

ATWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. This Policy sets out procedures for dealing with any complaints that anyone may have about Atworth Parish Council's administration and procedures. It applies to Atworth Parish Clerk. Complaints about Parish Councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct adopted by Atworth Parish on July 18th, 2012. Any complaints about Parish Councillors should be referred to Wiltshire Councils Monitoring Officer.
2. Complaints about policy decisions made by the Council shall be referred back to the Parish Council.
3. If a complaint about procedures or administration, as practised by the Parish Council's Clerk is notified orally to a Councillor or the Parish Clerk, s/he should seek to satisfy the complaint fully. If that fails, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Parish Clerk and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt.
4. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Parish Clerk s/he should be advised to put it to the Council Chairman or any other Parish Councillor, who will immediately refer the written complaint to the Parish Council's elected members.
5. On receipt of a written complaint, the Parish Clerk shall immediately arrange a meeting of the Full Council to deal with the complaint (except where the complaint is about his or her own actions). The person complained against shall be notified and given an opportunity to comment to the Full Council, at its meeting. Efforts should be made to attempt to settle the complaint at this stage, although the Full Council need to be aware of possible disciplinary, grievance or other employment or legal matters.
6. Where the Parish Clerk receives a written complaint about his or her own actions, s/he shall immediately refer the complaint to the Council Chairman. Where the Chairman or any other Councillor receives such a written complaint, s/he shall refer it immediately to the Full Council. The Parish Clerk shall be notified and given an opportunity to comment.
7. The Full Council shall have power to deal with any such complaints to a final conclusion and will invite the complainant to explain the complaint orally at a meeting. The Full Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary. Such a decision and the reason for it will be communicated to the complainant at the earliest opportunity. This is to protect the Parish Council in matters of law.
8. As soon as reasonably practicable after the decision has been made, it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
9. Any complaints received and the outcomes will be made public, unless employment or legal proceedings are being taken as a result of the complaint, in which case the information will be communicated to members of the Parish Council under Exempt Business provisions.

Adopted by Atworth Parish Council on Sep 19th, 2012