

## **ST WENN PARISH COUNCIL. COMPLAINTS POLICY.**

St Wenn Parish Council recognises that from time to time there will be concerns expressed by members of the public over the activities of the Council, or one of its Members or Employees.

To address these issues Council has adopted a procedure for the handling of complaints. This procedure allows people to have a form of address to the Council if they feel they have a complaint,

or have been unfairly treated in their dealings with the Council staff, Councillors, the Council or its Committees.

### **Customer Care Policy.**

1. This Policy sets out procedures for dealing with any complaints that anyone may have about St Wenn Parish Council's administration and procedures. It applies to the Council's employees. The behaviour of Councillors is covered by the 'National Code of Local Government Conduct'. Complaints against policy decisions made by the Council shall be referred to the Council.

2. If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk to the Council, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Chairman of the Council and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt. Where the Clerk to the Council receives a written complaint about the Clerk's own actions he / she shall refer the complaint to the Chairman of the Council.

3. On receipt of a complaint the Chairman of the Council, with one other Councillor, shall try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This shall not be done without first notifying the person complained against and giving him / her an opportunity to comment. Efforts should be made to attempt to settle the complaint at the earliest possible stage.

4. The Chairman of the Council shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.

5. The Chairman shall bring any complaint not settled, to the next meeting of the Council. The complainant shall be notified of the date on which the complaint will be considered and he / she shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally.

6. Where the complaint may result in proceedings being taken under the Council's Dismissal, Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures, then such a hearing will have to be heard under Exempt Business to exclude any member of the public, or the press, or deferred on appropriate advice received.

In all other cases, 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.

7. As soon as may be after the decision has been made, it, and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.

8. A Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law, or practice, arise on which advice is necessary. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.

9. In the event that it is not possible to resolve the complaint satisfactorily, the matter shall be referred to the Cornwall Council's Monitoring Officer.

10. Update – Complaints Policy (Monitoring Officer Section)

Referral to Cornwall Council's Monitoring Officer

If a complaint relates specifically to the personal conduct of an individual councillor and may represent a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct, the complainant may refer the matter to Cornwall Council's Monitoring Officer.

The Monitoring Officer cannot investigate complaints about decisions made by the Parish Council as a body, or complaints about the conduct of the Clerk or other employees, as these matters fall outside Cornwall Council's jurisdiction.

Further information and referral procedures are available at: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk>