

Lilleshall and Donnington Parish Council

Complaints Procedure

The Council recognises the importance of customer complaints and welcomes complaints as a valuable form of feedback about its services. The Council is committed to using the information it receives to help and drive forward improvements.

HOW WE WILL DEAL WITH YOUR COMPLAINT

1. If the Parish Council receives an informal complaint (phone call, visit to council office, etc) then ideally the complaint will be resolved 'on the spot' or very soon afterwards by staff directly involved.
2. A Formal (usually written) complaint will be investigated by the Clerk and will be acknowledged within three working days with a full response within 14 working days. If the Clerk is unable to reply within the agreed amount of days i.e. for very complex matter then you will be informed and the time scales for reply set out.
3. If the complainant is still not satisfied they should be asked to put the complaint about the Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk or other nominated proper officer.
4. 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,
5. 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.
6. The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish.
7. Seven 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

8. 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.
9. Chairman to introduce everyone.
10. Chairman to explain procedure.

11. Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint.
12. Members to ask any question of the complainant.
13. If relevant, Clerk or Chair to explain the Council's position.
14. Members to ask any question of the Clerk or Chair.
15. Clerk or Chair and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).
16. 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).
17. Clerk or other proper officer and complainant return to hear decision or to be advised when decision will be made.

After the Meeting

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

Following the review under the Council's complaints procedure, a complainant will always be told of their right to complain to the Ombudsman and given details of how to do so.

If you are unhappy with the outcome or way in which the Council has investigated your complaint, you may ask the Local Government Ombudsman to investigate the matter on your behalf.

They investigate complaints of injustice arising from maladministration by local authorities and certain other bodies. This includes complaints about most Council matters. The Ombudsman can investigate complaints about how the Council has done something. But they cannot question what a Council has done simply because someone does not agree with it.

Formally adopted at the Parish Council meeting of 7th March 2005.