

# **SOUTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Complaints Procedure**

**To be used in cases of complaint by the Public about the Parish Council's procedures and their implementation and administration.**

**Complaints about individual Councillors should be dealt with under the Code of Conduct by the Monitoring Officer.**

**If at all possible, some issues will be dealt with by the Clerk and Council by correspondence and satisfactory response/action. However, in cases that cannot be resolved easily, the complaints procedure is to be used.**

### **Before the Meeting**

1. The complaint should be sent in writing to the Clerk (or other nominated Proper Officer).
2. If the complaint is about the actions of the Clerk (or other Proper Officer), it may be addressed to the Chair of the Council.
3. The Clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint with details of when the matter will be considered by the Council or a specially convened Complaints Committee established for the purposes of hearing the complaint.
4. The complainant shall be invited to attend the meeting and may be accompanied by a representative whose role will be to assist the complainant to express their thoughts and concerns.
5. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence 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**

6. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the press and public. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council Meeting in public.
7. The Chair will introduce everybody and explain the procedure.
8. The Complainant (or representative) will then outline the grounds for the complaint and Members may ask any question of the complainant.
9. If relevant, the Clerk should explain the Council's position and Members may ask any question of the Clerk or Proper Officer.

10. The Chair will invite the Clerk and the complainant to make any final comments.

11. The complainant will leave the room while Members consider the grounds of the complaint and decide the action to be taken. If the complaint is against the Clerk then that officer shall also leave the room. (Both parties may be invited back if a point of clarity is necessary.)

12. All parties will return to hear the decision, or to be advised when a decision will be made.

### **After the Meeting**

13. The decision will be confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of the action to be taken.

14. In the event that the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the meeting then they will be advised to refer the matter to the Monitoring Officer of Peterborough City Council.

Adopted 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023      Review as and when deemed necessary