



## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The following policy and procedure will be adopted for dealing with complaints about the Council's administration or its procedures. Complaints about a policy decision made by the Council will be referred back to the Council, or relevant Committee, as appropriate, for consideration. This complaints procedure is designated for members of the public, all staff should raise any concerns they may have with their line manager, the Clerk or through the council's grievance procedure.

Fawley Parish Council recognises that the Local Government Ombudsman<sup>1</sup> has no jurisdiction over parish and town councils (unless they are performing a function on behalf of a principal authority) and therefore in the interests of reasonableness, accessibility, and transparency has put in place its own Complaints Procedure based on recommended good practice. At all times the rules of natural justice will apply.

Any complaint should be put in writing to the Parish Clerk or if the complaint involves the Clerk, Chairman of the Parish Council giving the complainants full name, address and contact telephone number together with the nature of the complaint. In writing includes electronic communication. If a complaint about procedures, administration or the actions of any of the Council's employees is notified orally to a Councillor, or to the Clerk to the Council, a written record of the complaint will be made, noting the name and contact details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint. Contact details for the Clerk and Chairman can be found on the Parish Council website.

Any complaint will be investigated and dealt with confidentially.

Receipt of a complaint will be acknowledged i.e. within five working days, giving a time scale for response.

If the complaint cannot be addressed satisfactorily by the Parish Clerk or Chairman, then this will be heard by the Parish Council at the next available meeting. However if the nature of the complaint is complex or urgent, then a specially convened meeting may be necessary. Notification of when this meeting will take place will be given to the complainant. He/she may bring a representative to the meeting if they wish.

Any documents relating to the complaint from the complainant and the Parish Council must be made available to either side within five clear working days of the convened meeting, in order for these to be read before the meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> Local Government Ombudsman Fact Sheet 05 – November 2013

In the interests of confidentiality, at the meeting, the Parish Council should decide whether to exclude the public and press from such a meeting. However, any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the next Parish Council Meeting.

The complainant (or representative) should outline the grounds for the complaint after which questions may be asked by the Clerk/nominated officer/members of the Parish Council.

The Clerk/nominated officer should explain the Parish Council's position after which they may be asked questions by the complainant/representative.

A summary from both sides would then follow. The Clerk/nominated officer and the complainant should leave the room for discussion by the Parish Council – if necessary, both parties could be invited back if there is a need for clarification.

Both the Clerk and complainant should be given the opportunity to wait for the Parish Council's decision but if this is unlikely to be finalised at the meeting they should be advised of when this is likely to be made and when they should expect details. The Council will aim to confirm the decision in writing within five working days together with details of any action to be taken, however this may be delayed if there is the need to receive legal or specialist advice to clarify the matter.

This procedure does not cover complaints about the conduct of a Member of the Parish Council. Complaints about an individual Parish Councillor should be submitted in writing to the Standards Committee via the Monitoring Officer at New Forest District Council, Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst, SO43 7PA. The Chairman of the Parish Council should also be advised of the complaint.

#### Contact details

Clerk to the Council  
Fawley Parish Council  
Gang Warily Recreation & Community Centre  
Newlands Road  
Fawley  
Southampton  
SO45 1GA

Tel: 02380-890761

E-mail: [clerk@fawley-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@fawley-pc.gov.uk)

Website: [www.fawley-pc.gov.uk](http://www.fawley-pc.gov.uk)

**This Complaints Procedure was Approved and adopted on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

**Review date – Annual Parish Meeting each May**