

# Upper Rissington Parish Council

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. Upper Rissington Parish Council ('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:
  - 3.1. Complaints by one Council employee against another Council employee, or between a Council employee and the Council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the Council's Disciplinary and Grievance procedures.
  - 3.2. Complaints against Councillors. Complaints against Councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council. Complaints against councillors should be directed to the Monitoring officer at Cotswold District Council. If a complaint against a Councillor is received by the Council, it will be referred to Cotswold District Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against Councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of Cotswold District Council.
  - 3.3. Complaints of a criminal nature - such complaints should be made to the Police.
  - 3.4. Complaints about financial irregularities - these should be made to the Council's auditor, whose name and address can be obtained from the Clerk.
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. 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. Complaints will either be considered informal or formal. Unless a written complaint states that it is a formal complaint, it will be deemed to be an informal complaint.
6. Informal Complaints:
  - 6.1. An informal complaint may be given orally or in writing to the Clerk;
  - 6.2. If an informal complaint is given to a councillor they shall report it to the Clerk within 5 working days;
  - 6.3. Wherever possible, the Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Clerk will take all reasonable steps to acknowledge your complaint within five working days;

- 6.4. The clerk or Chairman will correspond orally or in writing with the complainant to settle the complaint and ensure that the complainant feels satisfied their complaint has been fully considered and acted upon accordingly;
- 6.5. If the complainant feels their complaint has not been resolved they will be informed by the Clerk that they need to follow the procedure for formal complaints.

## 7. Formal Complaints

- 7.1. All formal complaints must be submitted in writing and contain the following information:
    - 7.1.1. Name, Address and telephone number of the complainant
    - 7.1.2. Details of the complaint about the Council's administration or procedure
    - 7.1.3. How the matter has affected the complainant
    - 7.1.4. Copies of any relevant documents or other evidence relevant to the complainant
    - 7.1.5. Details of any third parties and their involvement
    - 7.1.6. What action the complainant believes is necessary to resolve the complaint
    - 7.1.7. All formal complaints will be referred to the full Council;
  - 7.2. The Council will undertake such investigations as it deems appropriate;
  - 7.3. The Council will complete its investigations and use its best endeavours to complete its review within 20 working days.
  - 7.4. Where the complaint is part of a wider complaint which is being investigated by external bodies (e.g. Police) the Council will complete its investigation at the earliest opportunity after the other agency has completed its investigation;
8. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Chairman of the Council who will report your complaint to the Council.
  9. The Clerk or the Chairman of the Council will notify you within ten working days of the Council's decision (see 7.3 above) 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 reconsidered by the full Council and (usually within eight weeks) you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint. This outcome will be final.

## Contacts

The Contact details for the Clerk and Chairman of the Council are published on the Council's website [www.upperrissington-pc.gov.uk](http://www.upperrissington-pc.gov.uk)

This policy was reviewed and adopted by Upper Rissington Parish Council on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Date of Next Review: May 2020