



PEASEDOWN ST. JOHN PARISH COUNCIL FORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Written: June 2019 (based on information provided in the NALC Legal Topic Note 9E)
Adopted: Full Council on 10th September 2019 (minute C124 – 10/09/2019 refers)
Last Reviewed:

INTRODUCTION

Peasedown St John Parish Council strives to provide and develop services and amenities that support the quality of life of residents, however, things sometimes go wrong. When such incidents occur, it is best to raise concerns to enable the council to identify areas for improvement to the services and facilities provided.

The complaints procedure is designed to provide an opportunity to raise concerns in a straightforward and simple manner. Please follow the guidance below to help us help you.

DEFINITIONS

What constitutes a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the Parish Council's action, lack of action, the standard of a service delivered by the Council or an area that could be improved.

The complaint may relate to an action taken, or a service provided by the Council itself, or a person or body acting on behalf of the Council.

What is a complaints procedure?

The way the Council manages any report of a problem with the service you are getting, or trying to get from the Council, or a problem with things that the Council does or doesn't do, is via a complaints procedure.

What can be expected?

The aims of this complaints procedure is to ensure the process is:

- well publicised, easily accessible and easy to use;
- helpful and receptive, not confrontational;
- fair and objective;
- based on clear procedures and defined responsibilities;
- thorough, rigorous and consistent;
- decisive and capable of putting things right where necessary;
- sensitive to the special needs and circumstances of the complainant;
- adequately resourced and fully supported by councillors and officers;
- provides responses that are proportionate, timely; and
- regularly analysed to spot patterns of complaint and lessons for service improvement.



Note: Complaints against the Council will be treated as a complaint against the corporate body of the Council, not as a complaint against individual employees or member(s) of the Council.

PROCESS

A complaint or identified area for improvement can be raised either verbally or in writing (including email).

How to complain

Verbal complaint: –

- Direct your complaint to the Parish Clerk either by a telephone call or in person.
- Verbal complaints are used to report minor matters or the need to repair a property owned or operated by the Council, such as faulty streetlights etc.
- Verbal complaints are normally dealt with directly by the Parish Clerk and an expectation of timescales for resolution will be provided when the issue is raised.
- You may make a verbal complaint to a Councillor, but under the legislation governing Parish Councils, a Councillor has no authority to act as an individual and the complaint must be referred to the Parish Clerk.

Written complaint: –

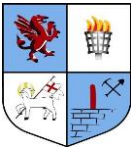
- To register a written complaint, you will need to obtain and complete a copy of the Councils Complaint Form either via the Council website or directly from the Parish Office.
- Attach any other information you wish to provide to support your complaint and then return your completed documents to the Parish Clerk at the Council office.
- Address your complaint to the Parish Clerk unless the complaint relates to the Clerk. In this instance the complaint should be addressed to the Parish Chairman and clearly marked “Council Chairman – Private and Confidential”.
- Written complaints should be a matter of serious nature and once resolved will be recorded in the Councils minutes. Any complaints relating to issues concerning Human Resources or any other sensitive issues, may under legislation be exempt from publication.
- The Council may ask any complainants who submit letters or emails to the Council, to also submit their complaint via the Councils Complaint Form, to allow the Council to keep a consistent record of communication on complaints.

Nature of a complaint

When making a complaint, it is often the case that the Parish Council is not the “Responsible Body” to handle the complaint. If consent is given on the appropriate form, then the complaint may be passed along with your details to the appropriate “responsible body”.

Handling a complaint

The way in which a complaint is handled is dependent on the nature of the complaint, and different types of complaint will be handled in different ways. The following table summarises how different types of complaint may be handled by the council or other appropriate organisation.



All complaints are shared with the councillors who will decide on what appropriate action to take (if any) and will ensure a response is issued inside the published time scales.

Acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint will be sent within 2 working days.

A formal response to a complaint will be made within 20 working days, however depending on the nature of any corrective action the actual rectification of the complaint may take longer.

Note: Complaints raised to the council may not be areas for which the council has any direct responsibility. In such case a response will be given with 5 working days highlighting the correct body responsible and the correct route for raising a complaint.

* * *

The foregoing **Formal Complaints Procedure** has been revised and amended to reflect the changes in the Council's working practices and the latest Government legislation. It was adopted by Peasedown St John Parish Council at a meeting held on 10th September 2019.

