

COMPTON BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. The following procedure will be adopted for dealing with complaints about Compton Bishop Parish Council ("CBPC") administration or procedures. Complaints about a policy decision made by the Council will be referred back to the Council or relevant Advisory Group, as appropriate, for consideration.
2. This procedure does not cover complaints about the conduct of a Member of the Parish Council which are handled according to the CBPC Code of Conduct.
3. If a complaint about procedures, administration or the actions of any CBPC employee is notified orally to a Councillor, or to the Clerk to the Council, a written record of the complaint will be made, noting the name and contact details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint.
4. The complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing (letter or e-mail) to the Clerk to the Council. The complaint will be dealt with within 28 working days of receipt wherever possible (but see clauses 12 and 13 below). Refusal to put the complaint in writing does not necessarily mean that the complaint cannot be investigated, but it is easier to deal with if it is in writing.
5. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk to the Council (because the matter relates to the Clerk, for example) he or she should be advised to write to the Chair.
6. (a) On receipt of a written complaint, the Clerk to the Council (except where the complainant is about his or her own actions) or Chair of CBPC (if the complaint relates to the Clerk) will seek to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This will not be done without first notifying the subject of the complaint and giving him or her opportunity to comment. Efforts should be made to resolve the complaint at this stage.

(b) Where the Clerk to the Council or a Councillor receives a written complaint about the actions of the Clerk, he or she shall refer the complaint to the Chair of CBPC. The Clerk to the Council will be formally advised of the matter and given an opportunity to comment.
7. The Clerk to the Council (or Chair) will report any complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant to the next meeting of CBPC.
8. The Clerk to the Council (or Chair) will report any complaint that has not been resolved to the next meeting of the Council. The Clerk will notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered and the complainant will be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint to the Council in person at the next CBPC meeting.

9. Matters relating to Grievance or Disciplinary proceedings that are taking, or are likely to take place, should be dealt with in accordance with CBPC grievance and disciplinary procedures.
10. CBPC may consider whether the circumstances of any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public, but any decision on the complaint will be announced at the CBPC meeting in public.
11. CBPC may consider in the circumstances of any particular complaint whether to make any without liability payment or provide other reasonable benefit to any person who has suffered loss as a result of CBPC maladministration. Any payment may only be authorised by CBPC after obtaining legal advice and also advice from CBPC auditors on the propriety of such a payment.
12. As soon as possible after the decision has been made (and in any event not later than 10 working days after the meeting) the complainant will be notified in writing of the decision and any action to be taken.
13. CBPC may defer dealing with any complaint if it is of the opinion that issues arise on which further advice is necessary. The advice will be considered and the complaint dealt with at the next CBPC meeting after the advice has been received.

This procedure was adopted by Compton Bishop Parish Council by formal resolution at the Council meeting held on 12 February 2014.