



## **NURSLING & ROWNHAMS PARISH COUNCIL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### **Introduction:**

A complaint is by definition an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the Council's action, lack of action or standard of a service provided by either the Council or a person or body acting on behalf of the Council.

Nursling & Rownhams Parish Council is committed to providing excellent service to its residents and to anyone who comes into contact with the Parish Council. The Council is committed to conducting its business in a fair and impartial manner and the aim of this procedure is to investigate all complaints promptly and to find a solution which is satisfactory to both the complainant and the Council.

Please note that Parish Councils (as corporate bodies) are not subject to the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman and there are no provisions for another body to which complaints can be referred. The Council will therefore do its utmost to settle complaints and satisfy complainants in the interest of the good reputation of the Council.

The Parish Council's complaints procedure does not cover complaints against an individual Councillor. If you wish to make a complaint about the behaviour of an individual Councillor you must contact:

Head of Legal and Democratic Services  
Test Valley Borough Council  
Beech Hurst  
Weyhill Road  
Andover  
Hampshire SP10 3AJ  
Email: [legal@testvalley.gov.uk](mailto:legal@testvalley.gov.uk)

Such complaints must refer to a Councillor's failure to follow the Code of Conduct as the Monitoring Officer cannot deal with complaints about matters that are not covered by this code

The Code of Conduct was adopted by the Parish Council on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2018 and can be viewed on the Parish Council's website, [www.nandr.org.uk](http://www.nandr.org.uk) or on the Test Valley Borough Council's website, [www.testvalley.gov.uk](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk).

**Informal complaints:**

An informal complaint may be made to the Clerk by telephone, email, in person or in writing. If the complaint relates to the Clerk and the complainant prefers not to put the complaint directly to the Clerk, he or she should write to the Chairman of the Council.

If a complaint is made to a Councillor it is their duty to notify the Clerk or the Chairman of the Council.

The Clerk or Chairman of the Council will speak directly to the complainant within seven working days and will attempt to resolve the complaint and ensure that the complainant feels satisfied that their issue has been fully considered, taken seriously and acted upon accordingly.

If the Clerk or the Chairman cannot satisfy a complaint in an informal way, then the Formal Complaints Procedure will be instigated.

**Formal Complaints:****Stage one – The Committee (Council)**

The complainant will be asked to put their complaint about the Council's staff, procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk they should address it to the Chairman of the Council.

The letter should contain the following information

- Name, address and telephone number of the complainant
- Details of the complaint about the Council's staff, procedures or administration
- How the issue has affected the complainant
- Copies of any relevant documents or other evidence
- Details of third parties and their involvement
- What action the complainant believes will resolve the complaint

The Clerk will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within three working days and will advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Committee (Council).

**Stage Two – The Complainant**

The complainant shall be invited to attend a meeting and to bring with them a representative if they so wish.

Any documents not already supplied to the Council must be sent to the Clerk as least seven working days before the meeting. The Council shall provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to refer at the meeting within the same timescale. No other documentation may be introduced at the meeting.

### **At the meeting**

The Clerk shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press.

The Chairman should introduce everyone and explain the procedure.

The complainant (or their representative) should outline the grounds for complaint following which questions may be asked by the Clerk and Members.

If necessary, the Clerk or a nominated Councillor will present the Council's position relating to the complaint following which questions may be asked by other Members.

The Clerk/nominated Councillor and the complainant will be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.

The Clerk/nominated Councillor and the complainant will be asked to leave the room while Members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint are legitimate. If a point of clarification is necessary both parties shall be invited back.

The Clerk/nominated Councillor and the complainant will be given the decision at the meeting or within seven working days if further consideration by the Committee (Council) is necessary.

### **After the meeting**

The decision will be confirmed in writing by the Clerk within seven working days, together with details of any action to be taken.

### **Conclusion**

The Council will aim to handle all complaints thoroughly and expeditiously. The procedure will take no more than 12 weeks from receipt to resolution.

In the first instance, please contact:

Clerk to the Parish Council  
Nursling & Rownhams Parish Council  
PO Box 1780  
Southampton  
Hampshire  
SO15 9FX  
Tel: 023 8073 6766  
Fax: 023 8073 6766  
Email: [clerk@nandr.org.uk](mailto:clerk@nandr.org.uk)