

Acton Parish Council

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Complaints Procedure

Reviewed: 15th March 2021

Next review date: May 2022

The following procedure should be followed by anyone wishing to make a complaint against the Parish Council.

If you have a complaint against a Councillor please write to: The Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Babergh District Council, Corks Lane, Hadleigh, Ipswich IP7 6SJ

If you have a complaint against an employee of the Parish Council, please write to:

The Chairman (see address on the website www.actononesuffolk.net) or care of the Clerk, Acton Parish Council at the address above.

If you have any other complaint you should contact the Clerk to the Council.

What we will do when we hear from you

On receiving your complaint the Council will investigate the matter fully and will obtain further information as required.

In the first instance, your complaint will be investigated by the Clerk. If this is not acceptable, or the Clerk does not feel that it is appropriate, your complaint will be investigated by the Chair of the Council.

We may be able to give you an answer straight away. If not, we will use our best endeavours to notify you, by email or in writing, of the outcome of your complaint within 10 days of hearing from you. If we cannot give you a full answer within 10 days we will give you a progress report, explain why we need more time to investigate further and tell you when you can expect a full answer.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the full Council. If procedures permit, and the information required by the Council is available, the complaint will be heard at the next Council meeting. If this is not possible, the complaint will be heard at the following Council meeting.

Where a complaint is referred to the Council, the circumstances of the complaint will be considered and, if necessary, the public and press will be excluded from that part of the agenda under which the matter is discussed. You will be advised of the Council's decision within seven working days of the meeting. The decision will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

On referral to the Council the following procedure will be followed:

Before the Meeting

1. The Complainant will be asked to complete the information requested (see page 3) and submit it to the Parish Council's proper officer, the Clerk.

2. If the Complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk, they will 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 as to when the matter will be considered by the Parish Council.
4. The Complainant will be invited to attend the relevant meeting and may bring with them a representative if they so wish.
5. 7 clear working days prior to the meeting, the Complainant will provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The Parish Council will similarly provide the Complainant with copies of documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

At the Meeting

6. The Parish Council will consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint will be announced at the council meeting in public.
7. The Chairman will introduce everyone.
8. The Chairman will explain the procedure.
9. The Complainant (or their representative) will outline the grounds for complaint.
10. The Council members will then ask any question of the complainant.
11. If relevant or necessary the Clerk will explain the council's position.
12. The Council members will ask any question of the Clerk.
13. The Clerk and the Complainant will be offered the opportunity of the last word.
14. The Clerk and the Complainant will be asked to leave the room while the Council members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made.

Note: If a point of clarification is necessary then both parties will be invited back.

15. The Clerk and the Complainant will return to hear the Council's decision or will be advised as to when the decision will be made.

After the Meeting

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

Please provide the following information when making a complaint to Acton Parish Council under its complaints procedure:

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Please give details of your complaint:

Have you spoken to, emailed or written to anyone at the Council about your complaint? Yes / No

If Yes, please provide their name:

What happened as a result of this contact?

What would be the best way for the Council to resolve your complaint?