



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Broughton Astley 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 sets out how you may complain to the Council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.
2. This Complaints 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:
 - i) complaints by one Council employee against another Council employee, or between a Council employee and the Council as an employer. These matters are dealt with under the Council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.
 - ii) Complaints against Councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council on 21 August 2012 and, if a complaint against a Councillor is received by the Council, it will be referred to the Monitoring Officer of Harborough District Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against Councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of Harborough District Council.
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 at least one week before the Committee is due to meet to ensure the issue can be added to the agenda. Alternatively, 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 Manager. You may do this in person, by phone, or by writing to or emailing the Parish Manager. The addresses and numbers are set out below.
6. Wherever possible, the Parish Manager will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Parish Manager will normally try to acknowledge your complaint within five working days.
7. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Parish Manager, you may make your complaint directly to the Chair of the Council who will report your complaint to the Staffing Committee of the Council or directly to the Council (as appropriate).
8. The Parish Manager or the Staffing Committee of the Council or the Council (as appropriate) will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the Council.
9. The Parish Manager or the Chair 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.)
10. If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred back to the Staffing Committee of the Parish Council or to the full Council (as appropriate) and (usually within eight weeks) you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint.



11. Habitual or Vexatious Complaints

The repeated and/or obsessive pursuit of:

- a. unreasonable complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes; and/or
- b. reasonable complaints in an unreasonable manner

will not be tolerated by Broughton Astley Parish Council, should such complaints be received the Parish Manager on behalf of the Parish Council will notify complainants, in writing, of the reasons why their complaint has been treated as habitual or vexatious and the action that will be taken.

Broughton Astley Parish Council defines unreasonably persistent and vexatious complainants as those complainants who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the Council, hinder the Council's consideration of their, or other people's complaints.

The term 'habitual' means 'done repeatedly or as a habit'. The term vexatious is recognised in law and means 'denoting an action or the bringer of an action that is brought without sufficient grounds for winning, purely to cause annoyance to the defendant'.

Record Keeping

The Parish Manager will retain records of the details of the habitual or vexatious complaint. Records will be kept of:

- The complaint received.
- The name and address of each member of the public who is treated as abusive, vexatious or persistent, or any other person who so aids the complainant.
- When the person and Council were advised.

Full Council will be provided with a regular report giving information about members of the public who have been treated as vexatious/persistent.

Contacts

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The Chair of Broughton Astley Parish Council

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