

ALBY WITH THWAITE PARISH COUNCIL

PROCEDURE FOR MAKING A COMPLAINT

As a resident if you have a complaint about any matter which involves the Parish Council we want to hear from you. Your feedback is important to us as we aim to serve the Parish as efficiently and effectively as possible as this is the only way we can continually improve the service the Council provides.

Our aims are:

- to simplify how you make a complain
- to ensure a satisfactory outcome for complainants
- to eliminate a re-occurrence of a complaint
- to encourage good practice

HOW TO CONTACT US

You can contact the Alby with Thwaite Parish Council in the following ways: by telephone, in written format to the Parish Clerk' address or via the Parish Council email address. If preferred the enclosed form with this leaflet can be completed and returned. The Parish Council contact details are as follows:

- The Parish Clerk - Rosalyn Dawson, 12A Pine Grove, Sheringham, NR26 8QG
- Telephone: 01263 824637
- Email to: albythwaitepc@gmail.com
- Telephone (Chairman): 01263 761648

OUR RESPONSE TO YOUR COMPLAINT

- an initial acknowledgement to your communication or an immediate resolve of your complaint
- respond to you within 14 working days giving you a comprehensive reply or a progress report outlining why we need more time to investigate and notify you of a time scale for this to happen

CONFIDENTIALITY

- Your complaint will be treated with the strictest confidence
- We will initially only involve officers who are directly involved with your complaint
- Where appropriate the Parish Council will refer your complaint to the Standards Board at the District Council.

Date received: _____

Reference No: _____

ALBY WITH THWAITE PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS FORM

Your Name _____

Your preferred contact details: Email address _____

Telephone _____

Home Address _____

DETAILS OF YOUR COMPLAINT

(Please use a continuation sheet if necessary)

Date received: _____

Reference No: _____

Have you contacted anyone on the Parish Council? Yes / No

If yes, please give their name _____

What happened as a result of this contact?

From your perspective how can the Council resolve your complaint?

Complaints will be treated in the strictest confidence. Your details will only be disclosed to parties who need to investigate your complaint. (Please note that the Parish Clerk in the first instance may report your complaint to the Chairman)

Please return this form to the Parish Clerk, Alby with Thwaite Parish Council, 12A Pine Grove, Sheringham, NR26 8QG

ALBY WITH THWAITE PARISH COUNCIL

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR COMPLAINTS

1. If a complaint about the Parish Council is notified orally to a Councillor or the Parish Clerk and it cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, they will be asked to put their complaint in writing to the Parish Clerk on the specified form provided.
2. If a complainant prefers not to direct their complaint to the Parish Clerk they will be advised to contact the Chairman.
3. Any written complaint will be responded to within 7 days. Where it is not possible to give a full resolve to a complaint within this timescale, the complainant will be contacted explaining why more time is needed. Where a complainant continues to remain dissatisfied, a complaint form and copy of the Code of Practice will be sent within 14 days.
4. In the case of a complaint concerning a member of staff or Councillor, the person concerned will be notified and given an opportunity to comment. Complaints lodged about Council staff shall be initially dealt with by the Chairman.
5. The Clerk or Chairman shall report to the next meeting of the Parish Council any written complaint settled by direct action with the complainant.
6. The Clerk or Chairman shall bring any unresolved written complaint to the next Parish Council meeting once it has been initially investigated. If necessary a Panel of three nominated Councillors one of whom is the Chairman, will fully investigate the complaint. Where an individual is the subject of a complaint, this will be dealt with in the absence of the public. However a final decision will be publicly announced at a Council meeting.
7. The complainant will be kept fully informed at every stage of the investigation of dates and the outcome and resultant action will be communicated in writing to the complainant.
8. Where a complaint relates to the **Code of Conduct**, it should be sent direct to The Standards Board of the *District Council* for referral to the Monitoring Officer.
9. The Council shall defer investigation of a written complaint **only** where issues of law or practice arise and legal advice is necessary.
10. Once a decision and the nature of any action has been made the *Council* will communicate this in writing to the complainant.
11. The *Council* will keep a **Complaints Incident Book** for incidents where individuals voices are raised, strong language used, threatening or violent behaviour is experienced that give rise to a complaint (or otherwise) the incident must be recorded within 24 hours of the incident.

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COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE - GUIDANCE TO THE COMPLAINTS PANEL

When enquiring into a complaint the Panel must consider the following:

- That the person(s), the subject of the complaint, be given the opportunity of responding in answer to the complaint, in their chosen format – verbally or written, or both. The person(s), the subject of the complaint, is given the right to have an independent person, like a friend, present at any hearing if they chose.
- Where the complaint concerns a member of staff the Grievance and Disciplinary Policy procedure should be followed.
- Any person(s) who may be able to provide information to substantiate the complaint, or otherwise, should be approached and asked for their recollection. Such information may be verbal or written.
- The Panel may wish to acquire further information from the complainant and may offer the complainant the opportunity of further discussing the content of the complaint.
- That the Panel records the date and time when the person(s), the subject of the complaint, and/or witnesses, were asked to comment.