

Ashton Parish Council

Complaints Procedure

1. Ashton Parish Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live and / or work in the parish. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from the 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 employee(s) have dealt with your concerns.

3. This Complaints Procedure does **not** apply to:

3.1. complaints between a council employee and the council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the council's 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 14th November 2012 and, if a complaint against a councillor is received by the council, it will be referred to the Standards Committee of South Northants Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of South Northants 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 in accordance with its Standing Orders the Council will not re-open issues for six months from the date of the decision, unless there are exceptional grounds to consider this necessary and the appropriate process 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 e-mailing the Clerk.

6. The Clerk will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and / or from other persons including members of the Council. Wherever possible, the Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Clerk will normally try to resolve 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 Council.

8. 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 the matter to be re-considered and reviewed at a meeting between yourself and the full Council. This review meeting will take place as soon as reasonably practicable (usually within eight weeks). Following the meeting, you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint.