opportunity to raise your concerns in the public participation section of Council meetings. If you are unhappy with a Council decision, you may raise your concerns with the Council, but Standing Orders prevent the Council from re-opening issues for six months from the date of the decision, unless there are exceptional grounds to consider this necessary and the special process set out in the Standing Orders is followed.
4. In order for your complaint about the Parish Council to be dealt with, the following Code of Practice has been adopted; so that you can be assured that your grievance will be properly and fully considered. We hope that by following this transparent process, we shall maintain the good reputation of the council. This procedure will be followed where complaints cannot be resolved less formally by the Clerk to the Council or the Chairman. The Clerk to the Council is the Proper Officer of the Council and will represent and advise the Council at any meeting where the complaint will be aired, unless the Clerk is putting forward the justification for action or procedure which is the subject of the complaint.

CODE OF PRACTICE

1. All complaints about the Council's procedures or administration should be given in writing to the Parish Clerk.
2. If the complainant does not wish to write to the Parish Clerk the complaint should be addressed to the council chairman.
3. Receipt of the complaint shall be acknowledged by the Parish Clerk and the complainant will be advised when the matter will be considered by the Council as soon as is practicable.
4. Receipt of a complaint about the Parish Clerk will be acknowledged by the Chairman.
5. A meeting will be arranged for the complaint to be heard and the complainant will be invited to attend. The complainant is entitled to bring a representative if they wish.
6. At least 7 clear working days before the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Council with supporting documentation or evidence to substantiate the complaint against the council. The meeting will not take place unless this is adhered to. The complainant will also be provided with relevant documentation to which the Council will rely upon when the complaint is heard at the meeting.
7. Under Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 the Council will decide whether the complaint warrants the exclusion of the public and press. The decision of the Council however, will be made public at the conclusion of the meeting.

1.0 At the Meeting

- 1.1 The Chairman to introduce everyone and explain procedures.
- 1.2 The Complainant will outline the nature of the complaint and the reason.
- 1.3 Councillors will question the complainant.
- 1.4 Councillors will question the Clerk to the Council.
- 1.5 The Complainant and the Clerk (in that order) will be given the opportunity of a last word.
- 1.6 The Complainant and the Clerk will be asked to leave the room whilst councillors decide whether or not the grounds of the complaint have been made. Where clarification may be necessary both parties shall be invited to return to the meeting.
- 1.7 The Clerk and Complainant return to hear the decision or if no decision can be reached, both parties shall be advised when a decision will be made.
- 1.8 The Complainant will be notified of the decision in writing within 7 working days together with details of any action to be taken

2.0 After the Meeting

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

2.2 The result of the proceedings will be reported at the next council meeting after the appeal.

3.0 Appeals Process

3.1 Should the complainant not agree with the decision they will be entitled to appeal the decision within fourteen days of receipt of the result of the proceedings.

3.2 The councillors nominated to handle the appeal will, within twenty-one days of receiving the appeal, examine the way in which the council dealt with the complaint.

3.3 If procedures were correctly handled by the council then the appellant will be notified that the appeal has not been successful. If the complaint was not handled correctly it will be referred back for consideration as at 3.0.

3.4 The appellant will be notified of the result of the appeals process within fourteen days.

Contact information:

<u>Chairman to the Parish Council</u> Cllr Duncan Fletcher Whitecroft Grove Lane Pontesbury Shrewsbury SY5 0UW Email: dfletcher@pontesburypc.org.uk	<u>Parish Clerk</u> Mrs Debbie Marais 8 Holbache Road Oswestry SY11 1RP Email: clerk@pontesburypc.org.uk Tel: 01691 661157
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Policy adopted: 10 September 2018
Review date: September 2020