FULFORD PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS POLICY& PROCEDURE

Adopted June 2023

Review June 2028

Fulford Parish Council are committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live, work or visit the area, irrespective of age, sex, race or disability. Anyone who is dissatisfied with the standard of service received from the Council, or is unhappy about an action, or lack of action by the Council, is entitled to make a formal complaint. This procedure sets out how such complaints should be made and how the Council will try to resolve them. **This procedure does not relate to complaints received about the services delivered by Stafford Borough Council or any other body.**

The appropriate time for influencing Council decision making is by raising any concerns before Council debates and votes on a matter. This may be done in writing to the Clerk, or during the public participation section at the start of each monthly Council meeting.

This procedure applies where the Parish Council, including its employees, has:

- done something wrong
- done something it should not have done
- failed to do something it should have done
- behaved unfairly or discourteously
- not carried out a service to a recognised standard or within an acceptable timescale.

The procedure does not apply where:

- an initial complaint is a necessary part of a request for a service
- the complaint is against an individual Councillor. This is covered by the Council's Code of Conduct and such complaints should be reported to the Monitoring Officer at Stafford Borough Council
- separate procedures exist for staff grievances, disciplinary matters and confidential reporting (whistle blowing)

Procedure

(a) All complaints received must be recorded. Every attempt to resolve the complaint immediately must be made.

(b) If complaints cannot be resolved immediately, they must be formally acknowledged.

(c) The Council will aim to provide an initial response within 7 days. Should it be deemed necessary, an investigation will be completed, and a full response given within 28 days. If a full response cannot be given within 28 days, for example where additional outside information is required, then the acknowledgement letter should give a specific timescale.

(d) If a complainant indicates that they would prefer not to put the complaint to the Clerk, they shall be advised to put it to the Chairman.

(e) Where the Clerk or Chairman receive a written complaint about his or her own actions, the complaint will be forwarded to full Council.

(f) Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation, then the complaint will be reviewed by the officer conducting the investigation and reported to full Council for a final decision.

Records

A full record of complaints will be kept in order that anyone reviewing a complaint either internally or externally can see the action taken, and why.

The record will contain a description of the complaint, any correspondence sent to and received from the complainant, written notes of conversations (including date and time) and any other documents used in the course of the investigation and details of actions taken.

All promises of action and agreements will be recorded along with dates and times.

Contact Details

Complaints should be made in writing to the Clerk in the first instance by one of the following:

Post – Fulford Parish Office, Meir Heath and Rough Close Village Hall, Grange Road, ST3 7BH
Email –clerk@fulfordparishcouncil.gov.uk
Website – Fulfordparishcouncil.gov.uk ‘Contact Us’ page