**MASHAM PARISH COUNCIL – COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

This procedure was adopted by Masham Parish Council at its meeting on 6th March 2017.

**Submitting a Complaint**

1. All complaints against Masham Parish Council (MPC) must be submitted in writing, either by letter or by email. A form has been designed for this purpose and once completed is to be submitted to the Parish Clerk at one of the addresses at the top of the form. Copies of the form can be obtained from the Parish Clerk, either:
	1. In person from the Parish Clerk’s office in the Mashamshire Community Office (MCO), 7 Little Market Place, Masham, HG4 4DY, or
	2. Electronically by email request to mashamparishclerk@gmail.com
2. If the complaint is against the Parish Clerk, then a copy of the form can be obtained from the Chairman of MPC via the MCO. Under these circumstances the completed form is to be returned to the Chairman.

**Receipt of the Complaint**

1. MPC will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within one week of its receipt by MPC. In its acknowledgement the MPC will confirm if the complaint is to be handled confidentially and will explain the next steps in the complaints procedure.
2. Please note in respect of receipt of the complaint by the MPC that the normal office hours for the Parish Clerk are Mondays and Tuesdays 9 am to 4.30 pm. Any complaint received outside of these times may not be actioned until the following week. In view of this any urgent complaint outside of these hours is to be submitted to the Chairman of the MPC.

**Investigation of the Complaint**

1. If the complainant has indicated that the complaint does not require an urgent response it will initially be presented to the MPC at its next monthly meeting. Thereafter the meeting will determine the need for and composition of any sub-committee who will investigate the complaint fully. MPC monthly meetings are normally scheduled for the first Monday of each month. Therefore, under the most extreme circumstances it could be one month before the complaint is discussed at the next monthly meeting. MPC will normally seek to investigate the complaint fully at its monthly meeting and, unless the complainant wishes to meet with the MPC, will determine its outcome within two weeks of discussing the matter at its monthly meeting.
2. If an urgent response has been requested, the complaint will be submitted by the Clerk directly to the Chairman for his consideration. Other councillors will then be selected to join the Chairman and the Clerk in the handling of the complaint. Under these circumstances MPC will investigate the complaint within two weeks and, unless the complainant wishes to meet with the MPC, determine its outcome no more than two weeks later.

**Meetings with the Complainant**

1. Once the handling method has been determined complainants will usually be offered the opportunity to present their complaint verbally to the MPC. At this meeting the complainant will be invited to outline the grounds for complaint and provide any new or additional information or other evidence relevant to the complaint. Thereafter, questions may be asked by members of the MPC present at the meeting.
2. The MPC position will then be explained to the complainant, who will have the opportunity to ask questions. The MPC and the complainant will then be offered the opportunity to summarize their respective positions.
3. The complainant will then be advised when a decision about the complaint is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them.

**After the Complaint has been Decided**

1. On completion of the above process, and within the timescales specified in paragraphs 5 and 6 above, or the timescales agreed in paragraph 9 as a result of the meeting with the complainant, the MPC will write to the complainant to confirm whether it has upheld the complaint.
2. The MPC will give reasons for its decision together with details of any action taken by the MPC if this is appropriate. The complainant will be advised of their right to appeal against the decision of the MPC, as detailed below.

**Appeals Procedure**

1. If the complainant does not accept the decision of the MPC they can submit a written appeal, to one of the addresses at paragraph 1, explaining their grounds for this. Any appeal must be made within two weeks of receipt of the MPC decision by the complainant. The MPC will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within the previously defined timescales.

1. In its further investigations the MPC will, if necessary, appoint a sub-committee to undertake a review and further investigation of the appeal.
2. On conclusion of its further investigations the MPC will write to the complainant to confirm whether it has upheld the appeal.

MASHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Mashamshire Community Office, Little Market Place

Masham, North Yorkshire, HG4 4DY

# Tel: 01765 680205 Fax: 01765 680209

E-mail: mashamparishclerk@gmail.com

# Office hours: Monday and Tuesday, 09:00 – 16:30

**Chairman**: **Clerk to the Council**:

Councillor Flo Grainger Tom Johnson

**MASHAM PARISH COUNCIL – COMPLAINTS PROFORMA**

Before completing this form potential complainants are requested to read the Masham Parish Council Complaints Procedure, copies of which can be obtained from the Parish Clerk.

Your details:

First Name . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Surname . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

Address . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Tel No: . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

NO

YES

Would you like this complaint to be treated confidentially?

(Please delete as appropriate)

NO

YES

Does this complaint require an urgent response?

(Please delete as appropriate)

**Nature of complaint:** (please include the date, time and place of the incident/complaint and any relevant names of councillors, council employees or others. Continue on a separate sheet if required)

Signature . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Date . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .