

HENSTRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Ian Treece, Rivendell, New Street, Marnhull, STURMINSTER NEWTON

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COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This procedure covers complaints about the administration or procedures of the Council.

Complaints about individuals are a separate matter, complaints about an employee would be dealt with as an employment issue and complaints about a Councillor should be made to the Standards Committee of South Somerset District Council.

Complaints against policy decisions made by the Council shall be referred back to the Council (Taking note of standing order 77).

Henstridge Parish Council takes the views of local people seriously and need to be aware when there is dissatisfaction with the services that the Council delivers. The outcome of a complaint will assist the Council in reviewing and where necessary changing the way services are delivered.

Before the Meeting

1. The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the clerk or other nominated proper officer.
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the clerk or other proper officer, they may be advised to put it to the chairman of the council.
3. The clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the council or by the committee established for the purposes of hearing complaints.
4. The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish.
5. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

At the Meeting

6. The council/committee shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the council/committee meeting in public.
7. Chairman to introduce everyone.
8. Chairman to explain procedure.
9. Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint.
10. Members to ask any question of the complainant. If relevant, clerk or other proper officer to explain the council's position.
11. Members to ask any question of the clerk or other proper officer.
12. Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).
13. Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be asked to leave room while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. (If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties to be invited back).
14. Clerk or other proper officer and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when decision will be made.

After the Meeting

15. Decision confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken.