



## Lancing Parish Council

### Complaints Procedure

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Please note that alternative formats of this document may be available upon request.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The Parish Council is always looking for ways of improving the quality of its services. Your comments will help us to achieve this. We also want to know when something has gone wrong with a service so that it can be put right.

1.2 For the purposes of this procedure a complaint is defined as:

“An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, facilities, actions or lack of action by the Council or its staff affecting an individual, group or organisation”

The definition covers most complaints such as:-

- a. Dissatisfaction with the administration of policy and/or decisions
- b. Delays in responding to service requests
- c. Failure to achieve standards of service
- d. Failure to fulfil statutory responsibilities
- e. Employees behaviour or attitude

## **2.0 HOW OUR PROCEDURE WORKS**

2.1 If you have a complaint, get in touch as soon as you can with the Clerk, or any of your Ward Councillors, telling them your concerns and how you would like these to be dealt with. (A list of Councillors and Wards is available from the Parish Council Offices).

2.2 If the complaint is about procedures or administration of the Council, and is notified orally, and the complaint cannot be satisfactorily dealt with at that time, the complainant will be requested to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk which will be dealt with under the Council's response procedure (see below).

2.3 If a complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk, he or she shall be advised to put it to the Chairman.

2.4 On receipt of a written complaint the Clerk or Chairman shall try to settle the complaint directly, but should this not be possible the complainant will be advised accordingly.

2.5 Any complaint relating to the Clerk or any Councillor will not be resolved directly to allow the person being complained about to be notified and given the opportunity to comment on the matter.

2.6 Where the Clerk or Chairman receives a written complaint about his or her own actions he or she shall refer the complaint to the Full Council and/or a programme Committee.

2.7 Other than where a complainant is advised that their complaint will be dealt with by the Full Council and/or a programme Committee and the date of that meeting given to the complainant, complaints will be dealt with under the Council's response procedure (see below).

2.8 When a complaint is to be discussed, the complainant will have the opportunity to explain the complaint orally.

2.9 All decisions reached regarding a complaint will be communicated in writing.

### **3.0 COMPLAINTS ABOUT MEMBERS OF LANCING PARISH COUNCIL**

3.1 All Councillors have signed an undertaking that they will observe the Council's Code of Conduct. The Code specifies a Councillor's obligations. Alleged breaches of the Code must be reported in writing to the Standards Committee of the Adur District Council.

### **4.0 COMPLAINTS ABOUT SERVICES PROVIDED BY OTHER PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS**

4.1 Given that some public services in Lancing are provided by either Adur District Council or West Sussex County Council – and that the division of responsibilities between public bodies can often be confusing – Lancing Parish Council will advise and, if appropriate, assist those wishing to pursue complaints against other public organisations providing services in the Village.

### **5.0 CONTACTING THE COUNCIL**

5.1 You can contact the Council by the following methods:-

a. **E-mail**

admin@lancingparishcouncil.gov.uk

b. **Telephone**

01903 753355

c. **Letter**

The Clerk or Chairman,  
Lancing Parish Council  
The Parish Hall, South Street  
Lancing, West Sussex  
BN15 8AJ

### **6.0 RESPONSE PROCEDURE**

6.1 Any correspondence received by letter or e-mail will be acknowledged within five working days and a response sent within ten working days, other than where the correspondent has been advised otherwise, and the reason/s given for this.

6.2 All telephone enquiries will be dealt with at the time of the call, other than where further information, detail or research is required to give an informed response, of which the caller will be advised at the time. A response will then be sent within ten working days, unless this is the subject of a report, or consideration by the Council.

6.3 Any complainant who does not receive a response within the above time limits can lodge a further complaint which will be dealt with separately.