

Bersted Parish Council Complaints Policy and Procedure

Bersted Parish Council

2018

1. This Policy sets out procedures for dealing with any complaints received concerning the administration and procedures of Bersted Parish Council (the Council).
2. It applies to the Council's Employees. Councillors are covered by the Members Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 14th February 2017.
3. Complaints against policy decisions made by the Council shall be referred back to the Council.
4. If a complaint about procedures or administration as practised by the Council's Employees is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk to the Council (the Clerk), they should seek to satisfy the complaint fully. If that fails, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt.
5. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk, he or she should be advised to put it to the Chairman of Council (Chairman).
6. On receipt of a written complaint the Chairman or the Clerk (except where the complainant is about actions of the Clerk), shall try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This shall not be done without first notifying the person complained against and giving him or her an opportunity to comment. Efforts should be made to attempt to settle the complaint at this stage.
7. Where the Clerk or the Chairman receives a written complaint about the Clerk's actions, the complaint shall be referred to the Chairman. The Clerk shall be notified and given an opportunity to comment.
8. The Clerk or Chairman shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
9. The Clerk or Chairman shall bring any written complaint that has not been settled to the next meeting of the Council. The Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered, and the complainant shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally. (Unless such a matter may be related to Grievance, Disciplinary or Standard Board proceedings that are taking, or likely to take place when such a hearing may prejudice those hearings when the complaint will have to be heard under Exempt Business to exclude any member of the public or the press, or deferred on appropriate advice received).
10. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.

11. As soon as possible after the decision has been made it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
12. A Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.
13. Complaints regarding Data Protection concerns should be made to the Clerk of Bersted Parish Council in writing either by email (clerk@bersted-pc.gov.uk) or to our postal address;- Clerk to the Parish Council, Bersted Jubilee Hall, Chalcraft Lane, North Bersted, Bognor Regis. PO21 5TU
14. Depending on the nature of the complaint the complainant may be required to provide proof of identity.
15. A complaint will be dealt with during the 30 days following a validated complaint.
16. If the complainant is not satisfied with the solution offered by Bersted Parish Council then the complainant can take the complaint regarding Data Protection directly to the Information Commissioners Office, <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/handling/> or write to them at;- Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire. SK9 5AF. If you wish to speak to them please telephone: 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or 01625 545 745 if you prefer to use a national rate number.