



Cubbington Parish Council

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Date approved: September 2019
Date to be reviewed: September 2021

Cubbington Parish Council

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Cubbington Parish Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or are visitors to the locality. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from this Parish Council or are unhappy about an action (or lack of action) by this Parish Council, this Complaints Procedure sets out how you may complain to the Council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.

Definition

Cubbington Parish Council uses the Local Government Ombudsman's (LGO) definition of a complaint, which is accepted by National Association of Local Councils (NALC):

'A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the council's action or lack of action or about the standard of a service, whether the action was taken or the service provided by the council itself or a person or body acting on behalf of the council.'

In accordance with NALC/LGO guidelines, the Parish Council will try to ensure that their complaints system is:

- well publicised and easy to use;
- helpful and receptive;
- not adversarial;
- fair and objective;
- based on clear procedures and defined responsibilities;
- quick, thorough, rigorous and consistent;
- decisive and capable of putting things right where necessary;
- sensitive to the special needs and circumstances of the complainant;
- adequately resourced;
- fully supported by councillors and officers; and
- regularly analysed to spot patterns of complaint and lessons for service improvement.

Confidentiality

The LGO/NALC advises that the identity of a complainant should only be made known to those who need to consider a complaint. Cubbington Parish Council will take care to maintain confidentiality where circumstances demand (e.g. where matters concern financial or sensitive information or where third parties are concerned).

This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about Council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how the Parish Council has dealt with your concerns.

This Complaints Procedure **does not** apply to:

- Complaints between a Council employee and the Council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the Council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- Complaints against specific councillors. Complaints against councillors are covered by the Councillor's Code of Conduct and, if a complaint against a councillor is received by the Council, it will be referred to Coventry City Council's Ethics Committee. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of Warwick District Council.

INFLUENCING DECISION MAKING

The appropriate time for influencing Parish Council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the Parish Council debates and votes on a matter. You may do this by writing to the Parish Council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There may also be the opportunity to raise your concerns in the Open Forum section of Council meetings. If you are unhappy with a Parish Council decision, you may raise your concerns with the Parish Council.

RAISING A COMPLAINT

You may make your complaint about the Parish Council's procedures or administration to the Clerk.

All complaints must be made in writing either by letter or by email to the Clerk.

The addresses are set out below.

Any complaint should be raised within 6 months, after this time, complaints will be considered at the Council's discretion.

The complaint must detail the name of the complainant(s), contact details and nature of the complaint. No complaint will be considered if the complaint is sent anonymously.

COMPLAINT HANDLING

Wherever possible, the Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Clerk will normally to acknowledge your complaint within ten working days.

The Clerk or a sub-committee of the Parish Council (consisting of the Chair, Vice Chair and two other Councillors - as appropriate) will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the Council.

The Clerk (or the Chairman of the Council) will notify you within 20 working days of the outcome of your complaint and will advise what action (if any) the Council proposes to take. *In exceptional cases, the twenty working days timescale may be extended. Should this be the case, you will be kept informed.*

If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the full Council. You will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint (usually within eight weeks).

CONTACT DETAILS

Jane Chatterton

Clerk & RFO

Cubbington Parish Council

Belby, Common Lane, Corley CV7 8AQ

07877 559825

Clerk@cubbington.org.uk

This procedure will not prejudice the rights of an elector or parish council member or parish council employee to submit a complaint relating to the Members' Code of Conduct to the Warwick District Council's Monitoring Officer.