

Upton Magna Parish Council

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

TO BE USED IN CASES OF COMPLAINT BY THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE PARISH COUNCIL'S PROCEDURES, THEIR IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION ONLY. (COMPLAINTS ABOUT A POLICY DECISION BY THE COUNCIL WILL BE REFERRED BACK TO THE COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE NEXT MEETING).

1. This procedure does not cover complaints about the conduct of a Member of the Parish Council which should instead be made to:

**The Monitoring Officer
Shropshire Council
The Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND**

2. The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the Parish Clerk at:

**Upton Magna Parish Clerk
5 Allgold Drive
Shrewsbury
SY2 5NN**

3. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint in writing, this should not prevent its investigation. A verbal complaint should be dealt with in exactly the same way as a letter of complaint but the person to whom the complaint is made (the Parish Clerk or the Chairman) will need to ensure absolute clarity with regard to it by producing a written report of the details of the complaint and asking the complainant to confirm that all details of the complaint are included and accurate.
4. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Parish Clerk as it is about her, the complaint should be advised to address it to the Chairman of the Council, marked "Strictly Private and Confidential" to the Parish Clerk's address. The Clerk will forward items marked in this way direct to the Chairman without opening.
5. The Parish Clerk (or the Chairman) should acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within 10 working days, using the template headed Appendix A. The complainant should be advised when the matter will be considered by the Parish Council and should also be advised whether the complaint will be treated as confidential or whether notice of it will be given in the usual way (i.e. as an agenda item at the next meeting of the Parish Council). However, the complainant may, at any point, choose for his or her complaint to go straight to a Parish Council meeting for consideration.
6. If the complaint is about the Parish Clerk, the Chairman should provide the Parish Clerk with the opportunity to comment.

Resolving Informally.

7. If possible, the complaint should be resolved by direct action and then reported on at the next Parish Council meeting.
8. However, if necessary, the complainant should be resolved informally by invited the complainant to attend a specially arranged meeting with two members of the Parish Council. The complainant should be advised that they bring with them a representative if they wish. Again, a complaint resolved in this way should be reported on at the next Parish Council meeting.
9. The complainant should always have the right to remain anonymous in any reporting process.

Resolving Formally.

10. If the matter cannot be resolved using stages 7 – 9 above then the complaint should proceed to be considered at a Parish Council meeting.
11. The complainant should be informed of the arrangements using the letter at Appendix B.
12. The complainant should be asked to provide the Parish Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence to be relied on, 7 clear working days prior to the Parish Council meeting. Likewise, the Parish Council should provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting and shall do so promptly, thus giving the claimant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.
13. The Parish Council should consider whether the circumstances of the complaint warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint should be announced at the Parish Council meeting in public.
14. The Chairman should introduce everyone and outline the procedure to be followed.
15. The complainant (or his or her representative) should outline the grounds for complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked firstly by the Parish Clerk or other nominated officer and then secondly by Parish Councillors.
16. The Parish Clerk or other nominated officer should have the opportunity to explain the Parish Council's position and questions may be asked by the complainant and Parish Councillors.
17. The Parish Clerk or other nominated officer and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their individual positions.
18. The Parish Clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be asked to leave the room while Parish Councillors 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.

19. The Parish Clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be given the opportunity to wait for the decision but if the decision is unlikely to be finalised on that day, they should be advised when the decision is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them.

Conclusion.

20. Once a decision has been reached, written confirmation of it should be sent to the complainant within 7 working days, together with full details of any action to be taken.

**Mrs. K.M. Smith-Wells, Clerk to Upton Magna Parish Council, 5 Allgold Drive, Shrewsbury, SY2 5NN.
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