

## **GREAT WALDINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Complaints Policy and Procedure**

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#### **Introduction**

Great Waldingfield Parish Council (GWPC) considers all complaints seriously and deals with any matters within this formal Policy and Procedure (P&P) to demonstrate fairness, openness and transparency. GWPC endeavours to provide a quality service for the benefit of the people who live, work or visit the Village.

If you are dissatisfied with the standard or are unhappy about something, this P&P sets out how you complain to GWPC and how we shall try to resolve the complaint. Anonymous complaints are not dealt with.

A meeting will be arranged by GWPC or the HR and Complaints Committee (HRCC) to consider any complaint. For habitual and vexatious complaints, GWPC will record the decision and hold all relevant correspondence except all personal details about the complaint and the complainant, which will be stored appropriately in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and GWPC's P&P. Any new complaint from a person whose previous complaints have been judged to be habitual or vexatious, will be treated on its merit.

Complaints against Councillors (Cllrs) – All Parish Cllrs must abide by the Code of Conduct. Complaints against Cllrs should be referred directly to the Monitoring Officer at Babergh District Council.

In accordance with the recommendations of National Association of Local Councils (NALC) complaints will be dealt with in confidence. The identity of the complainant should only be made to those in GWPC who need to consider the complaint and the Clerk.

## The Complaints Policy Procedure:

### Before the Meeting

- GWPC fully complies with the GDPR.
- The Complainant should be asked to put the complaint about GWPC's service, procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk.
- If the Complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk they may be advised to put it to the Chair, GWPC.
- The Clerk (or Chair) shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the Complainant when the matter will be considered by GWPC or the HRCC for the purposes of hearing the complaint/s.
- The Complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish.
- Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the Complainant shall provide GWPC with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The HRCC shall similarly provide the Complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

### At the Meeting

- The HRCC shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. (If dealt with by the HRCC then any recommended decision on a complaint shall be announced at the next available full GWPC meeting).
- The Chair of the HRCC will introduce everyone.
- The Chair of the HRCC will explain the procedure.
- The Complainant (or representative) to outline the grounds for the complaint.
- Members of the HRCC can ask any question of the Complainant.
- If relevant, the Clerk will explain GWPC's position.
- Members of the HRCC can ask any question of the Clerk.
- The Clerk and the Complainant can be offered the opportunity of the last word (in this order).
- The Clerk and the Complainant will be asked to leave the room whilst Members of the HRCC decide whether the grounds for the complaint have been made. (If a point of clarification is necessary, then both parties will be invited back).
- The Clerk and Complainant return to hear the decision or be advised when the decision will be made.

### After the Meeting

- A decision will be confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken.

## GWPC COMPLAINTS AND COMMENTS FORM

Please use this form for comments and complaints. GWPC will hold your data for the purposes of dealing with your complaint or comments. Data will be held in accordance with the GDPR.

|                                                                                    |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Name                                                                               |  |
| Address                                                                            |  |
| Daytime Phone Number                                                               |  |
| Email                                                                              |  |
| Details of Comment or Complaint (Please continue separate sheet if necessary)      |  |
| If you are making a complaint, what would you like GWPC to do to put things right? |  |

### Version Control

| Version | Editor | Date        | Comments/Amendments                                                         | Approval |
|---------|--------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| v1.1    | MF     | 23 Oct 2026 | Created by combining GWVHMC policy with GWPC policy. To be accepted by GWPC | GWPC     |
|         |        |             |                                                                             |          |
|         |        |             |                                                                             |          |
|         |        |             |                                                                             |          |
|         |        |             |                                                                             |          |

Review Body – GWPC. Reviewed annually and normally each May at the APCM.