

NEWCASTLE PARISH COUNCIL

CODE OF PRACTICE

FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS

The following procedure should be followed by anyone wishing to make a complaint against Newcastle Parish Council.

If you have a complaint against a councillor you should write to:

Chairman of the The Standards Committee
South Shropshire District Council
Stone House
Corve Street
Ludlow
Shropshire SY78DG

If you have a complaint against an employee, you should write to the chairman:

Cllr. Mr E M Jones
Lower Mount
Mardu
Clun
Shropshire SY7 8QG

If you have any other complaint you should write to the Clerk to the Council:

Mrs P J Smith
Crossways
Newcastle on Clun
Craven Arms
Shropshire SY7 8QT

In order for your complaint about the Parish Council to be dealt with, the following Code of Practice has been adopted so that you can be assured that your grievance will be properly and fully considered. We hope that by following this transparent process, we shall maintain the good reputation of the council. This procedure will be followed where complaints cannot be resolved less formally by the Clerk to the Council or the Chairman.

The Clerk to the Council is the Proper Officer of the Council and will represent and advise the Council at any meeting where the complaint will be aired unless the Clerk is putting forward the justification for action or procedure of the complainant.

CODE OF PRACTICE

1. All complaints about the Council's procedures or administration should be given in writing to the Clerk to the Council.
2. If the complainant does not wish to write to the Clerk the complaint should be addressed to the Chairman.

3. Receipt of the complaint shall be acknowledged. The complainant will be advised when the matter will be considered by the Council as soon as is practicable.
4. A meeting will be arranged for he or she to be heard and the complainant will be invited to attend. The complainant is entitled to bring a representative if they wish.
5. At least 7 clear working days before the meeting the complainant shall provide the Council with supporting documentation or evidence to substantiate the complaint against the council. The complainant will also be provided with relevant documentation to which the Council will rely upon when the complaint is heard at the meeting.
6. Under Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 the Council will decide whether the complaint warrants the exclusion of the public and press. The decision of the Council however, will be made public at the conclusion of the meeting.

Procedure of the Meeting

1. Chairman's introduction of those present at the meeting.
2. Chairman's explanation of procedure to be followed.
3. Complainant (or representative of the complainant) will outline the nature of the complaint and the reason.
4. Members of the Parish Council will question the complainant.
5. The Clerk to the Council will explain the position of the council, if relevant.
6. Members of the Parish Council will question the Clerk to the Council.
7. The Clerk to the Council shall be offered the opportunity of a final statement
8. The Complainant shall be offered the opportunity of a final statement
9. The Clerk of the Council and the complainant shall leave the meeting room while Members decide whether the grounds for the complaint have been justified. Where clarification may be necessary both parties shall be invited to return to the meeting.
10. The Clerk to the Council and the complainant shall be present to hear the decision of the Council. If no decision can be reached, both parties shall be advised as to when a decision will be made.

After the Meeting

1. The Complainant will be notified of the decision in writing within 7 working days and will also be notified of any action that may be taken.