



## **SHOTGATE PARISH COUNCIL**

### **COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE PARISH COUNCIL**

These procedures were adopted by the Parish Council at the Annual Parish Council meeting held 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008 and reflect the adoption of the 2012 Code of Conduct and the rescinding of the Power of Wellbeing in 2012 (now replaced by the General Power of Competence).

#### **PROCEDURE**

At Shotgate Parish Council, we want to ensure that all those who come into contact with us are dealt with efficiently, with courtesy and understanding.

A complaint should be within the remit of the Parish Council about something you think we should not have done, or something we failed to do.

In the event that you should wish to make a comment or complaint, please follow the steps below.

#### **Informal Stage**

Talk to any member of the Parish Council or the Clerk. Most problems are dealt with at this level and brought to a satisfactory conclusion. Your complaint will be recorded in the Complaints Book, so that the Council can monitor its performance against this code of practice, and to ensure that we put right anything the Council is doing wrong.

#### **Formal Stage**

##### **Stage 1**

Complaints may be made by letter, E-mail, telephone, in person\* or by using the Complaint Form available from the Clerk. The Clerk or a nominated member of the Council will acknowledge your complaint, investigate your complaint and let you have a written response within ten working days of receiving your complaint.

In the event that the investigation takes longer than 10 working days, we will send you a holding reply to let you know the reason for the delay and let you know when you will receive a substantive response to your complaint.

##### **Stage 2**

If you are not satisfied with the way in which your complaint was handled or the decision that was made, you should let us know by writing to the Chairman. In the letter you should let us know why you were not satisfied with either the way we handled your

complaint at Stage 1 or the response we gave you. The Chairman will review the Stage 1 investigation and you will receive a substantive reply within 10 working days of receiving your letter.

The purpose of Stage 2 is to ensure that everything you raised in your original complaint has been looked at in detail and correctly addressed and, if not, to make sure that this now happens. The review may take longer than 10 working days. If this is the case we will let you know the reason for the delay in a holding reply and let you know when you will receive a substantive response to your complaint.

A complaint under the Code of Conduct 2012 against an individual councillor should be referred to the Standards Committee. Details of which can be obtained from the Parish Clerk.

If you ask us to deal with an issue that does not fall within our complaints procedure we will let you know what other options may be available to you.

If you have difficulties in making a complaint or receiving a response at any stage of the procedure we will be pleased to help you in any way we can. Please call the Clerk on 01702 584158 for assistance.

\* Contact details for the Clerk and Parish Councillors can be found on the Council website or Newsletter.



**SHOTGATE PARISH COUNCIL**

**Complaint Form**

You are encouraged to fill in this form and return it to the address at the bottom of the form. Please help us to help you by giving as much information as you can. Continue on a separate sheet if there is not enough space on this form.

Your details (Your details will not be given to the public or press)

Mr/Mrs/Miss (please circle appropriately) or Other (please state)

First name (BLOCK letters) .....

Surname (BLOCK letters) .....

Your address

.....  
.....  
.....

Postcode .....

Daytime telephone no .....

Evening telephone no .....

E-mail address .....

Your complaint

What do you think we should not have done, or something we failed to do? (It would be helpful, although not essential, if you could include dates and names of people involved with this matter.)

Background to your complaint

Have you already complained to the Council? Yes/No (please delete as appropriate)

If yes

(a) Who did you complain to? .....

(b) On what date did you complain? .....

(c) Was your complaint made in writing? Yes/No (please delete as appropriate)

(d) Have you received a written reply? Yes/No (please delete as appropriate)

Putting matters right

How do you think we can put matters right for you? Be as specific as you can.

Do you need help?

If there is anything, which makes it difficult for you to use our complaints' procedure, for example, English, is not your first language or you have a disability, please use the space below to tell us how we might help you.

Your signature .....

Date .....

Please return this form to The Clerk, Shotgate Parish Council, 8 Tangmere Close, Shotgate, Wickford, Essex, SS11 8XD.