



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Complaints Procedure Adopted on 14th April 2011

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council (The Council) is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its 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.

Everyday problems, queries and comments

The Council receives queries, problems and comments as part of its day to day running, and they should not all be regarded as complaints. These are routine and expected and are generally resolved in a timely manner to the customer's satisfaction.

If someone is dissatisfied with the original service or response they received and wishes to take the matter further then the issue should be recognised as a complaint.

Informal Complaint

During the course of daily business, minor complaints are made to the Clerk about the services we provide. These will be dealt with by the Clerk, it is not appropriate for every comment to be treated as a formal complaint. Every effort should be made to deal with these problems as soon as possible, either by providing information, instigating the appropriate action or explaining a decision.

Formal Complaint

1. This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about Council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns. It will not be appropriate to deal with all complaints from members of the public under a complaints procedure.
2. This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:
 - 2.1. Financial irregularity: Local electors have the statutory right to object to Council's audit of account pursuant to s.16 audit Commission Act 1998; is required to be directed to the Auditor.
 - 2.2. Complaints about employment matters: These matters are dealt with under an internal disciplinary and grievance procedure.
 - 2.3. Complaints against Councillors. Complaints against councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members, adopted by the Council on 13th September 2007, and complaints relating to a Councillor's failure to comply with the Code of Conduct must be referred to the Standards Committee of West Berkshire Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against Councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer, Legal and Electoral Services, West Berkshire Council, Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury RG14 5LD.

3. You may make your complaint about the Council's procedures or administration to the Clerk. You may do this by writing to or emailing the Clerk. The contact details are set out below.
4. Wherever possible, the Clerk on receiving your complaint will try to resolve it in a proportionate and timely manner. If this is not possible, the Clerk will normally try to acknowledge your complaint and explain how your complaint will be progressed.
5. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Chairman of the Council.
6. Depending on the nature of the complaint, there may be a need to obtain further information as necessary from you and/or from the Clerk or Members of the Council, and the Clerk will contact you if this is the case.
7. Once the investigation concludes the Clerk or the Chairman of the Council will notify you of the outcome of your complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take as a result of your complaint.
8. If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the Parish Council or to the full Council (as appropriate) and you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint. The Committee may ask you to clarify the reason why you wish to escalate the complaint if this is not obvious from your correspondence.
9. Confidentiality: All complaints are treated with confidentiality with due regard for people's privacy. The Council are not at liberty to discuss a complaint with a third party.
10. Persistent or Prolific Complainants: A separate Council procedure exists for managing correspondence from persistent and prolific complainants.

Address: Mrs J E Kirk
Clerk of the Council
Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council
Parish Council Office
27 Victoria Road
Mortimer
Reading
RG7 3SH

Email: the.clerk@stratfield-mortimer.gov.uk