

Babraham Parish Council

Complaints Procedure Policy

Complaints against an employee of the Council

Complaints against an employee of the council i.e. the Clerk will be dealt with as an employment matter. The matter will be dealt with internally and appropriate action taken as required.

Complaints against a Councillor

Complaints against a councillor are subject to the jurisdiction of the Standards Board. Complainants will be advised to contact the Board directly or the Monitoring Officer for the further information. Contact details may be given to the complainant by the Council.

Complaints against the administration of the council or its procedures

In the first instance an attempt will be made to satisfy complaints by less formal measures or explanations provided to the complainant by the Clerk or Chairman of the council.

In investigating a complaint all parties will be treated fairly and the process will reasonably, accessibly and transparent.

The Clerk may represent the position of the council. If the clerk puts forward the justification for action or procedure complained of, he or she should not advise the council or committee.

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
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk, they shall be advised to put it to the Chairman of the council
3. The Clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint
4. The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish
5. 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 all documentation upon which they wish to reply at the meeting.

At the meeting:

6. The council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and 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 to explain the council's position.
12. Members to ask any question of the Clerk
13. Clerk and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).
14. Clerk 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 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.
17. If complainants are not satisfied they should take their complaint to the Standards Board.