

## 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 (APC) **administration or procedures**.

It applies to the APC's employees. APC Councillors are covered by Code of Conduct adopted by the Council 16<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

Complaints against **policy decisions** made by APC shall be referred back to the Full Council [but note paragraph 7a 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 APC employees is notified orally to a Councillor or the Parish Council Manager (PCM), they should seek to satisfy the complaint fully. If that fails, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing to the PCM 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 PCM 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 PCM (*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 PCM's own actions. The PCM shall be notified and given an opportunity to comment.
5. The PCM/ Chairman of the Council shall report to the next meeting of APC any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
6.
  - a) The PCM or Chairman of the Council shall bring any written complaint that has not been settled to the next meeting of the Council. The PCM 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
    - be a Monitoring Officer enquiry relating to a Council member (be it current or likely to take place in the future).

It is the Council's 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. (Part 2)
8. 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.
9. 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 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and will be reviewed when necessary.