

Working draft: 27 June 2023

Ashwell Parish Council

Complaints Procedure

Adopted on: [draft - not yet adopted]

Next review due on: [draft – not yet adopted]

1. Ashwell 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 you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from this council, or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by this council, this Complaints Procedure sets out how you may complain to the council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.

2. This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.

3. This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:

3.1 complaints by one council employee against another council employee, or between a council employee and the council as employer. These matters are dealt with in accordance with the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.

3.2. complaints against councillors. Complaints against councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council on 17 May 2023 and, if a complaint against a councillor is received by the council, it will be referred to the Standards Committee of North Herts Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of North Herts Council.

4. The appropriate time for influencing Council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the Council debates and votes on a matter. You may do this 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 your concerns in the public participation section of Council meetings. If you are unhappy with a Council decision, you may raise your concerns with the Council, but Standing Orders prevent the Council from re-opening issues for six months from the date of the decision, unless there are exceptional grounds to consider this necessary and the special process set out in the Standing Orders is followed.

5. You may make your complaint about the council's procedures or administration to the Clerk. You may do this in person, by phone, or by writing to or emailing the Clerk. The addresses and numbers are set out below.

6. Wherever possible, the Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Clerk will normally try to acknowledge your complaint within five working days.

7. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Chairman of the Council who will report your complaint to the HR Committee or to full Council (as appropriate).

8. The Clerk or the HR Committee or the full Council (as appropriate) will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the Council. In the event that the complaint is investigated via full Council, two councillors will be nominated not to take part in proceedings, so that they are able to deal with any decisions that are appealed.

9. The Clerk or the Chairman of the Council will notify you within 20 working days of the outcome of your complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take as a result of your complaint. (In exceptional cases the twenty working days timescale may have to be extended. If it is, you will be kept informed.)

10. If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the full Council or to the two councillors who did not take part in the initial investigation, if it was undertaken by full Council and (usually within eight weeks) you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint.

Contacts

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The Chairman of Ashwell Parish Council
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