



COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. Introduction

Wrose Parish Council is committed to providing a high-quality service to residents; however, it is recognised that sometimes things can go wrong. As a result, the Council may receive questions, queries, and comments as part of its day to day running and they should not all be regarded as formal complaints. These are routine, to be expected and are generally resolved quickly. However, if someone is dissatisfied with the original service or response they have received about an issue and want to take the matter further, they may make a formal complaint, and the procedures outlined in this document will be followed.

In dealing with complaints the Council commits to treating complainants with courtesy and respect. The aim of the Council is to manage each case fairly and consistently and ensure that the complaint, not the complainant, is the issue during the procedure. In turn, the Council expects complainants to treat staff and councillors with equal respect and courtesy. The Council will not tolerate threatening or abusive behaviour directed towards its staff or councillors.

2. Scope of the policy

This policy applies to complaints regarding:

- The standard of services provided by the Parish Council
- The behaviour or conduct of parish council employees
- Decisions made by the Parish Council that adversely affect individuals or groups
- Failure to observe the Parish Council's policies or procedures.
- Harassment, bias or discrimination

Some types of complaints are handled outside the procedures included in this document:

- Complaints regarding the conduct of Parish Councillors are handled by the standards committee of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
- Complaints regarding criminal activities would be a matter for the police.
- Complaints about matters that are outside the responsibility of the parish council should be made to the organisation with responsibility for them.
- Complaints made by staff are dealt with under the Council's grievance policy.

Anonymous complaints cannot be considered.

3. How complaints can be made:

Formal complaints should be submitted in writing:

- by email to: Clerk@wroseparishcouncil.gov.uk with the word "Formal Complaint" in the title subject line.
or
- by post to: The Clerk, C/O Highfield Youth Centre, Snowden Road, Wrose, BD18 1JD. With the words "Formal Complaint" in the letter heading. *(Please note that the Clerk is not based at this location so receipt of your letter could be delayed. In addition, the contents may be viewed by individuals who open the post at that location but are not employed by the Parish Council. Please mark the envelope as "Confidential" if you want to ensure the letter is only opened by the Wrose Parish Council addressee.)*

Complaints about the Clerk, may be sent to the Chair of the Council at:
Alex.RossShaw@wroseparishcouncil.gov.uk

4. How complaints are handled by the Council:

a. Acknowledgement

Complaints made in writing will be acknowledged within 10 working days of receipt.

b. Initial assessment

An initial assessment of the complaint will be made by the Clerk¹ to determine its validity and whether further investigation is required before it could be considered by the Council.

Further investigation of the complaint may involve gathering additional information, interviewing relevant parties and reviewing relevant documentation. Investigation can be completed by the Clerk or councillors not involved with the issue

Once any required investigation is complete, consideration of the complaint will be added to the agenda of the next ordinary meeting of the Council. In exceptional circumstances an extraordinary meeting of the Council may be called to consider the complaint prior to the next ordinary meeting. The Clerk will advise the complainant when the complaint will be considered and ask if they wish the item to be treated as confidential and whether they will be attending the relevant council meeting.

c. Consideration by the Council and notification of outcome

At the meeting in which the complaint is being considered, the Council may resolve to exclude members of the public and press for that agenda item to ensure confidentiality. This may be because of a request by the complainant or if discussions should be considered confidential on other grounds, such as the privacy of other individuals involved.

If present, the complainant will be given an opportunity to summarise their complaint. Councillors may ask for clarification on any points raised.

The councillors will then consider their response to the complaint which will be confirmed in writing to the complainant.

d. Appeals

¹ Or by the Chair of the Council if the complaint is about the Clerk.

Appeals against the decision made by the Council will only be considered if the procedure outlined above has not been correctly followed or if the complainant has new information that they wish the Council to consider.

The complainant must notify the Council within 21 days of receiving the written confirmation of the decision of the Council that they wish to appeal and the reasons for the appeal must be given.

If the appeals criteria are met, the appeal will be considered at the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

5. Habitual, Vexatious Complaints or unacceptable behaviour by a complainant.

The Parish Council reserves the right to refuse to investigate complaints that are deemed to be unreasonable, vexatious or repetitive or are being conducted by the complainant in a manner that is abusive or threatening. The complainant will be informed if their complaint will not be dealt with for any of these reasons.

Date policy adopted 12 September 2024

Date of next review: September 26

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