

Hoxne Parish Council

Complaints Policy

Hoxne Parish Council will usually try and resolve complaints in an informal manner. However, if this is not possible e.g. not acceptable to the complainant, the formal complaints procedure as below will be followed and a copy provided to the complainant. On receipt of a complaint it will be made clear that any complaints that refer to individual councillors, in relation to their conduct, will be referred to Mid Suffolk District Council's Standards Committee

PROCEDURE FOR MAKING A COMPLAINT:

The following procedure should be followed by anyone wishing to make a complaint against Hoxne Parish Council.

If you have a complaint against a Councillor or any other complaint you should write to the Parish Clerk, Sarah Foote, at c/o Church Hill, Hoxne, Suffolk IP21 5AT.

If you have a complaint against a member of staff you should write to Chairman of the Council, Cllr E O'Connor, The Old Thatch, Goldbrook, Hoxne, Suffolk IP21 5AN.

In order for your complaint about the Parish Council to be dealt with, the following Code of Practice has been adopted. You can be assured that your grievance will be properly and fully considered. The Clerk is the Proper Officer of the Council and will represent and advise the Council at any meeting where the complaint will be aired, unless the Clerk is putting forward justification for action or procedure of the complaint.

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS

Before the meeting:

1. The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk.
2. If the complainant does not want to put the complaint to the Clerk, they will be advised to put it to the Chairman.
3. The Clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council.
4. The complainant will be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representatives as they wish
5. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The Council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

At the meeting:

6. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the council meeting in public.
7. Chairman to introduce everyone. Chairman to explain procedure.
8. Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint.
9. Members may ask any question of the complainant
10. If relevant, the Clerk or other Proper Officer will explain the Council's position
11. members may ask questions of the Clerk or other Proper Officer.
12. Clerk or other Proper Officer and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order)
13. Clerk or other Proper Officer and complainant to be asked to leave room while Members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. (If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties will be invited back).
14. Clerk or other Proper Officer and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when decision will be made.

After the meeting:

15. Decision confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any actions to be taken.