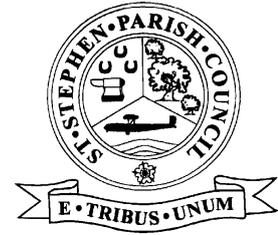


ST STEPHEN PARISH COUNCIL

In the District of St. Albans, County of Hertfordshire



ST STEPHEN PARISH COUNCIL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This policy was adopted by the Council at its meeting held on 20 September 2007 item 8.1.

1. GENERAL

- The Local Government Ombudsman has no jurisdiction over parish councils.
- Complaints about an **employee** of the Council shall be dealt with internally as an employment matter and appropriate action taken as required.
- Complaints about a **Councillor** are subject to the jurisdiction of the Standards Board. Complainants shall be advised to contact the Monitoring Officer at St Albans District Council directly for further information.
- Complaints against **policy decisions** made by the Council shall be referred back to the Council (note Standing Order no. 37 which states that a decision of the Council shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special resolution, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least a majority of the standing members of the Council.)
- This Complaints Procedure is aimed at those situations where a complaint has been made about the **administration or procedures of the council** in order that complainants may have their grievance properly and fully considered. It is designed for those complaints that cannot be satisfied by less formal measures or explanations provided to the complainant by the Clerk or the Chair of the Council.

2. BEFORE THE MEETING

- 2.1 If a complaint about the administration or procedures of the Council is received by the Clerk, the Chair of the Council or a Councillor, they should seek to satisfy the complainant by less formal measures or explanation.
- 2.2 If a less formal approach is unsuccessful, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk.
- 2.3 If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk they may be advised to put it to the Chair of the Council.
- 2.4 The Clerk shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint. The Clerk and Chair of the Council shall try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. Every effort shall be made to settle the complaint at this stage.
- 2.5 If efforts to settle the complaint are unsuccessful the Clerk shall advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council or one of its committees.
- 2.6 The complainant shall be invited to attend the meeting and offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally.

3. AT THE MEETING

- 3.1 The Council or its Committee 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 meeting in public.
- 3.2 The Council or its Committee may defer dealing with a complaint if it is of the opinion that legal advice is necessary. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next appropriate meeting after the advice has been received.

4. AFTER THE MEETING

- 4.1 The decision reached by the Council or its Committee shall be confirmed in writing together with details of any action to be taken.