



PULHAM MARKET PARISH COUNCIL

Mrs L. Shulver, 59D High Road, Wortwell, Harleston, Norfolk, IP20 0HA, Telephone 01986 788048

Pulham Market Parish Council Complaints Policy.

1. Complaints Policy

Overview

From time to time members of the public may have complaints about the administration or procedures of Pulham Market Parish Council. Local Councils are not subject to the Ombudsman, therefore this complaints procedure sets out how Pulham Market Parish Council will deal with such a complaint.

It should be noted that complaints about the Clerk to the Council will be dealt with as an employment matter and as such the matter should be referred to a member of the Council. Appropriate action will be taken as required.

Complaints about an individual Councillor should be submitted to:

The Monitoring Officer
South Norfolk Council
Swan Lane
Long Stratton
Norfolk
NR15 2XE

At all times, the rules of natural justice will apply. In other words, all parties will be treated fairly and the process will be reasonable, accessible, and transparent.

Pulham Market Parish Council will comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 as well as the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in dealing with complaints.

In the event of serial facetious, vexatious, or malicious complaints from a member of the public the council should consider taking legal advice before writing any letters to the complainant.

Confidentiality will be adhered to and will be at the discretion of the Council when communicating outcomes regarding a complaint.

Complaints Procedure

1. If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk to the council and it is not possible to satisfy the complainant in full immediately, the complainant shall be asked to put his/her complaint in writing to the Clerk to the Council and receive an assurance on receipt that the matter will be dealt with promptly.



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2. If a complainant indicates that s/he would prefer not to put the complaint to the Clerk to the Council then s/he should be advised to put it to a member of the Council.
3. The complaint should cover as much detail as possible and enclose any relevant supporting documentation. The Clerk will normally acknowledge receipt of the complaint within seven working days and advise the complainant whether the complaint will be treated as confidential or whether notice of it will be given in the usual way (for example advertised in detail on the full council agenda)
4. The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish.
5. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied on. The council shall provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting and shall do so promptly, allowing the claimant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.

At The Meeting

6. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
7. The chair person should introduce everyone and explain the procedure
8. The complainant (or representative) should outline the grounds for complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by the clerk and Councillors.
9. The Clerk or nominated councillor will have an opportunity to explain the council's position and questions may be asked by (i) the complainant and (ii), remaining Councillors.
10. The clerk or nominated Councillor and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.
11. The clerk or nominated Councillor and the complainant should be asked to leave the room while the remaining Councillors decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties shall be invited back.
12. The clerk or nominated Councillor and the complainant should be given the opportunity to wait for the decision but if the decision is unlikely to be finalised on that day they should be advised when the decision is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them.

After the Meeting

13. The decision should be normally confirmed in writing within seven working days or as far as is reasonably practicable with details of actions to be taken if any.

Timings



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The Parish Council will endeavour to adhere to the timings outlined in this policy, but in the case of a complex complaint timings may need to vary. Should this occur the complainant will be kept advised of the revised timescales.

Anonymity

The Council will not acknowledge or consider, under any circumstances, informal or formal complaints that are submitted anonymously.

This Policy was approved at a meeting of Pulham Market Parish Council on the. 12th February 2024

Signed

Cllr S Hewitt

**Chair of Pulham Market Parish Council
See the footer for the renewal date.**