

Carlton Parish Council

Complaints Procedure

Introduction

Carlton Parish Council aims to provide a quality service, and to conduct all of its business in an open, fair and equitable manner. When things go wrong, the Parish Council will try to put them right as quickly as possible.

Complaints may be made to any Parish Councillor or the Clerk at any time. Members of the public are also able to ask questions and raise items for discussion at the end of every meeting of the Parish Council.

When a complaint arises, the Council will attempt to resolve it promptly by informal discussion. If this is not successful, a formal complaint may be made.

All complaints are reported to the Parish Council, but complainants are not identified in minutes without their consent.

Formal complaints

1. A formal complaint must be made in writing to the Clerk and give full details of the matter. A complaint about the Clerk should be made to the Chairman.
2. Receipt of a formal complaint will be acknowledged in writing. One person will be nominated to investigate the complaint. This will usually be the Clerk, but may be a Councillor or the Internal Auditor. The Parish Council will consider the report of the investigation, and will then provide a written answer to the complainant.
3. If the complainant is not satisfied, the complaint may be considered at a meeting of the Parish Council. The Complainant will be invited to attend the meeting, and may be accompanied by a representative. Any supporting documentation or evidence shall be copied by the complainant to the Council and vice versa at least seven clear days before the meeting.

4. The procedure for consideration of a formal complaint at a meeting of the Parish Council shall be:

- a) The Chairman will introduce everyone, explain the procedure and make sure that both parties have exchanged any necessary documentation;
- b) The complainant (or their representative) will be asked to outline the grounds for complaint, and may then be questioned first by the nominated investigator, and then by Councillors;
- c) The nominated investigator will be asked to explain the results of the investigation, and may then be questioned first by the complainant and then by Councillors;
- d) The nominated investigator and complainant will be asked to leave the meeting while the Council decides whether the grounds for the complaint have been made. If clarification is required, both parties will be invited back to the meeting.
- e) Both parties will be advised of the decision immediately. If a decision is deferred, both parties will be advised of the reason and when the decision is likely to be made.
- f) The decision will be confirmed in writing to both parties within seven working days, together with details of any action to be taken.

5. Some serious complaints should be referred to other bodies.

Criminal activity should be referred directly to the Police.

Member's conduct. Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct should be referred to the Standards Committee of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council.

Financial irregularity. If the complaint cannot be resolved by the Responsible Financial Officer and Internal Auditor, a complainant who is a local elector has a statutory right to make representations to the External Auditor about the Council's accounts.

This policy was adopted by Carlton Parish Council on 9th March 2011.