



# GORING-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

### 1. Introduction

This policy sets out procedures for dealing with any complaints that a person other than a member of the council may have about Goring-on-Thames Parish Council's administration and procedures. It applies to Parish Council's employees. Complaints against councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct adopted by the council. Formal complaints of conduct by councillors should be made to and investigated by South Oxfordshire District Council.

### 2. Complaints on Policy Decisions

Complaints against policy decisions made by the council or any of its committees shall be referred back to council in accordance with Item 7 of the council's standing orders, which provides as follows:

- a Except where significant relevant new facts or an error come to light, a resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 4 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

### 3. Oral Complaints

If a complaint about procedures or administration as practised by the council's employees is notified orally to a councillor or the clerk to the council, they should seek to satisfy the complaint fully. If that fails, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing to the clerk to the council and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt.

If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the clerk of the council he or she should be advised to put it to the chairman of the council.



#### **4. Complaints Procedure**

- a) On receipt of a written complaint the chair of the council or the clerk to the council (except where the complaint is about his/her/their own actions), shall try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This shall not be done without first notifying the person complained against and giving them an opportunity to comment. Efforts should be made to attempt to settle the complaint at this stage.
- b) Where the clerk to the council receives a written complaint about the clerk to the council's own actions, he/she/they shall refer the complaint to the chair of council. The clerk to the council shall be notified and given an opportunity to comment.
- c) The clerk to the council or chairman of council shall bring any written complaint that has not been settled to the next meeting of the council. The clerk to the council shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered and the complainant shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally. (Unless such a matter be related to grievance, disciplinary or standard board proceedings that are taking, or likely to take place when such a hearing may prejudice those hearings when the complaint will have to be heard under confidential business to exclude any member of the public or the press, or deferred on appropriate advice received).
- d) The council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the council meeting in public.
- e) As soon as practicable after the decision has been made it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
- f) A council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law and practice arise on which advice is necessary. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received

#### **5. Review**

The Complaints Policy was approved for use at the meeting of the Parish Council on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023, it shall be reviewed yearly, at the Annual Meeting of the Council.

Signed:

Dated: 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023

\_\_\_\_\_, Chair of the Council