**WARCOP PARISH COUNCIL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

The following procedure shall apply when efforts by either the Clerk or Chairman to deal with a complaint informally have been unsuccessful.

**Receipt of Complaint**

1. The complainant will be asked to put the complaint about the council’s procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk.

2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk, they should be advised to address it to the Chairman of the Parish Council.

3. The clerk shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Parish Council. This may be the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Parish Council or an extra-ordinary meeting convened for the purpose of answering the complaint; this will be at the Chairman’s discretion. The complainant should also be advised whether the complaint will be treated as confidential.

4. The complainant shall be invited to attend the meeting and to bring with them a representative if they wish.

5. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Parish Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied on. The Parish 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.

**At the Meeting**

6. The Parish Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public (and the press). Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at a Parish Council meeting in public.

7. The Chairman shall introduce everyone and explain the procedure.

8. 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 and then (ii), members.

9. The Clerk or Chairman will have an opportunity to explain the Parish Council’s position and questions may be asked by (i) the complainant and (ii), members.

10. The Clerk/Chairman and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.

11. The complainant shall then be asked to leave the room (and the Clerk if the complaint involves the activities of the Clerk), while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, all parties shall be invited back.

12. The complainant should be given the opportunity to wait for the 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**

13. The decision should be confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken.

***This Complaints Procedure was approved for adoption by Warcop Parish Council at the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council meeting held on 16th May 2024.***