

COLWICH PARISH COUNCIL



PD007 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE POLICY

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COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Complaints Procedure Policy – PD007

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This document was originally written by:

Name	Position	Date
Michael Lennon	Clerk	

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Chairman of Council	Wendy Plant

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Revision History

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COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1 Scope of this Policy

- 1.1** The Local Government Ombudsman has no jurisdiction over Colwich Parish Council.
- 1.2** Colwich Parish Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work or are visitors in its area. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from the Council, or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by the Council, this Complaints Procedure sets out how you may complain to the Council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.
- 1.3** This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.
- 1.4** It is to be noted that:
- 1.4.1 Complaints about members of staff will be dealt with by the Council's internal disciplinary procedures as appropriate to the contract of employment relating to the individual.
- 1.4.2 If your complaint is one regarding a Councillor please read the Code of Conduct for Councillors adopted by Colwich Parish Council. Then either put your complaint in writing or speak to:
- The Monitoring Officer
The Standards Committee of the Stafford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Riverside
STAFFORD ST16 3AQ
Telephone No: 01785 619204
- 1.5** The following procedure has been adopted for those complaints that cannot be satisfied by the Clerk, any other officer of the Council or the Chairman of the Council. The procedure only applies to Complaints against the procedures, policies or practices of the Council.
- 1.6** If the complaint relates to issues which have already been addressed by Council then you will receive information from the files regarding the matter.
- 1.7** If your complaint relates to a matter not presented to Council before then it will be dealt with under Section 2 "Handling of Complaints" details of which are included in this document.
- 1.8** This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:
- 1.8.1 Complaints by one council employee against another council employee, or between a council employee and the Council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the council's disciplinary and grievance procedures detailed within the Council's Employee Handbook.
- 1.8.2 Complaints against councillors. Complaints against councillors are covered by the adopted Code of Conduct for Councillors. If a complaint against a councillor is received by the Council, it will be referred to the Monitoring Officer of Stafford Borough Council as in 1.4.2 above.
- 1.9** The appropriate time for influencing Council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the Council debates and votes on a matter. You may do this by

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writing to the Council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There is also the opportunity to raise your concerns in the public participation section of Council meetings. If you are unhappy with a Council decision, you may raise your concerns with the Council, but Standing Orders prevent the Council from re-opening issues for six months from the date of the decision, unless there are exceptional grounds to consider this necessary and the process set out in Standing Orders 11.1 and 11.2 is followed.

- 1.10 You may make your complaint about the Council's procedures or administration to the Clerk. You may do this by writing to or emailing the Clerk will normally acknowledge your complaint within five working days.
- 1.11 If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Chairman of the Council who will report your complaint at the next Full Council meeting or call an extraordinary Full Council meeting as appropriate..
- 1.12 The Clerk or the Council will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the Council.
- 1.13 The Clerk or the Chairman of the Council will notify you within 20 working days of the outcome of your complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take as a result of your complaint. (In exceptional cases the twenty working days timescale may have to be extended. If it is, you will be kept informed.)

2 Handling of Complaints

- 2.1 Prior to the council meeting at which your complaint is due for consideration you will have been asked to place your complaint in writing to either the Clerk (1.10 above) or to the Chairman (1.12 above). The Complaint will need to be registered into the Council's mailing procedures.
- 2.2 The Clerk will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be dealt with.
- 2.3 You will be advised whether your complaint will be considered by Full Council at a Special Council Meeting convened for that purpose only.
- 2.4 You will be invited to attend the relevant meeting and you may bring a representative with you if you wish.
- 2.5 You will provide Council with copy documents or other evidence which you wish to be considered as part of the complaint procedure. Any such documents/evidence should be forwarded to The Clerk, seven working days prior to the meeting date.
- 2.6 If Council have any documents/evidence they wish to be considered as part of the complaints procedure you will have received copies within the same time scale.
- 2.7 At all times you will be kept informed of Council's procedures and may contact the Parish Office to ascertain the progress on your complaint prior to it being presented to Council or Council's Policy Committee for attention.

3 At the Full Council Meeting.

- 3.1 Sufficient time will be allocated on the meeting agenda to ensure that all parties are able to present all documents/evidence and ask any questions relating to the matter.
- 3.2 The Council will consider whether the matter should be dealt with under "Confidential" and whether the Public and Press should be excluded from the meeting while the

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item is discussed. Any decision, however, made on the complaint will be announced at the Full Council Meeting.

- 3.3 The Chairman of the Parish Council will introduce all parties and explain the procedure.
- 3.4 You (or your representative) will be asked to provide an outline of your grounds for complaint.
- 3.5 Council members will be given time to ask you any questions.
- 3.6 Either the Clerk or other officer of the Council will explain the Council's position, if relevant.
- 3.7 Council members will be given the opportunity to ask the Clerk or other officer of the council any relevant questions.
- 3.8 You and either the Clerk or other officer of the Council or Council committee will be given a final opportunity to add anything other to the discussion thus far in the proceedings. Order of opportunity to speak: Clerk, other officer of the Council, complainant (you or your representative)
- 3.9 The Clerk or other Officer of the Council or Council Committee along with you and your representative will be asked to leave the room while the matter is considered and council members decide whether or not the grounds for complaint have been met.
- 3.10 If any further information or points of clarification are required all parties mentioned in note 3.9 above will be invited back into the room.
- 3.11 The Clerk, other Officer of the Council or Council Committee and the complainant (you and your representative) will return to the room to hear any decision or to be advised when a decision will be made.

4 After the Meeting.

- 4.1 You will receive written confirmation of the decision. This will be forwarded within seven working days of the decision being made and will include details of any action to be taken.
- 4.2 Should the complainant be not satisfied with the decision of the Policy & Resources Committee then they will be advised of their right to have the matter heard by the Full Council.
- 4.3 The hearing procedure at the second meeting will be the same as the first. The decision of the second hearing will be final.

5 Further Information

- 5.1 If this document does not provide you with all the information you require please contact:

Revd Mr Michael Lennon, FSLCC
The Parish Clerk,
Colwich Parish Council
The Parish Office

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St. Mary's Road
Little Haywood
STAFFORD
ST18 OTX

07378 145397 or email: clerk@colwichparishcouncil.gov.uk

SIGNED	
COUNCILLOR WENDY PLANT PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN	