

The procedure detailed below relates to complaints received against the Council as a body and not to individual members or employees of the Council. It refers to the handling of a matter and the process to which the decision was taken, and not the decision itself.

Prior to a meeting

1. The Complainant should put their complaint in writing to the clerk, unless a different officer has been nominated by the Council (ie should the complaint be in relation to the Clerk).
2. Should this not be applicable or the complainant does not want to put their complaint in writing to the Clerk or nominated officer, then s/he should address their complaint to the Chairman of the Parish Council.
3. Once the complaint has been received in writing the Clerk/nominated officer/chairman will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and reply with details of when the matter will be discussed by the Council. Should the issue be of a confidential matter the complainant should be advised that it will be discussed in a confidential manner and the necessary steps will be taken by the Council to ensure that that details remain that way.
4. The complainant shall be invited to attend a meeting and be advised that they can bring a representative should they wish too.
5. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied on. The council shall provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting and shall do so at least three working days prior to the meeting to allow the claimant the opportunity to consider the material in good time for the meeting.

During the meeting

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6. It shall be decided if it is necessary to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the duration of the complaint discussion
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7. The chairman should introduce everyone and explain the procedure so that everyone is aware of all parties and the correct procedure to take.
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8. The complainant, or their representative, should outline the grounds for their complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by the clerk or other nominated officer and then any other members should the Council feel necessary.
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9. The clerk or other nominated officer will have an opportunity to explain the council's position and questions may be asked by the complainant and then other council members.
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10. The clerk or other nominated officer and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position and make any final statements.
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11. The clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should 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 shall be invited back to clarify before being asked to leave the room again.
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12. The clerk or other nominated officer and 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. Within seven working days of the meeting, a decision should be reached and confirmed in writing to the complainant together with details of any further action to be taken.

Review by Independent Adjudicator

If a complainant is still not satisfied, the matter would be referred to an independent Adjudicator who would review all the information relating to the complaint and make recommendations as to any further action which the Council should take in the matter.

All complaints will be assessed on their own merit.