Ruddington Parish Council – Complaints Policy
Agreed by Environment & Policy Committee 28/7/2015

Introduction

This document sets out Ruddington Parish Council's policy on handling complaints.

The Council intends that the policy: …

- Is simple for customers to use and is equally accessible to all.
- Deals with problems as close to their source as possible and in a diligent and professional manner.
- Gives customers confidence that their complaints are being dealt with effectively.
- Takes appropriate actions to solve problems and generates a positive attitude to feedback.
- Seeks to learn from feedback and to enhance service provided.
- Provides a consistent approach to complaints throughout the Parish Council.

Council values complaints as a way of improving the services it offers.

Procedure

1. **Raise the issue with the Parish Council:** If you are dissatisfied with an action of Ruddington Parish Council please let us know. You can contact us in writing, by e-mail, by phone or in person at the Parish Council office. Or you can contact one of your parish councillors. . We hope to be able to sort out the issue to your satisfaction. If this has not been possible you may wish to make a formal complaint.

2. **Making a formal complaint:** If you are making a formal complaint you must put your concerns in writing, addressed to Ruddington Parish Council, St. Peter's Rooms, Church Street, Ruddington, Nottingham, NG11 6HA.

   If you are making a complaint about the Clerk you may wish to write direct to the Chairman of the Parish Council. You can find the address on the Parish Council website. Please note that the current Chairman does not have a private e-mail address.

The complaint will then be acknowledged in writing within three working days of receipt.

The proposals for dealing with the complaint will be communicated to the complainant with fourteen working days of receipt.

Council will then follow this procedure

The formal complaints procedure has two stages. The Council's aim is to resolve problems at the first stage, as close to their source as possible. Complaints will be referred to the officer (s) responsible for the areas to which they refer.

1st Stage

The 1st stage is at an operational level with an open definition of a complaint. For example "When customers do not feel that they have received a satisfactory response to an expression of dissatisfaction about an action or lack of action by the Council". It should be possible for most complaints to be resolved at this level.

2nd Stage

This stage is at councillor level and is used for those formal complaints that could not be resolved at the first stage and for any formal complaints about the Clerk.

Stage 2 complaints will be dealt with by a subcommittee made up of the Chairman of the Council (with the Vice Chairman substituting as appropriate) and two members selected by Parish Council.

There is no further appeal process.

Eligibility to complain

The following are eligible to complain. (Eligibility is not dependent upon residence in Ruddington).

- Any individual or group receiving or seeking a service from Ruddington Parish Council or anyone acting for an individual or group unable to complain personally.

The policy does not apply to issues raised by employees of the Parish Council in relation to their employment.

Confidentiality

Complaints made to the Council will be treated in confidence.

Customers who make their complaints public in the media forfeit their right to anonymity.

Publicity

All of the above to be published in an A4 leaflet.

Responsibility for procedures

Overall responsibility for the complaints procedure and for reporting on it will lie with the Clerk to the Council (the Clerk).

Publication of this policy

Copies of this policy will be available to the public at the Parish Council office and on the Parish Council website.

Records and Reports

A file of all formal complaints received (stages 1 and 2) will be kept by the Clerk to the Council and each formal complaint shall be held for a period of two years following a conclusion reached.

A report on the operation of the formal complaints policy & procedures, and summary information will be prepared by the Clerk and presented annually to Parish Council.