

Little Horkesley Parish Council

Complaints Procedure

Chairman	Clerk to the Council
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1. If there is an occasion when you feel that the Council has done something wrong or badly or failed to do something that you expected of it then you may feel you need to complain. The purpose of this document is to set out: (1) how you can make a complaint; (2) how the Council will deal with your complaint; and (3) what to do if you are still not satisfied.
2. Before making a complaint, please check that the cause of the complaint is within the scope of the parish council. Please note that the Council will not investigate anonymous complaints and may choose to not investigate if a complaint is serial or persistent. In all cases the Council will comply with the GDP regulations 2018.
3. Complaints must be raised within three months of the cause/ incident. You may withdraw your complaint at any time.

How to make a complaint

4. In the first instance please contact the Clerk to the Council (contact details above) and ask the Clerk to investigate for you or explain the actions of the Council. The Clerk will liaise with the Chairman (or the Vice Chairman, if your complaint concerns the Chairman) in an attempt to find an amicable solution. If your complaint relates to the Clerk, please contact the Chairman (contact details above).
5. If you are still not satisfied we will ask you to put your complaint in writing to the Clerk using the attached form. If you do not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk, you should address it to the Chairman of the Council. Your complaint will then be considered at the next most appropriate Council meeting.

Procedure before the meeting

6. The Clerk (or Chairman) will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and will circulate a copy of the complaint to all Councillors (including the subject of the complaint if it relates to an individual). The Clerk (or Chairman) will advise you when the matter will be considered by the Council and whether the complaint will be treated as confidential.
7. You will be invited to attend a meeting and to bring with you a representative, if you wish.
8. At least seven clear working days prior to the meeting, you must provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence upon which you wish to rely. The Council will then provide you with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting in good time before the meeting.

9. 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.
10. The Chairman will introduce everyone and explain the procedure.
11. You (or your representative) should outline the grounds for complaint and then questions may be asked by (i) the Clerk (or the Chairman) (ii) the other Council members.
12. The Clerk (or Chairman) will have an opportunity to explain the Council's position and questions may be asked by (i) you and (ii) the other Council members.
13. The Clerk (or Chairman) and then you will be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.
14. The Clerk (or Chairman) and you will be asked to leave the room while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, *both* parties will be invited back.
15. You will be advised when the decision is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to you.

After the Meeting

16. The Council may defer dealing with any complaint if it is of the opinion that issues arise on which further advice is necessary. The advice will be considered and the complaint dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.
17. The decision will be confirmed in writing within ten working days together with details of any action to be taken. There will be no further correspondence from the Council on this matter.
18. If you are still not satisfied and your complaint is about an individual Councillor you can contact the Monitoring Officer at Colchester Borough Council:

The Chairman of the Allegations Sub-Committee,
Monitoring Officer
Colchester Borough Council
Town Hall
High Street
Colchester CO1 1FR

Tel: 01206 282213

You may also be able to pursue your complaint further through the Local Government Ombudsman, which provides an independent national service to investigate certain complaints about councils: www.lgo.org.uk

Date of policy: July 2021

Review Date: July 2023

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Name:

Address:

Telephone No.:

Please set out what you consider the Council has done wrong or failed to do:

How has this problem affected you?:

What do you think the Council should do to put matters rights?

Who have you spoken to about this issue and when?

Signed:..... Dated:.....