Signed:

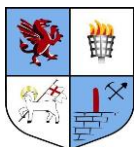
Chair: Cllr Kathleen Thomas

Date: 11th September 2019

Signed:

Clerk & RFO: Tanya West

Date: 11th September 2019



PEASEDOWN ST JOHN PARISH COUNCIL

Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, Bath BA2 8SN
 Tel: 01761 433686 E-mail: clerk@peasedownstjohnparishcouncil.gov.uk
www.peasedownstjohnparishcouncil.gov.uk

Nature of the Complaint	Who to Complain to	How to Complain	Who will deal with your complaint
A complaint about the Council's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes; • Procedures; • Services; • Facilities. 	Contact the Clerk. You will be provided with a complaint form or this may be directly downloaded from the parish council website.	Complete the form and add any other relevant evidence to support the complaint. You will receive a written acknowledgement from the Clerk within 2 working days.	The Clerk or Council. The Clerk may deal with and respond to the complaint or the matter may be debated by the council at a council meeting and if so the Clerk's response will be based on the decision of the council. All complaints will be reported to the Council at the next monthly Full Council meeting [schedule of meetings is published on the Parish Council website].
A complaint about the conduct of an employee of the council	Contact the Clerk. You will be provided with a complaint form or this may be directly downloaded from the parish council website.	Complete the form and add any other relevant evidence to support the complaint. You will receive a written acknowledgement from the Clerk within 2 working days. However, if the complaint is about the Clerk the complaint should be sent to the Council Chairman CllrKMThomas@psjpc.onmicrosoft.com	The complaint may be resolved or, if required, escalated and be treated as an internal disciplinary matter to be dealt with under the council's Disciplinary Policy [a copy of this document can be downloaded from the parish council website].
A complaint about alleged financial irregularity	Contact the Clerk. You will be provided with a complaint form or this may be directly downloaded from the parish council website.	Complete the form and add any other relevant evidence to support your complaint. You will receive a written acknowledgement from the Clerk/RFO within 2 working days.	The Clerk/RFO will endeavour to provide an explanation with 20 working days. If you are not satisfied you can report the matter to the External Auditor. Your explanation from the Clerk/RFO will provide the contact details of the External Auditor should you require them.
A complaint about a Parish Councillor allegedly breaching the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council [a copy of the Code of Conduct can be downloaded from the parish council website].	Contact the Monitoring Officer at B&NES Council. Democratic Services Bath & North East Somerset Council, Lewis House, Manvers Street, Bath, BA1 1JG 01225 394329 Councillor.Complaints@bathnes.gov.uk	You will have to complete the necessary complaint form and provide relevant evidence or information in support of your allegations. Full details will be provided by the Monitoring Officer or officer from the Democratic Services department.	The Monitoring Officer. Matters may be lengthy if an investigation is undertaken. The matter may be referred to the Independent Standards Committee for consideration.
A Complaint about alleged Criminal Activity	The Police.	Can be reported online via www.avonandsomerset.police.uk or via telephone by calling 101.	The Police. Depending on severity, the matter may go to court.



COMPLAINT LOG FORM

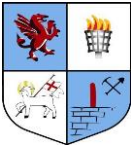
To register a complaint to Peasedown St John Parish Council please complete and return this form with any other supporting documentation, photographs or information you think relevant. Please continue your comments on a separate sheet if necessary.

Name		
Address		
Postcode		
Telephone Number		
Email Address		
Please initial as appropriate:	Yes	No
I confirm that I am happy for this complaint to be shared with the councillors		
I confirm that I consent for this complaint to be passed to the relevant responsible body if the Parish council is not the responsible body		
Nature of Complaint - please give details of:		
1. What you wish to complain about to the Parish Council?		
2. Any relevant details of the activity / item / situation. For example, location, date, day, time etc.		
3. The names, and if possible, contact details of any others involved?		
4. In your opinion, what action or decision would resolve the matter?		

Signed: _____

Print name: _____ Date: _____

N.B. The master document is controlled electronically. Printed copies of this document are not controlled. Document users are responsible for ensuring printed copies are valid prior to use.



PEASEDOWN ST JOHN PARISH COUNCIL
Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, Bath BA2 8SN
Tel: 01761 433686 E-mail: clerk@peasedownstjohnparishcouncil.gov.uk
www.peasedownstjohnparishcouncil.gov.uk

Council Use Only

Date Complaint Received:	
Received by:	
Date Acknowledgement Sent:	
Sent by:	
Copy of acknowledgement attached?	
Date Resolved:	
Date Complainant Informed of Resolution:	
Resolved by:	
Copy of resolution attached?	

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