

## **Fownhope Parish Council Procedures for Dealing with Complaints**

1. If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a councillor or the clerk and they cannot satisfy the complainant fully and quickly the complainant shall be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk and be reassured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt.
2. If a complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk he or she shall be advised to put it to the Chairman.
3. On receipt of a written complaint, the Clerk or the Chairman shall try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. However, when the complaint concerns the conduct of the clerk or a councillor, the clerk or councillor concerned shall be first notified and given an opportunity to comment on the manner in which it is intended to settle the complaint. A complaint about the conduct of an individual councillor shall be referred to the Standards Board for England. A complaint about the conduct of the Clerk, or any other employee, shall be dealt with by the Council. If the Clerk or Chairman receive a written complaint about actions of either of them, the complaint shall be referred directly to the Council.
4. The Clerk or Chairman shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint which has been disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
5. The Clerk or Chairman shall bring any written complaint which has not been settled to the next meeting of the Council and the Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered. The Complainant is to be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint in person to the Council.
6. Exceptionally, the Council shall consider whether, in the light of the circumstances, the complaint should be discussed in the absence of the press or public. However, any decision on a complaint should be announced at the Council meeting in public.
7. Once a decision has been made on the action to be taken, this is to be communicated promptly to the complainant in writing.
8. The Council shall defer dealing with a written complaint only when advice on issues of law or practise from the National Association of Local Councils is necessary. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after advice has been received.