

PEWSEY PARISH COUNCIL COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. This Policy sets out procedures for dealing with any complaints that anyone may have about Pewsey Parish Council's administration and procedures. It applies to the Council's employees.

The behaviour of Councillors is covered by the Code of Conduct, which was adopted by this Council on 1st May 2012. Complaints against policy decisions made by the Council shall be referred to the Council.

2. If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk to the Council, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Chairman of the Council and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt. If the complainant is reluctant to put their complaint in writing, then the Councillor/Clerk shall make a written record of the complaint and update them on the course of action being taken where possible.
3. Where the Clerk to the Council receives a written complaint about the Clerk's own actions, they shall refer the complaint to the Chairman of the Council. On receipt of a written complaint the Chairman of the Council shall try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant within 5 working days.

This shall not be done without first notifying the person complained against and giving them an opportunity to comment. Efforts should be made to attempt to settle the complaint at the earliest possible stage.

4. The Chairman of the Council shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
5. The Chairman shall bring any complaint not settled, to the next meeting of the Council. The complainant shall be notified of the date on which the complaint will be considered and they shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally.

Where the complaint may result in proceedings being taken under the Council's Dismissal, Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures or Standards Board proceedings then such a hearing will have to be heard as a Confidential item to exclude any member of the public or the press, or deferred on appropriate advice received.

6. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
7. As soon as may be after the decision has been made it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
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. Should Pewsey Parish Council be unable to reach an amicable agreement the complaint will be referred to Wiltshire Council.