

CHURCHILL AND BLAKEDOWN PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. The following document outlines the procedure adopted for dealing with complaints about the Council's administration or its procedures. Complaints about a policy decision made by the Council will be referred to the Council, or relevant committee, as appropriate, for consideration.
2. This procedure does not cover complaints about the conduct of a member of the Parish Council outside his/her Parish Council duties and responsibilities.
3. If a complaint about procedures, administration or the actions of any of the Council's employees is 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.
4. If a complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk, s/he shall be advised to put it to the Chairperson.
5. The complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk to the Council, or to the Chairperson. The recipient will acknowledge receipt and specify the date by which the complaint will be dealt with. Refusal to put the complaint in writing does not necessarily mean that the complaint cannot be investigated, but it is easier to deal with if it is in writing.
6. On receipt of a written complaint the Clerk or Chairperson shall try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This will not be done without first notifying any person complained about and giving him or her an opportunity to comment. Efforts will be made to resolve the complaint at this stage.
7. Where the Clerk receives a written complaint about his or her own actions s/he shall forthwith refer the complaint to the Chairperson.
8. Where the Chairperson receives a written complaint about his or her own actions s/he shall forthwith refer the complaint to the Council.
9. Matters relating to grievance or disciplinary proceedings that are taking, or are likely to take place, will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Grievance and Disciplinary procedures.
10. The Clerk or Chairperson shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
11. The Clerk or Chairperson shall bring any written complaint which has not been settled to the next meeting of the Council and the Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the

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complaint will be considered and offer the complainant the opportunity to explain the complaint orally.

12. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
13. Any decision taken in relation to the complaint shall be communicated as soon as possible to the complainant in writing, together with details of any action to be taken.
14. A Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues arise on which further advice is necessary. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received and considered.
15. A summary of complaints received during the year will be included in the Annual Report.