



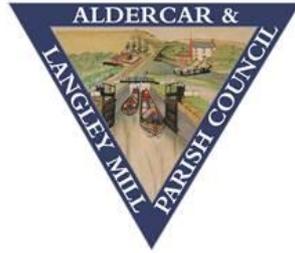
## **Aldercar & Langley Mill Parish Council**

### **Complaints Procedure**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by a member of the public about the Parish Council's procedures and their implementation, administration, action or lack of action, or about the standard of a service, whether the action or the service is provided by the Council or by a person or body acting on behalf of the Council.

#### **Stage 1**

1. The complaint should be sent in writing to the Clerk or, if the complaint is about the Clerk, to the Chairman of the Council.
2. Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged by the Clerk, or by the Chairman, as appropriate, specifying the date of receipt, which date shall be conclusive in relation to other dates specified below.
3. The complainant will initially be considered within 14 days of receipt, by the Chairman or Vice Chairman, and two Councillors, who will determine whether the complaint is valid and one that needs formal consideration by the Council.
4. The complaint may be deemed invalid and therefore rejected, if it is either deemed to be frivolous or vexatious, to relate to a matter that is outside the powers or control of the Council, is better to be referred to a third party, or for such other reason as the Councillors may determine.
5. In the event that the complaint is rejected at this stage, then the Complainant will be informed, in writing, within 21 days of receipt of the complaint. All members of the Council will be notified of the decision.
6. The decision at this stage is final.
7. If the complaint is determined to be valid the following procedures will apply.



## Stage 2

### Before the Meeting

8. The complaint will be placed on the Agenda of the next meeting of the Council to be held 42 days after receipt of the complaint.
9. The Complainant will be advised when the Council will consider the matter and be invited to attend with such representative as they wish.
10. 14 days prior to the meeting, the Complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer at the meeting. The Council shall similarly provide the Complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

### At the Meeting

11. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the complaint warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on exclusion shall be announced in public.
12. The Chairman will introduce everybody and explain the procedure.
13. The Complainant, or representative, will outline the grounds of the complaint and Members may ask any questions of the Complainant.
14. If relevant, the Clerk will explain the Council's position and Members may ask any questions of the Clerk.
15. The Chairman will invite the Clerk and the Complainant to make any final comments.
16. The Clerk and the Complainant will leave the room while Members consider the grounds of the complaint and decide the action to be taken. Both parties can be invited back if a point of clarification is required.
17. The Council will either make a decision, or defer a decision to a later date. The decision, when reached, is final.
18. The Clerk and the Complainant will be invited to either hear the decision, or to be advised when a decision will be made.
19. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced, in public, at a Council meeting and will be included within the Minutes of that meeting.