

WALMER PARISH COUNCIL – COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Adopted by Walmer Parish Council 17 January 20017, Minute 2447

Amended by Walmer Parish Council 16 January 2013 Minute 3895

Amended by Walmer Parish Council 7 December 2016 minute 5151

1. This procedure will be adopted for dealing with any complaints that anyone may have about the Parish Council's administration or procedures. Complaints against policy decisions made by the Council shall be referred back to Council [but note clause 8a of the Council's Standing Orders which says that issues shall not be re-opened for six months].
2. This procedure does not cover complaints about the conduct of a Member of the Parish Council or about members of staff.
3. In the case of a complaint about a third party if a more appropriate point of contact has already been established by the Council the complaint should be directed there in the first instance.
4. If a complaint about administration or procedures is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk to the Council, they should seek to satisfy the complaint fully. If that fails, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk and be assured that it will be dealt with within ten working days. If this is not possible a response should be sent indicating a new dead-line.
5. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk he or she should be advised to put it to the Chairman of the Council. The complainant should be advised whether the complaint is to be treated as confidential or whether it is necessary in order to resolve the issues to involve other parties including those against whom the complaint is made. Anonymous complaints cannot be investigated unless exception circumstances, such as personal safety, exist.
6. If the Clerk is unable to resolve the problem a report will be prepared for the most appropriate committee for consideration and, if possible, resolution at the next committee meeting.
7. The Clerk or Chairman shall report to the next meeting of the Council any formal complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.

8. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
9. As soon as possible after the decision has been made it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
10. The 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. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.

Amendments recommended by HR committee and approved by Council in October 2017 at minute 5367 in italics