

Ulcombe Parish Council

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE ADOPTED ON 9 MAY 2024 (Reviewed annually thereafter)

1. Ulcombe Parish Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or are visitors to the locality. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from this council or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by this council, this Complaints Procedure sets out how you may complain to the council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.
2. This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.
3. This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:
 - 3.1. complaints by one council employee against another council employee, or between a council employee and the council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.
 - 3.2. complaints against members of the Parish Council.
4. The appropriate time for influencing Council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the Council debates and votes on a matter. You may do this by writing to the Council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There may also be the opportunity to raise your concerns in the public participation section of Council meetings. If you are unhappy with a Council decision, you may raise your concerns with the Council, but Standing Orders prevent the Council from re-opening issues for six months from the date of the decision, unless there are exceptional grounds to consider this necessary and the special process set out in the Standing Orders is followed.
5. You may make your complaint about the council's procedures, administration or the actions of any of the Council's employees to a Councillor or the Clerk. You may do this in person, by phone, or by writing to or emailing the Clerk. The addresses and numbers are set out below. If a complaint is notified orally a written record of the complaint will be made, noting the name and contact details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint.
6. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Chairman of the Council who will report your complaint to the Council.
7. (a) On receipt of a written complaint, the Clerk of the Council (except where the complainant is about his or her own actions) or Chair of the Council (if the complaint relates to the Clerk) will seek to settle the complaint directly with the complainant within 21 working days. This will not be done without first notifying any person complained about and giving him/her an opportunity to comment. Efforts should be made to resolve the complaint at this stage.

(b) Where the Clerk of the Council or a Councillor receives a written complaint about the Clerk's actions, he or she shall refer the complaint to the Chair of the Council. The Clerk to the Council will be formally advised of the matter and given the opportunity to comment.
8. The Clerk or the Council will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the Council.
9. The Clerk to the Council (or Chair) will report any complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant to the next meeting of the Council.

Ulcombe Parish Council

10. The Clerk of the Council (or Chair) will report any complaint that has not been resolved or if you are dissatisfied with the response received from your complaint, to the next meeting of the Council. The Clerk will notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered and the complainant will be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint to the Council orally.
11. The Council may consider whether the circumstances of any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public, but any decision on the complaint will be announced at the next available Council meeting in public.
12. The Council may consider in the circumstances of any particular complaint whether to make any without liability payment or provide other reasonable benefit to any person who has suffered loss as a result of the Council's maladministration. Any payment may only be authorised by the Council after obtaining legal advice and advice from the Council's auditor on the propriety of such payment.
13. The Clerk or the Chairman of the Council will notify you in writing as soon as possible after the decision has been made (and in any event not later than 10 working days after the meeting) of the outcome of your complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take as a result of your complaint.
14. The Council may defer dealing with any complaint if it is of the opinion that issues arise on which further advice is necessary. The advice will be considered and the complaint dealt with at the next available meeting after the advice has been received.

Contacts

The Clerk of Ulcombe Parish Council (Mrs Helen Anderson)

Address: 16 Chaplin Drive
Headcorn
Kent
TN27 9TN
Telephone: 07944668802
Email: clerk@ulcombepc.co.uk

The Chairman of Ulcombe Parish Council

Address: ??
Telephone: ??
Email: ??