

# **HORNINGSEA PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Complaints Policy**

### **Introduction**

Horningsea Parish Council recognises that from time to time there may be concerns expressed by members of the public over the activities of the Council or one of its members or employees. To address these issues the Council has adopted a procedure for handling complaints. This procedure allows people to have a form of address to the Council if they feel they have a complaint, or have been unfairly treated in their dealings with the Council staff, Councillors, or the council as a whole.

### **Verbal Complaints**

On receipt of a complaint by telephone or in person, the Clerk will try to satisfy the complainant immediately or as soon as is practicable.

If the Clerk is unable to answer the complaint immediately, then full details of the complaint together with the complainant's telephone number etc. will be recorded so that a further verbal response can be made as soon as possible.

If a verbal response is unable to satisfy the complainant, then the Clerk will ask that the complaint be put in writing in order that it can be investigated more fully.

### **Written Complaints**

On receiving a written complaint, the Clerk shall try to settle the complaint directly.

If the complaint is about the behaviour of an employee or contractor of the Council, the Clerk will notify the person and offer the opportunity for comment on the matter in order to try and settle the complaint.

If necessary, the Clerk will send a holding letter to the complainant to allow further time to address the issues raised.

The Clerk or Chairman shall bring any written complaint which has not been settled to a meeting of the Council and the Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date of the meeting. The complainant will be offered the opportunity to explain the nature of the complaint at the meeting.

The Clerk shall consult with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to consider whether the written complaint warrants discussion at a Council meeting in the absence of the press and public, with the decision on the complaint being communicated at the next Council meeting in public.

The Clerk will communicate in writing the decision that has been made by the Council and the nature of any action taken by the Council.

### **Complaints Against an Officer of the Council**

Any complaint against an officer must be submitted in writing.

If the complaint is against the actions of the Clerk, it should be submitted in writing to the Chairman.

If the complaint is made against the actions of an employee, it will be considered as an employment issue and the Clerk will present the complaint to Full Council for consideration at a meeting held in the absence of the press or public.

If the complaint is made against the actions of the Clerk, it will be considered as an employment issue and the Chairman will present the complaint to Full Council for consideration at a meeting held in the absence of the press or public.

The complainant may be invited to attend part of the meeting to explain the nature of their complaint in the absence of the press and public.

Persons mentioned in the complaint will have the opportunity to explain the nature of their actions to the meeting, in the absence of the public and press.

The general outcomes of any Council consideration of a complaint will be announced at a Council meeting in public.

### **Complaints Against a Member of the Council**

The Council is unable to investigate complaints against any of its members. Parish and Town Councillors sign up to a Code of Conduct on taking office which adheres to the principles of public life.

If you wish to submit a complaint for breach of this code, you should do so to the Monitoring Officer at South Cambs District Council:

South Cambridgeshire Hall  
Cambourne Business Park  
Cambourne, Cambridge CB23 6EA