

Marston Parish Council Complaint's Procedure

The 'complaint' should be against Marston Parish Council as a corporate body.

Marston parish council's complaints procedure is not designed to handle complaints relating to financial irregularity or criminal activity. Complaints about the conduct of an individual councillor may be pursued through the Monitoring Officer at South Kesteven District Council. Complaint's against council employees will be dealt with in line with employment procedures.

Marston parish council acknowledge that a complaint is 'an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the council's lack of action or about the standard of service, whether the action was taken or the service provided by the council itself or a person or body acting on behalf of the council.

Prior to the meeting

1. The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the clerk or other nominated officer.
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the clerk or other nominated officer, he or she should be advised to address it to the chairman of the council.
3. The complaint must be made within 12 months of the date of the matters which are subject to complaint.
4. The clerk or other nominated officer shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 7 days and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the council.
5. The complainant should be advised whether the complaint will be treated as confidential.
6. The council should be given adequate time to investigate the complaint (this may vary depending on the complexity of the complaint and is subject to the council's discretion).
7. The complainant shall be invited to attend a meeting and bring with them a representative should they wish.
8. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting (not including weekends or bank holidays), the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied on.
9. The council shall provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting and shall do so promptly, allowing the claimant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.

10. The complainant will not be allowed to present any documentation at the meeting not before seen by council. Should the complainant present any unseen documentation the meeting may be adjourned for the council to consider the new material.

At the meeting

11. The council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press.
12. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the council meeting in public.
13. The chairman should introduce those present and explain the procedure.
14. The complainant (or representative) should outline the grounds for the complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by (i) the clerk or other nominated officer (ii) the chairman and then (ii) members.
15. The clerk or other nominated officer or the chairman will have an opportunity to explain the council's position and questions may be asked by (i) the complainant and (ii), members.
16. The clerk or other nominated officer or the chairman and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.
17. The clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be asked to leave the room while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, the complainant shall be invited back.
18. The complainant should be given the opportunity to wait for a decision but if the decision is unlikely to be finalised on that day they should be advised when the decision is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them.

After the meeting

19. The decision should be confirmed in writing within 7 working days of the decision together with details of any action taken.

Date of Adoption: 7th July 2016.