

ASHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Revised and adopted 21 January 2021

This document sets out procedures for dealing with complaints that anyone may have about Ashford Parish councillors, the council's employees, or actions taken by the council. For clarity it is divided into three parts.

Part 1 – Complaints against Councillors.

Parish councillors are required to follow a Code of Conduct, which is published on the parish council's website (www.ashfordparishnorthdevon.com > the parish council > compliance and other documents).

Any alleged breach of this Code of Conduct by a councillor must be referred in writing to the North Devon Council Monitoring Officer and cannot be discussed in public nor investigated by the parish council. This process is explained in full on the North Devon Council website (www.northdevon.gov.uk > council > complaints > complaints against a councillor).

Part 2 – Complaints against Ashford Parish Council employees.

Complaints against parish council employees will be investigated by the parish council. To avoid ambiguity the complaint should be submitted in writing to either the council's chairman or vice chairman (contact details below). Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged in writing within one week.

All complaints will be investigated promptly. A complainant may request confidentiality, in which case their name will only be known to councillors. Complaints about conduct will not be heard or discussed in public. Complaints about actions will be dealt with using Part 3 of this procedure.

On receipt of a complaint, the chairman/vice chairman will discuss it with the parish council employee and with the other parish councillors. When a decision has been reached regarding appropriate action, this will be conveyed to the parish council employee, who will have the right to appeal against the proposed action.

If the complaint is resolved without appeal, the complainant will be notified of the action taken.

If the employee wishes to appeal, a formal hearing will be convened with appropriate representation and with advice taken as necessary.

Contact details for the chairman/vice chairman can be found on the parish council website at www.ashfordparishnorthdevon.com

Part 3 – Complaints against actions taken by Ashford Parish Council.

Complaints against actions taken by the parish council will be investigated by the parish council. To avoid ambiguity the complaint should be submitted in writing to the clerk of the council (email APCclerk@mail.com). Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged in writing within one week.

All complaints will be investigated promptly using the procedure detailed in the parish council's Standing Order on contributions from Members of the Public, which is published on the parish council's website (www.ashfordparishnorthdevon.com > the parish council > compliance and other documents). A complainant may request confidentiality, in which case their name will only be known to councillors.

NOTE: For the purposes of this procedure 'Actions taken by the parish council' is taken to mean - *a decision, an action taken or a process followed by the council, which may give rise to a complaint. Part 3 does not include breaches of the councillor's code of conduct, which are dealt with under part 1 of this procedure.*