

NETTLESTONE AND SEAVIEW PARISH COUNCIL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. The following procedure will be adopted for dealing with complaints about the Council's administration and its procedures. Complaints about a policy decision made by the Council will be referred back to the Council, or relevant Committee, as appropriate, for consideration.
2. If a complaint about procedures, administration or the actions of any of the Council's employees is notified orally to a Councillor, or to the Clerk of the Council, a written record of the complaint will be made, noting the name and the contact details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint.
3. The complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing (letter or email) to the Clerk of the Council at 2 Harrow Cottages, Nettlestone Hill, Seaview, PO34 5DU or clerk@nettlestoneandseaview-pc.gov.uk. 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.
4. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk of the Council (because the matter relates to the Clerk, for example), he or she should be advised to write to the Chairman.
5. (a) On receipt of a written complaint, the Clerk to the Council (except where the complaint is about his or her own actions) or Chairman of the 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 allowing him or her the opportunity to comment. Every effort should be made to resolve the complaint at this stage.

(b) 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 the Council. The Clerk of the Council will be formally advised of the matter and allowed an opportunity to comment.
6. 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.
7. The Clerk to the Council (or Chairman) will report any complaint that has not been resolved 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 offered an opportunity to explain the complaint to the Council orally.

8. Matters relating to Grievance or Disciplinary proceedings that are taking, or likely to take place, should be dealt with in accordance with the Council's grievance and disciplinary procedures.
9. 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.
10. 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 taken.
11. The Council may defer dealing with any complaint if is of the opinion that issues arise on which further advise is necessary. The advice will be considered and the complaint dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.

Adopted by Nettlestone and Seaview Parish Council – 21st January 2008: Minute No.3087

Reviewed 15th May 2023 (Minute No 23/69/09)