



Kents Hill & Monkston Parish Council

Complaints Procedure

This procedure applies to complaints made by the residents of Kents Hill & Monkston Parish Council (including Monkston Park, Brinklow and Kingston) and suppliers, contractors and partners of the Parish Council. Separate procedures apply to Councillors and staff making complaints.

1. Introduction

1.1. This procedure covers routine complaints. A separate policy exists for complaints described as vexatious. Vexatious complaints are defined as unreasonable complaints, enquiries or outcomes that are repeatedly or obsessively pursued.

1.2. Some types of complaint are handled outside this procedure: Financial irregularity are handled by the Council's own auditor / Audit Commission; criminal activity by the Police; member conduct by the standards committee of the principal authority; and employee conduct by internal disciplinary procedure.

You can complain if you feel we have:

- Done something wrong;
- Done something we should not have done;
- Failed to do something we should have done;
- Behaved unfairly or not politely;
- Not carried out a service to an agreed standard;
- Not responded to your request for a service within our stated timescale;

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE:

1. Stage 1 - Verbal

In most cases problems can be sorted out quickly and satisfactory at stage 1. Simply speak directly to the staff involved, telling them why you are dissatisfied or, if you prefer, you can write a letter saying what your complaint is and what you think ought to be done.

Letter addressed to:

Clerk P O Box 6293
Milton Keynes
MK10 1ZG

Email to: clerk@kentshill-monkston-pc.org.uk

2. Stage 2 - Written

2.1 Where you are not satisfied with what has been done or the problem continues, please send a formal written letter/email addressed to the Clerk (or Chair if the complaint is about the Clerk) of the Parish Council, outlining the grounds for your complaint and whether you wish your complaint to be treated confidentially or not.

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- 2.2 The Parish Council will acknowledge your complaint in writing within 3 working days of receipt of the complaint and will confirm who will be dealing with your complaint (NOTE: if the Clerk or Chair are on leave then your complaint will be dealt with within 3 working days following their return).
- 2.3 Depending on the severity of the complaint, the Parish Council will take 10 working days to investigate and respond back to you.
- 2.4 If the complaint concerns the behaviour of a Parish Councillor, rather than a decision of the Parish Council as a whole, then it is likely that the Parish Council will not be able to deal with it, as such complaints are dealt with by the Standards Committee of Milton Keynes City Council. Similarly, complaints about staff behaviour are dealt with by the disciplinary procedure, which is confidential. You will be advised if this is the case in the response.
- 2.5 If you are not happy with the outcome of the complaint, you have the right of appeal.

Management of Complaints

- 2.6. Council will handle complaints in Full Council or nominate councillors who are authorised to deal with complaints but are not involved with the case.
- 2.7. If the complaint is handled by Full Council two nominated councillors should not take part in the proceedings. They will then be available for any appeal, if required.
- 2.8. The Clerk should normally represent the Council through the proceedings, but a nominated councillor may act instead.

3. Stage 3 – Right of Appeal

- 3.1 Send a written letter/email addressed to the Chair of the Parish Council, asking for a further investigation.
- 3.2 The Chair will acknowledge your appeal in writing within 3 working days.
- 3.3 The Chair will carry out, and minute an investigation, and it will be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting whose agenda is published after the letter is received. The decision there will be final. (Agendas for meetings are published on our website and noticeboards within the Parish).

STILL NOT HAPPY?

Contacting the Ombudsman

If you have completed the final stage of our complaints procedure and you are still not happy with the outcome, you can contact: The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) or your local MP.

The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)

The LGO investigates complaints of injustice by local authorities; all investigations are carried out in private.

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For more information visit the LGO's website www.LGO.org.uk

You can write to the Ombudsman at the following address

PO Box 4771
Coventry
CV4
0EH

or you can call the Ombudsman on the following number

0300 0610 614

Member of Parliament

To find out who your MP is please use MK Council's interactive mapping via their website and type in your post code.

Change Control

Version	Nature of Update or Approval	Approved
1	In place by and confirmed in May 2020	18-5-2020
2	Confirmed unchanged 2021	5-5-2021
3	Confirmed unchanged in 2022	30-5-2022
4	Minor clarification of scope following a complaint and Peninsula review in 2023	15-5-2023
5	Reviewed – several updates made	18-7-2024

Review due: May 2025