



REVISED COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. COMPLAINTS TO PARISH COUNCIL FROM THE PUBLIC

It will not be possible to deal with all complaints from members of the public under the Parish Council's Complaints Policy. Where such complaints are outside the remit of the Policy the following procedures/bodies should be engaged with regard to the following types of complaint:

Complaints about an employee of the Council should be dealt with as an employment matter. The complainant can be assured that the matter will be dealt with internally as such and appropriate action taken as required. Complaints must be made in writing to the Parish Clerk or in the case of the complaint being against the Parish Clerk, the Chairman.

Complaints about the administration/procedures of the Parish Council – this policy is aimed at situations where a complaint has been made about the administration of the Council or about its procedures and which cannot be satisfactorily resolved with less formal measures or explanations provided to the complainant by the Parish Clerk or Chairman. It is not an appropriate forum for a complaint against individuals, as the provisions available above should cover these situations.

2. IDENTIFYING A COMPLAINT

Parish Council will use The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) definition of a complaint, which is:

'A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the Council' action or lack of action or about the standard of a service, whether the action was taken or the service provided by the Council itself or a person or body acting on behalf of the Council.'

3. THE COUNCIL'S COMPLAINT PROCEDURE AIMS TO BE:

- Well publicised and easy to use;
- Helpful and receptive;
- Not adversarial;
- Fair and objective;
- Based on clear procedures and defined responsibilities;

- Quick, thorough, rigorous and consistent;
- Decisive and capable of putting things right where necessary;
- Sensitive to the special needs and circumstances of the complainant;
- Adequately resourced;
- Fully support by councillors and officers; and
- Regularly analysed to spot patterns of complaint and lessons for service improvement.

4. CONFIDENTIALITY

The LGO advises that the identity of a complainant should only be made known to those who need to consider a complaint. It may not be feasible to deal with complaints outside some sort of committee structure but, nevertheless, the Council should take care to maintain confidentiality where circumstance demand (e.g. where matters concern financial or sensitive information or where third parties are concerned).

5. TIMESCALE AND REMEDIES

The Parish Council will endeavour to handle any complaint as soon as practicable, with time allowed for dealing with lengthy and complex complaints. The Council must be given adequate opportunity to investigate and reply to the complaint. The object of the procedure is to rectify things if they go wrong and take action to ensure that such a mistake does not reoccur.

The following procedure is not appropriate for use where a complaint is made against an individual. Serious complaint relating to the conduct of an individual can be dealt with in the ways suggested at Paragraph 1.

NB: These procedures are designed for those complaints which cannot be satisfied by less formal measures or explanations provided to the complainant by the Parish Clerk or Chairman

6. PROCEDURES

- 6.1 The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Parish Clerk, clearly stating the nature of the complaint and the remedy sought (Appendix A – Complaint Form).
- 6.2 If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Parish Clerk they may be advised to put it to the Chairman of the Council.
- 6.3 The Parish Clerk or Chair of Council shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the selected members.

- 6.4 The Complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting committee and bring with them such representative as they wish.
- 6.5 Seven (7) clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Parish Clerk or Chair of Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The Parish Clerk or Chair of Council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

7. AT THE MEETING

- 7.1 Members selected shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press.
- 7.2 The Chairman will introduce everyone and to explain procedure.
- 7.3 The Complainant (or representative) to outline the grounds for complaint.
- 7.4 Members to ask any question of the complainant.
- 7.5 If relevant, the Parish Clerk or Chair of Council or other proper officer to explain the Council's position.
- 7.6 Member to ask any question of the Parish Clerk or Chair of Council or other proper officer.
- 7.7 The Parish Clerk, Chair of Council or other proper officer and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).
- 7.8 The Parish Clerk or Chair of Council or other proper officer and complainant to be asked to leave the room while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been met. (If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties to be invited back).
- 7.9 The decision will be confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council Meeting in public.

Appendix A

Parish Council Complaint Form

Name	
Address	
Post Code	
Daytime Phone Number	
Evening Phone Number	
Email Address	

Nature of Complaint – please give details of:

1. What you wish to complain about to the Parish Council?	
2. When and where the situation took place including if possible, details such as time, day, date and location?	
3. The names & if possible, contact details of any others involved?	
4. In your opinion, what action or decision would resolve the matter?	

To register your complaint please complete & return this form with any other information you wish to provide to support your complaint to Kirby Muxloe Parish Council. Please continue your comments on a separate sheet if necessary.