



## COMPLAINTS POLICY

Adopted on 11 September 2019

1. Sutton on the Forest Parish Council is committed to serving the people who live, work or visit its area. If you are dissatisfied with any of the Council's actions, inactions or services, this procedure sets out how you may complain and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.
2. This Procedure applies to complaints about the council's administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees, contractors or volunteers working on the Council's behalf have dealt with your concerns. It does not apply to:
  - i) a complaint by an employee against the Council or by one employee about another;
  - ii) a complaint about the conduct of a councillor. These are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council in July 2012. Any complaint against a councillor or any complaint of financial impropriety should be referred to the Monitoring Officer of Hambleton District Council.
4. The appropriate time for influencing Council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the Council debates and votes on a matter. You may do this by writing to the Council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There may also be the opportunity to raise your concerns in the public participation section of Council meetings. If you are unhappy with a Council decision, you may raise your concerns with the Council although you should note paragraph 36 of the Council's Standing Orders which says issues shall not be re-opened for six months.
5. You may complain about the council's procedures or administration to the Clerk. You may do this in person, by phone, or by writing to or e-mailing the Clerk. You can find the Clerk's addresses and telephone number on the Council's website.
6. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Chairman of the Council. You will find the Chairman's addresses and telephone number of the Council's website.

7. Your complaint will be acknowledged within 48 hours of being received and, where possible, the Clerk will try to resolve it immediately. If that is not possible, you may be asked to put your complaint in writing and either the Clerk or Chairman will investigate and endeavour, following consultation with the Council, to notify you of the outcome within 20 working days. Exceptionally, for example if the Clerk or Chairman wishes to seek legal or other advice, the 20-day timescale may have to be extended. In that case you will be kept informed with regular updates.
8. Any complaint against an employee of the Council must be made in writing and the employee given an opportunity to comment.
9. While every effort will be made to reach a satisfactory conclusion, the Council reserves the right to discontinue its involvement if it considers, despite reasonable efforts, it does not understand the complaint; if the complainant engages in a pattern of threatening, abusive or insulting behaviour; if the complainant has suffered no injustice as a result of the matter complained about; or if it considers a complaint is being pursued unreasonably.
10. All complaints against the Council, whether disposed of or not, will be notified to the next meeting of the Council. The Clerk will notify the complainant of the date of that meeting and, providing public discussion will not prejudice an ongoing investigation, the complainant will be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally.
11. All complaints will be dealt with impartially, objectively and professionally. Complainants need have no fear they or their families will suffer adverse treatment because they have made a complaint.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of meeting

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Parish Clerk

Date: \_\_\_\_\_