

HUGHENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

**INFORMAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

**POLICY**

November 2013

With effect from 12th September 2013, as RESOLVED at the Council Meeting on  
13th September 2013

## 1. BACKGROUND

- a) Hughenden Parish Council (HPC) has policies that relate to resolving issues between Council and Members of the Public, or between Staff and Members of the Public
- b) This policy attempts to provide a quick and informal route for resolving a dispute between Councillors or between groups of Councillors. It aims to foster mutual respect and courtesy and to develop good working relationships between members and to avoid unnecessary formal complaints
- c) It recognises that in any event one or more of the parties may apply to the Monitoring Officer at Wycombe District Council (WDC) for further assistance

## 2. CODE OF CONDUCT

- a) HPC's Code of Conduct includes the following clauses:
- b) You must (2.5) not misconduct yourself in a manner which is likely to bring the authority into disrepute
- c) You must (2.6) use your position as a Member in the public interest and not for personal advantage
- d) You must (2.7) accord with the authority's reasonable rules on the use of public resources for private and political purposes

## 3. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

- a) Councillors shall have regard to the existing Member Code of Conduct as setting clear ground rules on their conduct and behaviour
- b) It will be expected that before the procedure is implemented that the members involved in the dispute/conflict will have met to identify specifically what the difference is and to discuss the matter in a meaningful way with a view to resolving the difference (where this is reasonably practical)
- c) In the event that a difference cannot be resolved the Clerk shall be informed as soon as possible
- d) The Clerk shall convene a meeting, ideally within 5 days, with the members who are involved in the dispute and the Council Chairman. In the event that either party considers the Chairman to not be suitable or if he is not available, the parties should agree on another Councillor to chair the meeting
- e) Any meetings shall encourage a full and frank exchange of views in a professional manner in an endeavour to resolve the conflict
- f) Either Member may wish to seek the advice and/or involvement of WDC's Monitoring/Deputy Monitoring Officer at any time during the process
- g) In the unlikely event of the matter not be resolved as above, the matter may be referred to the Monitoring Officer to try and break the deadlock. The Monitoring Officer may consult the Chairman of the WDC Standards Committee at this stage to determine whether further action should be taken