

Eardisland Parish Council Complaints Procedure

Adopted by Eardisland Council on 24 March 2016
Review by 31 May 2017

1. This policy document sets out the procedure for dealing with and resolving complaints against Eardisland Parish Council about the Council's conduct, administration or procedures. This does not include a complaint about a decision made by the Council but about processes.
2. The conduct of an individual Councillor is covered by the Herefordshire Council Code of Conduct 2015, adopted by Eardisland Parish Council on 25 June 2015. Any complaint about an individual Councillor should be made to the Democratic Services Officer of Herefordshire Council.
3. If the Clerk receives a verbal complaint about Eardisland Council's conduct, procedures or administration, she should seek to answer the complaint fully. If this fails, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk (via email or post) and be assured that the matter will be investigated promptly.
4. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk, he/she should be advised to put it to the Chairman of the Council.
5. On receipt of a written complaint about Eardisland Parish Council's conduct, administration or procedures, the Clerk or Chairman, as relevant, will (except where the complaint is about the Clerk's actions) try to resolve the complaint directly with the complainant using the Council's policies.
6. If the complaint is about the behaviour of the Clerk, she should immediately refer the complaint to the Chairman and full Council. The Chairman, or a delegated Councillor, will try to address the complaint directly with the complainant using the Council's policies, after the Clerk has been given the opportunity to comment on the manner in which it is intended to settle the complaint. If necessary the Council will address the complaint with the Clerk, using the Council's Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure and the Chairman will inform the complainant that this action is being instigated.
7. If either the Clerk or Chairman is able to resolve a complaint directly with the complainant, whether verbally or in writing, she/he must report the complaint and resolution to Council at the next meeting.
8. A written complaint that is not settled should be brought to the next meeting by the Clerk or Chairman. The Clerk will notify the complainant of the date of the meeting and offer the complainant an opportunity to explain the complaint verbally.
9. The Council shall only defer dealing with a written complaint if it considers that advice is required on a matter of law or practice. The complainant will be informed of such delay and of the date of the next meeting at which the complaint will be dealt with.
10. If the Council considers that the absence of the press or public is required while the complaint is considered, the decision on the complaint will be announced at the meeting in public.
11. As soon as possible after a decision has been made, it and any action that will be taken should be notified to the complainant in writing.
12. If there are serial malicious, facetious or vexatious complaints from a member of the public, the Council will consider taking advice from the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils or a solicitor before responding formally to the complainant.

Signed: *J. W. Gausan*

Date: 24/3/16

Chairman of Eardisland Parish Council