

WELFORD-ON-AVON PARISH COUNCIL

Code of Practice for Local Councils in Handling Complaints

1. If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk, and they cannot satisfy the complainant fully forthwith the complainant shall be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk, and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt.
2. If a complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk he or she shall be advised to put it to the Chairman.
3. (a) On receipt of a written complaint, the Clerk or Chairman, as the case may be, shall (*except where the complaint is about his own actions*) try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant but shall not do so in respect of a complaint about the behaviour of the Clerk or Councillor without first notifying the person complained of and giving an opportunity for comment on the manner in which it is intended to settle the complaint.

(b) Where the Clerk or Chairman receives a written complaint about his or her own actions, he shall forthwith refer the complaint to the Council.
4. The Clerk or Chairman shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
5. The Clerk or Chairman shall bring any written complaint, which has not been settled to the next meeting of the Council and the Clerk 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.
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 meeting in public.
7. As soon as practicable after a decision has been made it shall be communicated to the complainant in writing and shall include details of any action to be taken.
8. The 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 from Warwickshire Association of Local Councils and/or other appropriate bodies. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next Council meeting after such advice has been received.
9. No anonymous complaints shall be considered by the Council.

Adopted by Welford-on-Avon Parish Council in 2006 and reviewed at the Parish Council meeting on December 2nd 2008.

