

# **EASTWICK AND GILSTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **CODE OF PRACTICE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS**

**The revised Complaints Procedure was adopted by Eastwick and Gilston Parish Council at its meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015.**

Its purpose is to deal satisfactorily with complaints from parishioners or other members of the public. All complaints should be dealt with as quickly as possible.

1. If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk and they cannot satisfy the complainant fully forthwith the complainant shall be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt. The complaint shall include the following:
  - Name of the complainant
  - Address of the complainant
  - Telephone number, fax number and/or email address
  - Details of the complaint
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. a) On receipt of a written complaint the Clerk or Chairman, as the case may be, shall (except where the complaint is about his or her own actions) try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant but shall not do so in respect of a complaint about the behaviour of the Clerk or a Councillor without first notifying the person complained of and giving an opportunity for comment on the manner in which it is intended to attempt to settle the complaint.  
b) Where the Clerk or Chairman receives a written complaint about his or her own actions he or she shall forthwith refer the complaint to the Council.
4. The Clerk or Chairman shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint 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, and the complainant shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally.
6. 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.
7. As soon as may be after the decision has been made it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
8. A Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary from Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.

Signed by the Chairman Mark Orson 12.10.2015

Review this Procedure in 2017.

