

WOOTTON BRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

CODE OF PRACTICE

FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS

This code is the accepted guidance for dealing with complaints received against the Parish Council, with respect to its administration or procedures only.

Complaints against an Employee should be dealt with internally, as an employment matter.

Complaints about Parish Councillors are dealt with under the Code of Conduct and, as such, come under the jurisdiction of the Ethical Standards Committee and are sent to the Monitoring Officer, Isle of Wight Council, County Hall, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 1UD. An on-line form is available from the Isle of Wight Council website.

The Standards Committee will be informed of adoption of this Code of Practice.

Before the Meeting.

1. The Complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk, or other nominated Proper Officer.
2. If the Complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk or other Proper Officer, he/she may be advised to put it to the Chairman of the Council.
3. The Clerk will acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the Complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council, or by any Committee established for the purposes of hearing complaints.
4. The Complainant will be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with him/her such representative as they wish.
5. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the Complainant will provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which he/she wishes to refer to at the meeting.

At the Meeting.

6. The Council will consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the Public and Press. Any decision on a complaint will be announced at the Council meeting in public.
7. Chairman to introduce everyone.
8. Chairman to explain procedure.
9. Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint.
10. Members to ask any questions of the Complainant.
11. If relevant the Clerk, or other Proper Officer, to explain the Council's position.
12. Members to ask any questions of the Clerk, or other Proper Officer.
13. Clerk, or other Proper Officer, and Complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).
14. Clerk, or other Proper Officer, and Complainant to be asked to leave room while Members decide whether or not grounds for the complaint have been made. (If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties to be invited back in).
15. Clerk, or other Proper Officer, and Complainant return to hear decision, or be advised when decision will be made.

After the Meeting.

16. Decision confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken.

Adopted by Wootton Bridge Parish Council 17 September 2013

Amended and approved 21 March 2017