



Martlesham Parish Council

Parish Room
Felixstowe Road
Martlesham
Woodbridge
Suffolk IP12 4PB

Clerk: Mrs Lisa Burgess
Chair: Laurence Burrows - l.burrows@martleshamcouncil.org.uk
Telephone: 01473 612632
Email: clerk@martleshamcouncil.org.uk
Website: <https://www.martleshamparishcouncil.org.uk/>

COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE MARCH 2024

If there is an occasion when you feel that the Council has done something wrong or badly or failed to do something that you expected, or if you have a complaint about the attitude or conduct of a councillor or Council employee then you may feel you need to complain. The purpose of this document is to inform you:

- a) How to complain to Martlesham Parish Council
- b) How we will deal with your complaint
- c) What to do if you are still not satisfied.

In all instances you can expect your complaint to be acknowledged within three working days of receipt, and if the matter cannot be resolved immediately, because further investigation is needed, you will be advised of the timescales involved and you will be kept informed of progress on a weekly basis should the investigation prove to be lengthy.

Step 1

Contact the Clerk to the Council, (contact details above) and ask them to investigate for you or explain the actions of the Council. The Clerk will liaise with the Chairman (or the Vice Chairman if the complaint is against the Chairman) in an attempt to find an amicable solution.

If your complaint is about the Clerk, please contact the Chairman (contact details above).

At this stage the Council will attempt to find an amicable resolution to all queries or complaints.

If you are still not satisfied:

Step 2

Please put your complaint in writing. Please use the complaints form enclosed with an accompanying letter if you wish to give more details and send to Martlesham Parish Council office as detailed above or to the Chairman if the complaint is about the Clerk. If you need help with completing this form, we can arrange for someone to help you. Please ensure that you include all relevant information on this form as the Council will use this to assess the details of your complaint.

AT THIS STAGE PLEASE NOTE - If the complaint is against an individual councillor and you consider that the actions of that Councillor are so serious as to have breached the Council's Code of Conduct THEN YOU MUST contact East Suffolk District Council's Monitoring Officer (contact details at the bottom of the page) as this Council have no jurisdiction on such matters and are unable to issue sanctions relating to the behaviour of individual councillors

Step 3

Upon receipt of your written complaint a copy will be circulated to all councillors/Clerk (including the subject of the complaint if the complaint is against an individual), and the matter will be considered by the Council at a Full Council meeting (or personnel sub-committee meeting for employee

matters), which will take place on a date and time to be determined by the Chairman (or Vice Chairman if the complaint is against the Chairman). The quorum for the meeting will be decided in accordance with the Council's current Standing Orders and if the complaint is against an individual member, then the subject of the complaint will not be included as a voting member for the purposes of calculating the quorum. If the complaint is against the Clerk (or any employee) then the matter will be dealt with as a confidential staff matter by a delegated personnel committee.

Step 4

Procedures at the Full Council/Committee Meetings

It is unlikely that the Council would consider it necessary to invite you to any kind of 'hearing' – please ensure you have included all necessary and relevant details in your written complaint.

The Council (or Personnel Committee for employee matters) will decide whether or not to hold the meeting to consider the complaint in public. Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media may be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this matter. If it is considered to be in the public interest, and the matter does not relate to confidential personnel details, the minutes of the meeting will be made publicly available at a later date.

The Council will reach a decision as to whether to uphold the complaint in full or part and will recommend a remedy to the complaint. You will be advised if the Council considers that it requires any further information from you before reaching a decision.

If the complaint is against a member of the Council and an informal remedy such as an apology is not considered appropriate, the Council may defer the matter to the Borough Council's Standards Committee for guidance as to the appropriate action. This Council cannot consider complaints which it considers may constitute a serious breach of the Council's Code of Conduct or where you have mentioned that you consider the Code of Conduct has been breached.

If the complaint is against an employee, it will be dealt with under our personnel procedures and any sanctions on the employee will be confidential.

The Council's decision will be final.

The final decision will be communicated to all parties in writing if required – there will be no further correspondence from this Council on the matter.

If you are still not satisfied:

If your complaint is about an individual Councillor, you can contact the Monitoring Officer at East Suffolk District Council by completing the 'Councillor Conduct – Complaint Form' which can be found here:- https://my.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/en/service/councillor_conduct_complaint

COMPLAINTS FORM – MARTLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Name:

Address:

.....

.....

Post Code:

Telephone Number:

What do you consider the Council has done wrong or failed to do?

How has the problem affected you?

What should the Council do to put things right?

Who have you spoken to about this and when? Please quote any reference numbers.

Signed:
(to be signed by the person making the complaint)

Dated