

Complaints Procedure

The Parish Council is required to have a procedure in place for dealing with complaints about the administration of its affairs. The code of practice detailed below is aimed at those situations where a complaint has been made about the administration of the council or about its procedures.

Before the Meeting

If a complaint about the Council's procedures or administration is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk, they should seek to satisfy the complaint fully. If that fails, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt.

The clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the council or by the committee established for the purposes of hearing complaints.

The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish.

7 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 at the meeting.

At the Meeting

The 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 the council meeting in public. The procedure will be as follows: -

- Chairman to introduce everyone.
- Chairman to explain procedure.
- Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint.
- Members to ask any question of the complainant.
- If relevant, clerk or other proper officer to explain the council's position.
- Members to ask any question of the clerk or other proper officer.
- Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).
- Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be asked to leave 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).
- Clerk or other proper officer and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when decision will be made.

After the Meeting

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

Complaints about Employees

Complaints about an employee of the council are dealt with as an employment matter. The complainant can be assured that the matter will be dealt with internally as such and appropriate action taken as required.

Complaints about Councillors

Complaints about a councillor are subject to the jurisdiction of the Standards Board. Complainants are advised to contact the appropriate body directly or the Monitoring Officer at Chorley Council for further information.