

# **MICKLEFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

## **COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE**

Micklefield Parish Council is committed to delivering a quality service, however there may be occasions when members of the public may be disappointed or dissatisfied and would like to make a complaint. This policy explains how the Parish Council will deal with complaints.

Please note: Micklefield Parish Council will not consider complaints made anonymously or to third parties, including third party social media, such as Facebook and Twitter feeds.

### **SCOPE OF POLICY**

- Complaints arising from problems between members of staff, members of Council and staff and Council members are not covered by this Policy.
- Complaints against individual Council members regarding breaches of the Code of Conduct should be referred to the Monitoring Officer at Leeds City Council.
- Complaints of a criminal nature should be referred to the Police
- Complaints of financial irregularity should be made to the Auditor
- This policy covers complaints made by the general public about the Parish Council, its committees, sub-committees, working groups, staff and volunteers

### **INITIAL ACTION**

- The Clerk will deal with simple complaints informally and will only refer the complainant to the formal complaints procedure in the event that this is not appropriate or does not satisfy the complainant
- Formal complaints should be made in writing to the Clerk at the Parish Council office and contain the complainant's name and address
- In the event that the complaint is against the Clerk, it should be made, or referred, to the Chairman of the Parish Council
- Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within 10 working days (except in exceptional circumstances, such as staff absence)
- Complainant's will be given a copy of the Council's Complaint Handling Procedure
- The Clerk will investigate the complaint (complaints against the Clerk will be investigated by the Chairman or another member appointed for the task) which will require the complainant to disclose all relevant information, including documentation. The investigation period should take no longer than 10 working days (in exceptional circumstances or for complex cases the investigation period may be extended).

### **CONSIDERATION OF THE COMPLAINT**

- The complaint and investigation evidence will be referred to the Complaints Sub-Committee of the Finance and Corporate Management Committee for consideration (a special meeting may be called for the purpose).
- The complainant will be allowed to attend the meeting, with a representative if required, to give verbal representation
- Due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the press and public may be excluded from the representation and consideration
- The Committee may decide to exclude all persons for its deliberations

- The complainant will receive the Committee's decision and details of any action that will be taken in writing within 15 days of the meeting/a decision being made, even in cases where s/he has attended the meeting and given representation

#### **AFTER A DECISION HAS BEEN MADE**

- If a complainant is still dissatisfied, s/he has the right to appeal the decision
- Requests for reconsideration must be made in writing, stating the reason(s) that a decision should be reconsidered and where it exists provide supporting new evidence.
- The appeal request will be referred to the Parish Council for consideration at the earliest Parish Council meeting
- If the appeal is upheld, the Parish Council's Appeals Committee will reconsider the decision following the process specified in 'consideration of the complaint'.
- The complainant has one right of appeal, after which the Parish Council's decision is final.

**Approved by the Finance and Corporate Management Committee at its meeting held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014**

**Approved by full Council at its meeting held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2014**