



PROCEDURE FOR USE IN COMPLAINTS OR GRIEVANCE AGAINST THE COUNCIL AND/OR ITS EMPLOYEES

This procedure does not cover complaints about the conduct of an individual Member of the Parish Council. Such complaints should be dealt with according to the Code of Conduct, or if that fails to resolve the complaint, referred to St Helens Borough Council and if necessary, to the Standards Board.

- 1.** The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk or other nominated officer. If the complaint is only notified orally to a Councillor, or to the Clerk to the Council, a written record of the complaint will be made, noting the name and contact details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint.
 - 2.** If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk or other nominated officer, he or she should be advised to address it to the chairman of the Council.
 - 3.** The Clerk or other nominated officer shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council.
 - 4.** The complainant shall be invited to attend a meeting and to bring with them a representative if 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 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 promptly, allowing the claimant the opportunity to read the material in good time for 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.** The chairman should introduce everyone and explain the procedure.
 - 8.** The complainant (or representative) should outline the grounds for complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by (i) the Clerk or other nominated officer and then (ii) members.
 - 9.** The Clerk or other nominated officer will have an opportunity to explain the Council's position and questions may be asked by (i) the complainant and (ii) members.
 - 10.** The Clerk or other nominated officer and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.

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.

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

In the event of complaint/grievance or disciplinary matter by a Councillor or an employee of the Council, the matter will be heard by the Personnel Committee.

The committee will listen to all sides of the arguments or statements in the event of a complaint against anyone involved within the Parish Council and the Employees.

May 2019