**PENSHURST PARISH COUNCIL**

**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE – 21 February 2024**

Penshurst Parish Council is committed to working for the benefit of the people who live or work in the Parish. If you are unhappy with the provision of service you receive from the council, or have other concerns in relation to the council, this Complaints Procedure sets out how you may complain to the council and how we will endeavour to resolve your complaint.

This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.

This Complaints Procedures does not apply to complaints relating to council employees, or between employees and the council. These matters are dealt with under the Council’s Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.

Complaints against councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council and, if a complaint is received against a councillor, it will be referred to the Standards Committee of Sevenoaks District Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of Sevenoaks District Council.

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.

The Council will provide an Open Session in order that members of the public can take part. 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 exceptional grounds to consider this necessary and the special process set out in the Standing Orders is followed.

You may make your complaint about the council’s procedures or administration to the Clerk. You may do this in by writing to or emailing the Clerk. 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. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Chairman of the Council who will report to the Council who will deal with the issue.

The Clerk or the Chairman will notify you within 20 working days of the outcome of your complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take as a result of your complaint. (In exceptional cases the 20 working days timescale may have to be extended. If it is, you will be kept informed).