



Baughurst Parish Council

Complaints Policy

INTRODUCTION BY BAUGHURST PARISH COUNCIL

This is version 2.1 of the Baughurst Parish Council Complaints Policy which has been updated from Version 1.

This Complaints Policy Version 2.1 was adopted by the council at its meeting held on 12th January 2023.

Baughurst Parish Council operates a complaints process as described in this policy to handle complaints made about the services received from the council. The process also covers complaints about councillors breaching the code of conduct for councillors adopted by the council that aligns with the Standing Orders adopted by the council.

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1. Purpose of the Complaints Policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out the process by which the council handles routine complaints anyone may have about the service received from the council and how the council will aim to resolve those concerns.

2. Scope

The policy applies to complaints relating to the administration and procedural affairs of the council. The policy does not deal with grievance issues from staff nor with any matters relating to third parties that do not relate to action taken by the council.

This policy does not apply in the following circumstances:

Alleged financial irregularity

Local electors have a statutory right to object to a council's audit of accounts ([Audit Commission Act 1998, s.16](#)).

Detailed information about your rights can be found [here](#).

Alleged criminal activity

Should you suspect criminal activity; this should be reported to the police for investigation.

Alleged breach of the code of conduct adopted by the council

These types of complaints relate to councillors only and not members of staff. All complaints of this nature should be reported to the Monitoring Officer at Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.

A copy of the council's code of conduct is available from the clerk by emailing clerk@baughurst-pc.gov.uk or from the council website.

3. Personal injury, damage to property, financial loss or legal claims

Complaints concerning personal injury, damage to property, financial loss or a legal claim will be immediately referred to the council's insurance providers for investigation and resolution.



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4. Who can complain?

Anyone who lives in or near Baughurst who is affected by decisions made by the council has a right to complain.

5. How to complain

Informal complaint

An informal complaint can be made to the Clerk or any Councillor by telephone, email or in person. The complaint will be dealt with by the most appropriate person depending on the nature of the complaint.

We hope that most complaints can be dealt with informally. However, we appreciate that at times an informal complaint might not result in a satisfactory response, or the complaint might be so serious that a formal complaint is more appropriate.

Formal complaint

The council requests that any formal complaints are directed to the Clerk in writing giving full details of the complaint. If possible, the complaint should include details of any dates/times, references to council minutes, details of staff or councillors concerned, copies of any correspondence and your contact details. If the complaint is about, for example, the Chairman, then you may direct your complaint to another councillor or the Clerk.

All complaints should be sent to:

Clerk to the Council
The Turbary Administration Centre
2 Franklin Avenue
Tadley
RG26 4ET
Clerk@baughurst-pc.gov.uk

The receipt of your complaint will be acknowledged in writing within 7 working days along with the names of those who will be investigating your complaint.

6. How will the council deal with your complaint?

All formal complaints will be fully investigated within **28 days** with a written response then being sent.



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If the complaint is particularly complicated or there is insufficient time to gather information needed, then the council reserves the right to extend the [28 days](#) period but will notify you of this in writing. We will also contact you during this period should we require more information from you. However, the agreed period will be extended should we then require a longer period to investigate any new information provided by you.

You may be invited to attend a meeting when the complaint is being considered. You are welcome to bring a representative with you should you wish. Should you require any assistance, please contact the Clerk in the first instance.

In all cases, the council will endeavour to resolve all formal complaints as quickly as possible.

The Chairman will lead the investigation into the complaint along with [three named councillors](#) appointed by the [Chairman of the council](#).

In all cases, the council will treat your complaint in confidence and adhere to current Data Protection Regulations so your identity will not be disclosed unless you choose to waive your right to anonymity.

Once the investigation is complete, we will write to you to advise whether your complaint has been upheld or dismissed. We will give you reasons for our decision along with details of any action the council will take. We will also outline the appeals procedure to you.

7. What happens next?

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you should put your concerns in writing to the council and it will be considered by [three councillors \(different from above\)](#) ("the appeals panel") who were not involved in the original complaint investigation. The Clerk may be asked to investigate if appropriate.

The appeals panel will look at all the information relating to your complaint and may contact you for further information or invite you to attend a meeting for further discussion. You are welcome to bring a representative with you should you wish.

The appeal panel will notify you of its decision within [28 days](#)

The decision of the appeals panel is final.



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APPENDIX 1 AMENDMENT HISTORY

These are the amendments to the version one of the Complaints Policy last reviewed in November 2022.

Reference	Amendment
Introduction	A revised introduction has been added by Baughurst Parish Council and includes a general statement about the policy.
All sections	Minor typographical changes.
2	Copy of code of conduct available on council website.
6	Period for investigation set to 28 days.
7	The Chairman of the council will lead the investigation along with three councillors. Three other councillors will constitute the appeals panel. The appeal will be notified within 28 days.

Reviewed: December 2022

Review date: November 2023