

ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL

Complaints Procedure

Adopted by the Parish Council at the meeting on 6 January 2011

From time-to-time members of the public may have complaints about the administration or procedures of the Parish Council. Local councils are not subject to the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman. Aston, Cote, Shifford & Chimney Parish Council has adopted the following procedure, as recommended by the National Association of Local Councils in order to ensure that it properly and fully considers any complaints made about its administration or procedures.

The Parish Council will bear in mind the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 as well as the Freedom of Information Act 2000 when dealing with complaints.

This procedure relates to complaints about the Parish Council's administration or procedures only. Complaints against an employee are dealt with internally as an employment matter. Complaints about Parish Councillors are dealt with under the Code of Conduct and, as such, come under the jurisdiction of the Standards Board for England and Wales.

Before the meeting at which the complaint will be considered

1. The Complainant will be asked to put the complaint about the Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk, or other nominated Proper Officer.
2. If the Complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk or other Proper Officer, they may 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 when the matter will be considered by the Council, or by any Committee established for the purposes of hearing complaints.
4. The Complainant will be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish.
5. Seven 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 Council will similarly provide the Complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

At the Meeting

6. The 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. Chairman to introduce everyone.
8. Chairman to explain procedure.
9. Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint.

10. Members to ask any questions of the Complainant.
11. If relevant the Clerk, or other Proper Officer, to explain the Council's position.
12. Members to ask any questions of the Clerk, or other Proper Officer.
13. Clerk, or other Proper Officer, and Complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).
14. Clerk, or other Proper Officer, and Complainant to be asked to leave room while Members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. (If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties to be invited back in).
15. Clerk, or other Proper Officer, and Complainant return to hear decision, or be advised when decision will be made.

After the Meeting.

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

Helen Sandhu
Parish Clerk
January 2011