

DALTON PIERCY PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

It is important that the Parish Council acts in an open and timely manner in relation to complaints made about both its Councillors and its staff. Equally, it is important that members of the public understand how to make a complaint.

Parish Councillors are subject to the authority of the Standards Committee administered by Hartlepool Borough Council. This Committee consists of Borough Councillors, Parish Councillors and Lay People. Clearly, members of the public are entitled to ask the Parish Council Chairman to investigate any informal complaint about the actions or behaviour of a Parish Councillor but any formal complaints about the behaviour or actions of a Dalton Piercy Parish Councillor must be made in writing to the Borough Solicitor at Hartlepool Civic Centre.

As far as staff of the Parish Council is concerned, the council recognises that often matters are not of a serious nature and can be resolved on an informal basis. In these cases, it is appropriate for the member(s) of the public to raise the matter informally with the Chairman of the Parish Council. Normally these matters will be resolved on an informal basis by discussion and agreement.

In the case of more serious complaints, the Council will establish a Disciplinary and Complaints Committee to handle a serious complaint made about staff. This Committee will consist of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the council and one other (although substitutes are permissible). Any complaint about an employee of the Parish Council should be sent to the Chairman in writing, and marked confidential. The Disciplinary and Complaints Committee will then investigate the complaint and report their findings to the Parish Council under a confidential banner, together with any action it recommends and the complainant informed accordingly. If the matter comes within the purview of the Council's Disciplinary Procedures, the complainant will be informed accordingly but not of the result of any disciplinary action, which remains confidential.

In all other circumstances, the Chairman will inform the complainant, in writing, of the outcome of the investigations.

Approved: