HOPESAY PARISH COUNCIL
COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

1. Hopesay Parish Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or 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 Complaints Procedure sets out how you may complain to the council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.

2. This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about Council administration and procedures.

3. This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:

   3.1. Complaints by one council employee against another council employee, or between a council employee and the council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.
   3.2. Complaints against individual councillors. Complaints against councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members.
   3.3. If a complaint against a councillor is received by the council, it will be referred to the Monitoring Officer of Shropshire Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of Shropshire Council.

4. The appropriate time for influencing Council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the Council debates and votes on a matter. You may do this by writing to the Council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed, and / or by lobbying councillor(s). There is usually the opportunity to raise your concerns in the public participation section of Council meetings. If you are unhappy with a Council decision, you may raise your concerns with the Council, but Standing Orders prevent the Council from re-opening issues for six months from the date of the decision, unless there are valid grounds to consider this necessary and the special process set out in Standing Orders to do this is followed.
   The Council's agendas for forthcoming meetings are displayed on parish notice boards, and on the Hopesay Parish website www.hopesayparishcouncil.gov.uk .

5. You may make your complaint about the council's procedures or administration to the Clerk. The Council will always try to address a complaint informally in the first instance. If however this is not possible, the formal complaints procedure will be triggered.
   A formal complaint must be in writing or via email to the Clerk.

6. Wherever possible, the Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Clerk will normally try to acknowledge your complaint within five working days. Please bear in mind that the Clerk is a part-time employee and if on holiday, your complaint may take longer to receive a response.

Adopted 14th November 2016. Reviewed: 21/5/18, 15/7/19, 23/8/21, 22/8/22, 28/7/25, 9/11/26.

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7. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Chair who will report your complaint to the Council.

8. The Clerk or a Complaints Committee of the Council or the Council (as appropriate) will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the Council.

9. The Clerk or the Chair of the Council will notify you within 20 working days of the outcome of your complaint and of what action or of any changes in our systems (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.)

10. If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, provided that it had not previously been dealt with by full Council, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to full Council for review and (usually within eight weeks) you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint.

11. To contact either the Clerk or the Chair, please go to the parish council's website www.hopesayparishcouncil.gov.uk : The Clerk's contact details can be found on the 'Contact Us' page, and the Chair's details can be found on the 'Your Councillors' page.