



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

This procedure is to deal with complaints made about the administration of the council or about its procedures. Complaints about an employee of the council should be dealt with as an employment matter; complaints about a councillor are subject to the jurisdiction of the Monitoring Officer.

1. Receipt of Complaint

1.1 If a complaint is made regarding the council's procedures or administration is made verbally, the Clerk may be able to deal with it there and then. If so, then the matter shall be finalised by a report to the full Council at its next meeting.

1.2 If the Clerk is not able to satisfy the complaint as envisaged in 1.1:

- a) If not in writing, the Clerk shall request that it shall be put in writing (to include email);
- b) If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk, they may be advised to put it to the Chairman of the Council.
- c) The Clerk shall send to the complainant an acknowledgement of his/her written complaint, together with a copy of the Complaints Procedure and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council or by the committee established for the purposes of hearing complaints.
- d) The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them a representative if they wish.
- e) Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely on at the meeting.

2. Dealing with the Complaint

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

2.2 Complaints Procedure

At the meeting:

- a) Chairman to introduce everyone
- b) Chairman to explain procedure
- c) Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint
- d) Members to ask any question of the complainant
- e) If relevant, Clerk or Chairman to explain council's position
- f) Members to ask any questions of the Clerk
- g) Clerk and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order)
- h) Clerk and complainant to be asked to leave the room while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. (If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties to be invited back.

i) Clerk and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when decision will be made.

3. The Decision

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

This policy is reviewed by the Clerk every two years or earlier if there are changes to relevant legislation and submitted to the full council