

ALDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Complaints Policy

1. This Policy sets out procedures for dealing with any complaints that anyone may have about Aldenham Parish Council's **administration or procedures**. It applies to the Aldenham Parish Council's employees. Councillors are covered by Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 30th July 2007.
Complaints against **policy decisions** made by the Council shall be referred back to Council [but note paragraph 43 of the Council's Standing Orders which says that issues shall not be re-opened for six months].
2. If a complaint about administration or procedures as practised by the Council's employees is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk to the Council, they should seek to satisfy the complaint fully. If that fails, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly. Acknowledgement of the letter will be sent within three working days of receipt of the letter of complaint, and a full report sent within ten working days, where this is not possible the complainant must be given an update and a reasonable date by which they should receive the report.
3. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk he or she should be advised to put it to the Chairman of the Council.
4.
 - a) On receipt of a written complaint the Chairman of the Council or the Clerk. (*except where the complaint is about his or her own actions*), shall try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This shall not be done without first notifying the person complained against and giving him or her an opportunity to comment. Efforts should be made to attempt to settle the complaint at this stage.
 - b) Where the Chairman of the Council receives a written complaint about the Clerks own actions. The Clerk shall be notified and given an opportunity to comment.
5. The Clerk/ Chairman of the Council shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
6.
 - a) The Clerk or Chairman of the Council shall bring any written complaint that has not been settled to the next meeting of the Council. The Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered and the complainant shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally.
 - b) Where such a matter may be related to, or may prejudice a Grievance or Disciplinary action against an employee or a Standard Board enquiry relating to a Council member (be it current or likely to take place in the future). It is the Councils policy that the new complaint will not be heard until the former is concluded.

7. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint warrant the matter being discussed under the exempt business rules.
8. Within five working days after the decision has been made, a letter will be sent to the complainant detailing the decision and any action to be taken.
9. A Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.
10. A copy of this policy must be given to any persons who requests it, or wishes to make a complaint.

This policy was adopted by Aldenham Parish Council at its meeting of 25th November 2008 and will be reviewed bi-annually.