

Complaints Procedure

1. The following procedure will be adopted for dealing with complaints 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 relevant Committee, as appropriate, for consideration
2. This part of the procedure does not cover complaints about the conduct of a Member of the Parish Council (see attached procedures 13 – 16)
3. If a complaint about procedures, administration or the actions of any of the Council's employees is notified orally to a Councillor, or to the Clerk to the Council, a written record of the complaint will be made, noting the name and contact details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint
4. The complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk to the Council at the Parish Office, Histon & Impington Recreation Ground, New Road, Impington Cambridge CB24 9LU. The complaint will be dealt with within 21 days of receipt. Refusal to put the complaint in writing does not necessarily mean that the complaint cannot be investigated, but it is easier to deal with if in writing
5. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk to the Council (because the matter relates to the Clerk, for example) he or she should be advised to write to the Chairman
6. (a) on receipt of a written complaint, the Clerk to the Council (except where the complaint is about his or her own actions) or Chairman of Council (if the complaint relates to the Clerk) will seek to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This will not be done without first notifying any person complained about and giving him or her an opportunity to comment. Efforts should be made to resolve the complaint at this stage

(b) where the Clerk to the Council or a Councillor receives a written complaint about the Clerk's actions, he or she shall refer the complaint to the Chairman of the Council. The Clerk to the Council will be formally advised of the matter and be given an opportunity to comment
7. The Clerk to the Council (or Chairman) will report any complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant to the next meeting of the Council
8. The Clerk to the Council (or Chairman) will report any complaint that has not been resolved to the next meeting of the Council. The Clerk will notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered and the complainant will be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint to the Council orally
9. Matters relating to Grievance or Disciplinary proceedings that are taking, or are likely to take place, should be dealt with in accordance with the Council's grievance and disciplinary procedures
10. The Council may consider whether the circumstances of any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public, but any decision on the complaint will be announced at the Council meeting in public

11. As soon as possible after the decision has been made (and in any event not later than 10 days after the meeting) the complainant will be notified in writing of the decision and any action to be taken
12. The Council may defer dealing with any complain if it is of the opinion that issues arise on which further advice is necessary. The advice will be considered and the complaint dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received
13. Complaints about the conduct of a Member of the Parish Council should be made in writing to the Clerk of the Council (or the Chair of Council if the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk to the Council) at the Parish Office, Histon & Impington Recreation Ground, New Road, Impington Cambridge CB24 9LU
14. Upon receipt of a written complaint the Clerk will advise the complainant that the councillor(s) against whom the complaint(s) is made will be given 5 working days to offer a response and that response will be copied to the complainant within 24 hours of such receipt
15. The complainant will be given 48 hours to consider the response after which time the Clerk will ask whether the complainant is satisfied or whether an additional letter of apology from the councillor(s) would resolve the matter or whether further action is required
16. If the matter cannot be resolved locally the complaint, in writing, will be forwarded to the Monitoring Officer at the District Council (monitoring.offiicer@scambs.gov.uk)