
COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Hurstbourne Tarrant 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 complaint 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. The complaints procedure does not apply to:
 - complaints by one Council employee against another Council employee, or between a Council employee and the Council as an employer. These matters are dealt with under the Council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.
 - complaints against councillors. Complaints against councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Parish Council and, if a complaint against a councillor is received by the Council, it will be referred to Test Valley Borough Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer at Test Valley Borough Council.
4. 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 participations 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. The Council's Standing Orders are available to view on

5. You may make your complaint about the Council's procedures or administration to the Clerk. You may do this in person, by phone, or by writing to or emailing the Clerk. The addresses and numbers are set out below.
6. Wherever possible, the Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Clerk will ask you to put your complaint in writing (if you have not already done so) and normally acknowledge your complaint within five working days. Records of oral and written complaints will be recorded and maintained by the Clerk.
7. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Chair of the Council who will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Chair will ask you to put your complaint in writing (if you have not already done so) and normally acknowledge your complaint within five working days.
8. The Clerk or the Chair of the Council will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff members of the Council.
9. The Clerk or the Chair of the Council will report any complaint received to the Council with the resulting resolution or other outcome.
10. Any complaint that has not been settled will be reported to the full Council for investigation.
11. You will be invited to attend the relevant meeting where this will be discussed and bring with you a representative if you wish.
12. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting you shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence which you wish to refer to at the meeting any details of any representative you wish to attend the meeting with you. The Council shall similarly provide you with copies of any documentation upon which we wish to rely at the meeting.
13. At the meeting
 - the Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
 - the Chair shall introduce everyone and explain the procedure
 - you or your representative will be asked to outline the grounds of the complaint
 - councillors can ask any questions of you or your representative
 - if relevant, the Clerk shall explain the Council's position

- the Clerk and you, or your representative, will be offered the opportunity of the last word (in this order)
- you, and your representative, will be asked to leave the room whilst councillors decide whether the grounds of the complaint has been made. If the complaint is against the Clerk, they will also be asked to leave. (If a point of clarification is required, both parties will be invited back).
- you, your representative and the Clerk, if appropriate, will return to hear the decision, or to be advised when the decision will be made.

14. After the meeting

- The Clerk or the Chair of the Council will notify you within 20 working days of the outcome of your complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take as a result of your complaint. (In exceptional cases the twenty working days timescale may have to be extended. If it is, you will be kept informed).

The Clerk to Hurstbourne Tarrant Parish Council can be contacted as follows:

Email: theparishclerk@hbt.org.uk

Tel: 01264 736677

Address: The Parish Clerk, Chestnut Cottage, The Dene, Hurstbourne Tarrant, SP11 0AN

The Chairman of Hurstbourne Tarrant Parish Council can be contacted as follows:

Email: councillor.ian.kitson@hbt.org.uk

Approved on 16th December 2019 minute reference: 93.2



Signed (Chairman)