



EGGLESCLIFFE & EAGLESCLIFFE COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

Egglecliffe & Eaglescliffe Council endeavours to provide excellent services within its budgetary limits for the benefit of the people of the Parish. The Council takes the views of local people seriously and needs to be aware when there is dissatisfaction in the services which the Council delivers. The outcome of a complaint will assist the Council in reviewing and where necessary changing the way services are delivered.

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 via the Director of Law & Democracy at Stockton Borough Council. Complaints against policy decisions made by the Council shall be referred back to the Council (taking note of Standing Order 13).

Complaints shall be dealt with by a Complaints Committee which shall be made up of five Members of the Council convened as and when necessary. The Complaints Committee shall report its conclusions to the next Council meeting following any hearing.

MAKING A COMPLAINT

1. Complainants should make complaints about the Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk.
2. Within three working days of receipt of a complaint, the Clerk shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing and shall try to settle the complaint directly.
3. The Clerk shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
4. Where a complaint cannot be settled directly, within seven working days of receipt of a complaint, a date shall be set for a Complaints Committee meeting and the complainant advised in writing of this date.
5. The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish.
6. Not less than 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.

7. The Council 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 a Council meeting and in public.

AT THE MEETING

8. The Chairman of the meeting shall introduce everyone
9. The Chairman of the meeting shall explain the procedure.
10. The complainant (or their representative) shall outline the grounds for complaint.
11. The Members of the Committee may ask any question of the complainant
12. If relevant, the Clerk shall explain the Council's position.
13. Members may ask any question of the Clerk.
14. The Clerk and the complainant shall be offered the opportunity of last word (in this order).
15. The Clerk and complainant shall be asked to leave the room while Members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made (if a point of clarification is necessary both parties shall be invited back).
16. The Clerk and the complainant shall return to hear decision or to be advised when decision shall be made.

AFTER THE MEETING

17. The decision shall be confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken.

Adopted by the Council 3rd February 2011