

NORTHWOOD PARISH COUNCIL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. The following procedure will be adopted for dealing with complaints about Northwood Parish Council's administration or its procedures. Complaints about a policy decision made by Northwood Parish Council will be referred back to the Parish Council, or relevant Committee, as appropriate for consideration.
2. This procedure does not cover complaints about the conduct of a member of Northwood Parish Council. Any complaint that a Councillor may have breached the Parish Council's adopted code of conduct should be referred to the Standards Board for England at Fourth Floor, Griffin House, 40, Lever Street, Manchester, M1 1BB.
3. If a complaint about procedures, administration or the actions of Northwood Parish Council's employees is notified orally to a Councillor, or to the Clerk to Northwood Parish 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.
4. The complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing by letter or by e-mail to the Clerk to Northwood Parish Council at 11 Wyatts Lane, Northwood, Isle of Wight, PO31 8QB or barbara.herbert@sky.com. The complaint will be dealt with within 14 days of receipt. Refusal to put the complaint in writing does not necessarily mean that the complaint cannot be investigated, but it is easier to deal with if it is.
5. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk to Northwood Parish Council (because the matter relates to the Clerk, for example,) they should be advised to contact the Chairman.
6.
 - a. On receipt of a written complaint, the Clerk or, if paragraph 5 refers, the Chairman will seek to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This will not be done without notifying any person complained about and giving him/her an opportunity to comment. Efforts should be made to resolve the complaint at this stage.
 - b. Where the Clerk or a Councillor receives a written complaint about the Clerk's actions, he/she shall refer the complaint to the Chairman. The Clerk will be formally advised of the matter and given an opportunity to comment.
7. The Clerk (or the Chairman) will report any complaint that has not been resolved to the next meeting of the Parish Council.
8. The Clerk to Northwood Parish Council (or the Chairman) will report any complaint that has not been resolved to the next meeting of the Parish Council. The Clerk will notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered and the complainant will be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint to the Parish Council orally.

9. Matters relating to grievance or Disciplinary proceedings that are taking, or are likely to take place, should be dealt with in accordance with Northwood Parish Council's grievance and disciplinary procedures.
10. Northwood Parish Council may consider whether the circumstances or any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public, but any decision on the complaint will be announced at the Parish Council meeting in public.
11. As soon as possible after the decision has been made (and in any event not later than 10 days after the meeting) the complainant will be notified in writing of the decision and any action to be taken.
12. Northwood Parish Council may defer dealing with any complaint if it is of the opinion that issues arise on which further advice is necessary. The advice will be considered and the complaint dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.

Agreed 3 June 2008