

# Colne Parish Council



## Complaints Procedure

**Adopted by the Council on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2018, reviewed annually in June**

- 1) A complaint must be made in writing to the Clerk or, if complainant prefers, to the Chairman or other Councillor. The Council will not consider any anonymous complaints other than in serious and exceptional circumstances, any acceptance being at the discretion of the Clerk, Full Council, or Policy & Resources Committee.
- 2) If a Councillor has received the complaint, a copy of the complaint must be forwarded to the Clerk.
- 3) The Clerk must:
  - Add the complaint to 'list of correspondence received' for the next Parish Council meeting.
  - Acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing to complainant within 7 days of receipt.
  - Add acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint to 'list of correspondence sent' for the next Parish Council meeting.
  - Send a copy of the complaint to all Councillors (via email or hard copy).
- 4) A subcommittee consisting of a minimum of any three Councillors must review the complaint:
  - To determine if the complaint should be classified as 'Confidential'.
  - If necessary, contact complainant for clarification of any matters relating to complaint.
  - If necessary, request that the Clerk adds the complainant as a separate agenda item to the next Parish Council meeting.
  - Draft response to complainant.
  - Distribute draft response to complainant to all other Councillors (via email or hard copy) for comment, along with request, if necessary, to ratify classification of 'Confidential' and the substantiating reason why.
  - Collate all comments from Councillors and formalise response.
- 5) At the next Parish Council Meeting:
  - If there is consensual agreement that the complaint is confidential in nature, then a resolution must be proposed that the details of the complaint and the response is not made public knowledge and not be available under the Freedom of Information policy.
  - The proposed response from the complaints subcommittee must be finalised and approved by a resolution or

- If the complaints subcommittee has not yet formalised a response agree the basis of the response by resolution for the complaints subcommittee to formalise later, but the letter only sent once reviewed by all available Councillors (via email or hard copy).
  - Only if any Councillor requests, the complaint and the response should be read out during the Parish Council meeting.
- 6) The Clerk (or Councillor, if the Clerk is not available) must send out a response to complainant within seven working days of approval.
- 7) If complainant is not satisfied with the response, complainant should be provided with details of how to contact the Standards Committee at Huntingdon District Council.

This policy will be reviewed annually.