

## **Complaints Procedure**

This complaints procedure has been adapted from the national model Town & Parish Council complaints procedure published by the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC). The model is based on the guidance on handling complaints produced by the Local Government Ombudsman. This document sets out how you may complain to the Council and how we shall go about resolving your complaint.

1. Hound Parish Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in the Hound area or are visitors to the locality. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from this council, or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by this council, this Complaints Procedure sets out how you may complain to the council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.
2. This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about council administration, procedures and services and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.
3. This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:
  - 3.1. complaints by one council employee against another council employee, or between a council employee and the council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.
  - 3.2. complaints against councillors. Complaints against councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council in 2012 and if a complaint against a councillor is received by the Parish Council it will be referred to the Standards Committee of Eastleigh Borough Council in line with this policy. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of Eastleigh Borough Council - Joanne Cassar.
4. The appropriate time for influencing Council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the Council debates and votes on a matter. You may do this by writing to the Council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed, or by contacting one of the councillors.

Parish Council meeting agendas are published at least 3 days before all of our meetings here: <https://www.houndparishcouncil.gov.uk/meetings.html>

There may also be the opportunity to raise your concerns in the public participation section of Council meetings. This section usually occurs between 7pm - 7.15pm at full Council meetings.

5. If the complainant(s) are unhappy with a Council decision, they may raise their concerns(s) with the Council, but Standing Orders prevent the Council from reopening issues for six months from the date of the decision, unless there are exceptional grounds to consider this necessary and the special process set out in the Standing Orders is followed.
6. Complaints about the council's procedures, services or administration can be made to the Parish Clerk. This may be done in person, by phone, or by writing to or emailing the Clerk:  
  
David Nevin, Parish Clerk  
02380 453732  
[clerk@houndparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@houndparishcouncil.gov.uk)  
The Parish Office, 29c Station Road, Netley Abbey, Southampton, SO31 5AE
7. Wherever possible, the Parish Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately and without referring to the formal procedure. If this is not possible, the Clerk will normally try to acknowledge your complaint within five working days and will instigate the formal procedure.
8. If the complainant does not wish to report their complaint to the Clerk, they may make their complaint directly to the Chairman of the Council who will liaise with the Clerk in resolving the complaint:  
  
Cllr Mark Roberts  
[mroberts@houndparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:mroberts@houndparishcouncil.gov.uk)
9. If the formal procedure is invoked the complainant will be asked to put their complaint in writing, either on paper or by email. They must submit their name, address and either a telephone or email address where they can be contacted. The Parish Clerk will investigate your complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from the complainant and/or from staff or members of the Council (as appropriate).
10. The Clerk will notify the complainant within 20 working days of the outcome of their complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take as a result of the complaint. (In exceptional cases the twenty working days timescale may have to be extended. If it is, you will be kept informed.)
11. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response to their complaint, they may ask for their complaint to be referred to the Appeals Committee of the Parish Council. This referral will be made by the Clerk or Chairman of the Council at their discretion and the result of the referral will be reported to the full Council. The complainant will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of their original complaint, usually within 8 weeks of the complaint, although this period may be extended in exceptional circumstances.

12. If the complaint is about the Parish Clerk, the Chairman of the Council will manage the process for the complaint in conjunction with another suitable officer, most probably a Senior Officer from Eastleigh Borough Council or another Councillor.
13. Some disputes may need to be handled outside of this complaints procedure, for instance where legal proceedings are involved or where a claim for compensation is made that we need to refer to our insurers. If this is the case the Parish Clerk will seek legal advice before advising the complainant of the process to be followed.