

CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to describe procedures for handling complaints against the Council's procedures or administration and those directed at Council members or employees

B. COMPLAINTS AGAINST PROCEDURES & ADMINISTRATION

Before the Meeting

1. The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk to the Council or other nominated 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 in writing to the Council's Mayor.
3. The Clerk (or Mayor, in the case of 2. above) shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council or by a committee established for the purpose of considering complaints.
4. The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representatives 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 that they wish to refer to 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. The Mayor (or appointed chairman of the meeting) to introduce everyone.
8. The Mayor (or chairman) to explain the procedure to be followed (paragraphs 9 to 16 below)
9. The complainant (or representative) to outline the grounds for complaint.
10. Members to ask any question of the complainant.

11. If relevant, the Clerk or other proper officer to explain the Council's decision.
12. Members to ask any questions of the Clerk or other proper officer.
13. The Clerk or other proper officer and the complainant, in that order, to be offered the opportunity of the last word.
14. The Clerk or other proper and complainant to 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 will be invited back.
15. The Clerk or other proper officer and the complainant to return to hear the decision or to be advised when a decision will be made.

After the Meeting

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

C. COMPLAINTS AGAINST MEMBERS

17. For potential complaints against any member of the Council, complainants shall be advised to address their complaint direct to the Standards Board or to the Monitoring Officer.
18. The Clerk of the Council shall make contact details available to complainants.

D. COMPLAINTS AGAINST EMPLOYEES

19. For potential complaints against any employee of the Council, complainants shall be advised to address their complaints in writing to the Council's Mayor.
20. Should the Mayor consider that there are sufficient grounds for complaint, they shall be considered at a special meeting of the full Council and the public and the press excluded therefrom.
21. If the grounds for complaint are found to have been made, by resolution of the full Council, the matter will be settled in accordance with the ACAS code or practice relating to discipline at work.