

WOODHOUSE PARISH COUNCIL

Code of Practice for Handling Complaints

1. If a complaint about Parish Council procedures or administration is notified orally to a councillor or the Clerk and it is not possible to satisfy the complainant fully forthwith, the complainant shall be asked to put his complaint in writing to the Clerk and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt.
2. If a complainant indicates that he would prefer not to put the complaint to the Clerk he shall be advised to put it to the Chairman.
3. On receipt of a written complaint, the Clerk or Chairman, as the case may be, shall [except where the complaint is about his own actions] try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant but shall not do so in respect of a complaint about the behaviour of a clerk or a councillor without notifying the person complained of and giving him an opportunity to comment on the manner in which it is intended to attempt to settle the complaint. Where the Clerk or Chairman received written complaint about his own actions, he shall forthwith refer the complaint to the Council
4. The Clerk or Chairman shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
5. The Clerk or Chairman shall bring any written complaint which cannot be settled to the next meeting of the Council, and the Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered.
6. 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.
7. As soon as may be after the decision has been made, it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
8. Freedom of Information requests: If you are dissatisfied with the way in which your request has been handled the Council will do everything it can to resolve your complaint on an informal basis within 15 working days. Please initially contact the Clerk.
9. If you are then still unsatisfied with the response that you have been given put your formal complaint in writing, providing any supporting evidence, to the Information Commissioner's Office. The Information Commissioner's Office will investigate and respond to your complaint: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF Telephone: 01625 54 57 45 Website: www.ico.gov.uk
10. If your complaint is about an individual councillor you may contact the independent Standards Committee at Charnwood Borough Council, Southfield Road, Loughborough LE11 2TX Telephone: 01509 634785 E-mail: michael.hopkins@charnwood.gov.uk. The Standards Committee will decide if further action is necessary and if so, will pass the details on to the Standards and Monitoring Officer for detailed investigation.