



**GREAT
SANKEY**
PARISH
COUNCIL

Complaints Policy

Updated: January 2019

Code of Practice for Handling Complaints

1. Introduction

This code of practice covers complaints made against individuals, either Councillors or Parish Council staff, or about the administration of the council or about its procedures.

2. Complaint Procedures

2.1 Complaint about a Councillor

Complaints about a Councillor are subject to the jurisdiction of the Standards Committee. Complainants will be advised to contact the appropriate body directly or the Monitoring Officer for further information and will be given the relevant contact information to do so.

2.2 Complaint about a Parish Council Employee

Complaints about an employee of the council (e.g. the clerk) should be dealt with as an employment matter and therefore referred to the Chair of the Employment Group who will take appropriate action. The complainant can be assured that the matter will be dealt with internally as such and appropriate action taken as required.

2.3 Complaint about the Parish Council

A complaint about the administration or procedure of the Parish Council will be dealt with in the first instance by the Clerk, other proper officer or Chair of the Council. If the complainant is unsatisfied with the explanation or response provided it will then be referred to the full Council at their next meeting and the following actions taken:

- The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the clerk or other nominated proper officer. 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.
- The clerk shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 7 working days and advise the complainant that the complaint will be referred to the next meeting of the Parish Council when a committee will be established for the purposes of hearing the complaint.
- The membership of the committee will be open to any Councillor, avoiding as far as possible any Councillor involved in the complaint.
- The complainant will be told the date of the next Parish Council meeting and that the Committee, when set up, will deal with the complaint within the 20 working days following its establishment.
- The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting of the committee and bring with them such representative as they wish.

- 7 clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the committee 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.
- The committee should report its conclusions to the next full council meeting after the case has been dealt with.