

Much Hadham Parish Council

Complaints Procedure

- 1) This procedure does not apply to Code of Conduct complaints, which are dealt with by the District Council and in accordance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders.
- 2) If a spoken complaint about the procedures or administration of the Parish Council is made to a Councillor or the Clerk and they cannot quickly satisfy the complainant, the complainant shall be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk, who will ensure that it is dealt with promptly. The complaint shall include the following:
 - Name of the complainant;
 - Address of the complainant;
 - Telephone number and/or email address; and
 - Details of the complaint.
- 3) If a complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk, he or she shall be advised to put it to the Chairman.
- 4)
 - a) On receipt of a written complaint the Clerk or Chairman, as the case may be, shall (except where the complaint is about his or her own actions) try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. However, if the complaint is about the behaviour of the Clerk or a Councillor, then the person complained of will be notified first so that they may have an opportunity to comment on how it is intended to settle the complaint.
 - b) Where the Clerk or Chairman receives a written complaint about his or her own actions he or she shall immediately refer the complaint to the Parish Council.
- 5) The Clerk or Chairman shall report to the next meeting of the Parish Council any written complaint dealt with by direct action with the complainant.
- 6) The Clerk or Chairman shall bring any written complaint which has not been settled within 20 working days of its receipt to the next meeting of the Parish Council and the Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered. The complainant shall be offered an opportunity to address the Parish Council at that meeting, if they wish.
- 7) The Council shall consider whether the circumstances of any complaint justify it being discussed in the absence of the press and public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Parish Council meeting in public.
- 8) As soon as possible after the decision has been made, it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
- 9) The Parish Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary from Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.