



Code of Practice for Handling Complaints

Introduction

Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council have adopted a standard and formal procedure for considering complaints either made by complainants directly or which have been referred back to the council from other bodies. The procedure ensures that complainants can feel satisfied that their grievance has been properly and fully considered.

Complaints that cannot be satisfied by less formal measures or explanations provided to the complainant by the Clerk or Chairman are referred to the Finance and General Purposes Executive Committee to avoid the need for full council having to assemble. This also makes the process less daunting for a complainant if they choose to attend the meeting in person. The Finance and General purposes Committee will then report its conclusions to the next full council meeting.

Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council

Complaints Procedure

1. Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or are visitors to the locality. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from this council, or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by this council, this Complaints Procedure for handling complaints sets out how you may complain to the council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.
2. This procedure applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.
3. This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:
 - 3.1. 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.
 - 3.2. complaints against councillors. Complaints against councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council on 12 May 2014 and, if a complaint against a councillor is received by the council, it will be referred to the Standards Committee of Wealden District Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of Wealden District Council.

Complaints that a Councillor has breached the Code of Conduct for Members should be referred to:

The Monitoring Officer
Wealden District Council
Vicarage Lane
Hailsham
BN27 2AX or Democratic Services on 01892 602437

4. 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 writing to the Council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There may also be 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 special process set out in the Standing Orders is followed.
5. You may make your complaint about the council's procedures or administration to the Parish Clerk. You may do this in person, by telephone, or by writing to or emailing the Parish Clerk whose contact details are below.
6. Wherever possible, the Parish Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Parish Clerk will normally try to acknowledge your complaint within five working days.
7. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Parish Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Chairman of the Parish Council who will report your complaint to the Finance and General Purposes Executive Committee.
8. The Parish Clerk or the Finance and General Purposes Executive Committee will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the Council.
9. The Parish Clerk or the Chairman of the Parish 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.)
10. If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the full Council and (usually within eight weeks) you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint.

Contacts

The Clerk of Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council

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High Street
Mayfield
TN20 6AL

Telephone: (01435) 873784

Email: clerk@mayfieldfiveashes.org.uk

The Chairman of Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council

Address: c/o The Parish Clerk
Old Manor House
High Street
Mayfield
TN20 6AL