

Hodsock Parish Council

Complaints Procedures

- . Hodsock Parish Council handle complaints in full council or nominate councillors who are authorised to deal with complaints but are not involved with the particular case.
- . If the complaint is handled by the full council then two nominated councillors should not take part in the proceedings. They will then be available to handle any appeal, if required.

The Clerk should normally represent the council through the proceedings but a nominated councillor may act instead.

The Procedure

- . Before the Meeting
 - The complainant should complain in writing to the Clerk or to the Chairman of the council. Assistance should be given to the claimant if necessary.
 - The complainant should be advised when the matter will be considered and whether it will be treated confidentially or heard by a committee. A copy of this procedure should also be given to the complainant.
 - The complainant should be invited to attend a meeting with a representative if wished.
 - Not later than seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant and the council will exchange copies of any documentation or other evidence to be relied on.

At the Council Meeting or Committee Meeting

- The Chairman of the meeting should introduce everyone and explain the procedure.
- The complainant (or representative) should outline the grounds for complaint before any questions from the Clerk and then from members if present.
- The Clerk should explain the council's position before any questions from the complainant, and from members if present.
- The complainant and the Clerk should then summarise their position; they then leave the room while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made.
- If the decision is unlikely to be finalised on that day an estimated date will be given.

After the Meeting

- The decision should be confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken.
- The result of the proceedings should be reported at the next council meeting after the appeal period has passed, ensuring that agreed confidential issues are appropriately respected.

Appeals

- Should the complainant not agree with the decision they are entitled to appeal the decision within fourteen days of receipt of the result of the proceedings.
- The councillors nominated to handle the appeal should, within twenty-one days of receiving the appeal, examine the way in which the council dealt with the complaint.
- If procedures were correctly handled by the council then the appellant should be notified that the appeal has not been successful. If the complaint was not handled correctly it must be referred back for consideration.
- The appellant should be notified of the result of the appeals process within fourteen days.