

OUT RAWCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

General guidance

Complaints about an **employee** of the council will be 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 a **councillor** are now subject to the jurisdiction of the Standards Committee at Wyre Borough Council. Complainants are advised to contact the Committee direct for further information.

This document relates to situations where a complaint is been made about the **administration** of the council or about its **procedures**. It is designed for those complaints that cannot be satisfied by less formal measures or explanations provided to the complainant by the clerk or other proper officer or chairman.

The clerk or proper officer may represent the position of the council at a meeting. If the clerk or proper officer is putting forward the justification for the action or procedure complained of, he or she will not advise the council.

At all times, the rules of natural justice will apply. In other words, all parties should be treated fairly and the process will be reasonable, accessible and transparent.

CODE OF PRACTICE

Before the Meeting

1. The complainant shall be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the clerk or other nominated proper officer.
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the clerk or other proper officer, they may be advised to put it to the chairman of the council.
3. 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.
4. The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish.
5. 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 at the meeting.

At the Meeting

- 6. 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.
- 7. Chairman to introduce everyone.
- 8. Chairman to explain procedure.
- 9. Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint.
- 10. Members to ask any question of the complainant.
- 11. If relevant, clerk or other proper officer to explain the council’s position.
- 12. Members to ask any question of the clerk or other proper officer.
- 13. Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).
- 14. 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).
- 15. Clerk or other proper officer and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when decision will be made.

After the Meeting

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

Adoption

Document adopted by the Council at minute reference

Signed on behalf of the CouncilChairman

Date