

# COLEORTON PARISH COUNCIL

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clerk: Ms. Fiona M. Palmer

## **Policy on Handling Complaints**

The Parish Council has the following complaints procedure for dealing with the Parish Council's action or lack of action or about the standard or service, whether the action was taken, or the service provided by the Parish Council itself or a person or body acting on behalf of the Parish Council.

If a complaint relates to the financial irregularity, criminal activity, member or employee conduct there are other procedures or bodies that may be more appropriate than this procedure.

<b>Type of conduct</b>	<b>Refer to</b>
Financial irregularity	Local elector's statutory right to object Council's audit of account pursuant to s. 16 Audit Commission Act 1998. On other matters, councils may need to consult their auditor/Audit Commission
Criminal activity	The Police
Member conduct	In England a complaint relating to a member's failure to comply with the Code of Conduct must be submitted to the standards committee of the relevant principal authority.
Employee conduct	Internal disciplinary procedure

## **Procedure for Complaining**

### **Before the Meeting**

1. The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the clerk or other nominated proper officer.
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the clerk or other proper officer, they may be advised to put it to the chairman of the council.
3. The clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the council or by the committee established for the purposes of hearing complaints.
4. The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish.
5. 7 clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

### **At the Meeting**

1. The council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the council meeting in public.
2. Chairman to introduce everyone.
3. Chairman to explain procedure.
4. Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint.
5. Members to ask any question of the complainant.
6. If relevant, clerk or other proper officer to explain the council's position.
7. Members to ask any question of the clerk or other proper officer.
8. Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).
9. Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be asked to leave room while Members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. (If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties to be invited back).
10. Clerk or other proper officer and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when decision will be made.

### **After the Meeting**

1. Decision confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken.