



COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURE

Introduction

This procedure provides the basis upon which a member of the public can raise a formal complaint against Kineton Parish Council's procedures or administration. The procedure was adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on the 15th December 2015 and will be reviewed annually in May.

Before processing a complaint

1. All formal complaints against the Parish Council must be submitted in writing. A complaint sent by email will be accepted.

Complaints can be

- sent by post to:
The Clerk to the Council
Sideways
Banbury Road
Kineton
CV35 0JY
- emailed to:
clerk.kinetonpc@btinternet.com

Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged in writing within 7 working days.

2. The complainant must confirm from the outset if he/she wants the complaint to be dealt with confidentially. *Please note the Parish Council will ensure compliance with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 to safeguard against unlawful disclosure of personal data.*
3. The complaint will be considered by the Clerk and if he/she thinks it requires further investigation it will be further considered by the Council's Standards Panel.
4. The complainant will be advised of the timeframe for investigating the complaint which will be determined by the type of complaint received but should generally not exceed 12 weeks from receipt to resolution.
5. Once submitted a complaint will be processed by the Council through written communications unless otherwise stated. Should the complainant be requested to make verbal representations he/she will be given the opportunity to be accompanied by a friend.

Receipt of the complaint

6. The Clerk will
 - acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 7 working days. In the event that the complaint is against the Clerk, the acknowledgement will be sent by the Chairman of the Council.
 - confirm to the complainant if the complaint will be treated as confidential and
 - confirm the next steps in the complaints procedure

Investigating the complaint

7. The Clerk and Standards Panel will investigate the facts of the complaint and collate relevant evidence.

Should the complainant be requested to make verbal representation, the complainant will be invited to a meeting with the Clerk and Members of the Standards Panel

Seven working days prior to the meeting

- i. the complainant shall provide the Clerk with any new information or other evidence relevant to the complaint and
- ii. the Clerk shall provide the complainant with new information or evidence relevant to the complaint

Meetings with the complainant (if applicable)

8. The Clerk shall advise the complainant of how the meeting will proceed.
9. The complainant should outline the grounds for the complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by the Clerk and Members of the Standards Panel.
10. The Clerk (or if the complaint concerns the Clerk, a Member of the Standards Panel) will have an opportunity to explain the Council's position and questions may be asked by the complainant.
11. The Clerk / Standards Panel and then complainant will then be offered the opportunity to summarise their respective positions.
12. The complainant will be advised when a decision on the complaint is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them.

After the complaint has been decided

13. The Standards Panel will submit its report and recommendation to full Council for determination.

14. The complainant will then be notified, in writing, of the findings and conclusion of the Parish Council.

15. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the conclusion they may ask the Council to reconsider. Staff or Members previously involved in the original decision will not participate in the determination of the appeal.