

NEWTON LONGVILLE PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

At Newton Longville Parish Council we work hard to provide you with the best possible service. If you are dissatisfied with the council's lack of action or standard of service, we want to hear from you. We see your comments and complaints as an opportunity to help us to improve the services we provide. We would be pleased to hear from you if you have any suggestions.

[How to make a comment, complaint or suggestion](#)

You can make a comment, complaint or suggestion by using our on-line complaints form at www.newton-longville.co.uk, by email at newtonlongvillepc@tiscali.co.uk, in person, by telephone or by letter.

[How to make a complaint](#)

1. If a member of the public wants to make a serious complaint about the conduct of a Councillor they should address their complaint to the Standards Board for England at
Fourth Floor,
Griffin House,
40 Lever Street
Manchester
M1 1BB
Telephone: 0800 107 2001

The Standards Board does not deal with complaints against the Council as a corporate body. The Council cannot intervene in any complaint of behaviour that amounts to a breach of the Code of Conduct.

2. If a complaint about procedures or administration or the actions of any of the Council's employees is notified orally to a member of 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. Whenever possible, verbal complaints should be confirmed in writing to create a clear audit trail.

3. The complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing (letter, email or standard form will be accepted) to
The Clerk to the Council
Newton Longville Parish Council
Longueville Hall
Whaddon Road
Newton Longville
Buckinghamshire
MK17 0AT
Email to newtonlongvillepc@tiscali.co.uk.

The complainant will be assured that their complaint will be dealt with promptly and usually within 14 days of receipt of their complaint. 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.

4. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk to the Council (because the matter relates to the Clerk, for example) he or she should be advised to write to the Chairman.
5. On receipt of a written complaint, the Clerk to the Council (except where the complainant is about his or her own actions) or Chairman of Council (if the complaint relates to the Clerk), will seek to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This will not be done without first notifying any person complained about and giving him or her the opportunity to comment. Efforts should be made to resolve the complaint at this stage.
6. Where the Clerk to the Council or a Councillor receives a written complaint about the Clerk's actions, he or she shall refer the complaint to the Chairman of Council. The Clerk to the Council will be formally advised of the matter and given an opportunity to comment.
7. The Clerk to the Council (or Chairman) will report any complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant to the next meeting of the Council.

8. If the complaint cannot be resolved by negotiation, The Clerk to the Council (or Chairman), will report the matter to the next meeting of the Council.

The Clerk will notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered and the complainant will be invited to attend, together with any representative, to offer an opportunity to explain the complaint to the Council orally. The complainant should be asked to provide any written or documentary evidence in good time for councillors to consider this before the meeting (seven clear working days) and should also be supplied with any documentation upon which the Council may rely.

The Council may consider whether the circumstances of 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 Council meeting in public.

The Chair should be as informal and non-hostile as possible in the circumstances. The complainant (or representative) should be invited to present grounds for the complaint and answer any questions from councillors. The Clerk to the Council or proper officer may give the response from the Council and should also answer any further questions. The two protagonists should then leave the room while Council discuss the complaint but may return to answer further questions and then to receive the decision of Council.

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.

9. Any matters relating to Grievance or Disciplinary proceedings that are taking, or are likely to take place, should be dealt with in accordance with the Council's grievance and disciplinary procedures, if available.
10. The 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.

If you feel the problem is still not resolved

If you are still not satisfied after we have investigated and reviewed your complaint, then you can refer your complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman at

10th Floor
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP
Telephone: 020 7217 4620
Fax: 020 7217 4621

11. The complaints file should be reviewed annually to ensure that trends in complaints and the appropriateness of any action taken are assessed.