**Brafferton Parish Council Complaints Procedure**

**Amended on Wednesday 16 July 2014**

1. **General Process**
   1. Brafferton Parish Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or are visitors to the locality. If a parishioner is dissatisfied with the standard of service they have received from the Council, or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by the Council, this Complaints Procedure sets out how a complaint may be raised and how the Council will try to resolve that complaint.
   2. This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how the Council has dealt with your concerns.
   3. This Complaints Procedure does not apply to complaints against councillors. Complaints against councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council on 18 October 2012 and if a complaint against a councillor is received by the council it will be referred to the Standards Committee of Hambleton District Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of Hambleton District Council.
2. **Raising Concerns**
   1. The most appropriate time for influencing Council decision-making is by raising concerns before the Council debates and votes on a matter. This may be done by writing to the Council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There may also be the opportunity to raise concerns in the public participation section of Council meetings. If a parishioner is unhappy with a Council decision, he/she may raise their concerns with the Council, but Standing Orders prevent the Council from re-opening issues for four months from the date of the decision, unless there are exceptional grounds to consider this necessary and the special process set out in Council Standing Orders is followed.
3. **Raising a Complaint**
   1. A complaint about the Council’s procedures or administration should be raised in the first instance with the Clerk. This must be done by writing to or emailing the Clerk (or Chairman, see 3.2). The Clerk or the Chairman will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from the complainant and/or members of the Council.
   2. Some complaints (particularly those concerning actions by the Clerk) may be more appropriately addressed directly to the Chairman of the Council.
   3. Wherever possible, the Clerk or Chairman will try to resolve the complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Clerk will acknowledge the complaint within five working days (subject to normal absences due to leave etc) setting out the process to be followed and asking whether the complainant wishes the complaint to be treated confidentially. In some cases the complainant will be offered an opportunity to make verbal representation to the Clerk, Chairman or (when appointed) a Complaints Committee.
   4. The Clerk or the Chairman will notify the complainant within 20 working days of the outcome of the complaint and of what action, if any, the Council proposes to take as a result. (In exceptional cases the twenty working days timescale may have to be extended. If it is, the complainant will be kept informed.)
   5. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response received, the complaint may then be referred to the full Council and (usually within eight weeks) the complainant will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of their original complaint.

**Contacts**

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