

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Proposed for review at 21 May 2025 meeting
Review and adoption every annual meeting

1. Westmill Parish Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or who are visitors to the locality. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from this council, or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by this council, this policy sets out how you may complain to the council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.

2. This policy applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.

3. Complaints against councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct adopted by the council on 17 May 2023 and if a complaint against a councillor is received by the council, it will be referred to the monitoring officer at East Herts District Council.

4. You may make a complaint about the council's procedures or administration to the parish clerk or a councillor. You may do this in person or by phone, but if the complaint cannot be satisfied fully, you may be asked to put the complaint in writing to the clerk using the contact details below and including the following information:

- Name of the complainant
- Address of the complainant
- Telephone number and/or email address
- Details of the complaint

T: 01763 272587

E: clerk@westmillpc.org.uk

5. If you would prefer not to put the complaint to the clerk, you will be advised to direct it to the chairman by email: chair@westmillpc.org.uk

6. Wherever possible, the clerk or chairman (except where the complaint is about their own actions) will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, you will normally receive acknowledgement of your complaint within five working days.

7. The clerk or the council will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff and/or members of the council and will notify you within twenty working days of the outcome of your complaint and of what action (if any) the council proposes to take as a result of your complaint. (In exceptional cases the twenty working days timescale may have to be extended. If it is, you will be kept informed).

8. The clerk or chairman shall report to the next meeting of the council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.

9. Any written complaint which has not been settled by the next meeting of the council will be referred to the council and the clerk or chairman shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered, giving the complainant an opportunity to explain the complaint in person.

10. 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 next public council meeting.

11. 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.

12. 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 from Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.