# Walton Parish Council Complaints Policy

1. **Complaints against Councillors** ~ Councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct adopted by the parish council **in November 2022**
   Therefore, any complaints about individual Councillors should be referred to:
   The Standards Committee of **Somerset** Council ~ Monitoring Officer.

2. **Complaints against Policy Decisions** ~ these should be referred to the council, however, please note the Parish Council Standing Order **7** [rescission of previous resolution] with the six-month limitation.

3. **Complaints about Walton Parish Council Administration and Procedure** ~ if a complaint about procedures or administration as practiced by the Council is notified to a Councillor or the Clerk to the Council:

   - They should seek to satisfy the complaint fully, if that fails, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing addressed to the Clerk to the Council and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt.
   - If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk to the Council, he or she should be advised to put it to the Chair of the Council.
   - On receipt of a written complaint the Chair or Clerk to the Council [except where the complaint is about his or her own actions] 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 the opportunity to comment.
     Efforts should be made to settle the complaint at this stage.
     Where the Clerk to the Council or the Chair receives a written complaint about the Clerk to the Council's own actions, he or she shall refer the complaint to the Chair.
     The Clerk to the Council shall be notified and given an opportunity to comment.
   - The Clerk to the Council or the Chair shall report to the next meeting of the Parish Council any complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
   - The Clerk to the Council or the Chair shall bring any written complaint that has not been settled to the next meeting of the Parish Council.
     The Clerk to the Council shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered, and the complainant shall be offered the opportunity to explain the complaint orally. [unless such a matter should be related to disciplinary or standard board proceedings that are in process or likely to be taking place, when such a hearing may prejudice those hearings then the complaint will be heard as Confidential Business and exclude any member of the public or press.]
   - The Parish Council shall consider whether the circumstances warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of press or public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Parish Council Meeting in public.
   - 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.
   - The Parish Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise, and on which advice is necessary. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.

Complaints procedure adopted by Walton Parish Council on 27th June 2008.
Minute reference: 08/09/83

**Reviewed October 2024**