



# Kingsclere Parish Council Complaints Procedure

Reviewed at the OM April 2023 and adopted at the Annual Meeting of the Council 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023

In order to ensure the good name of the council, it is essential that, in the event of a complaint about the council and its work, there be a proper procedure for dealing satisfactorily with it. Where parishioners have a complaint about the work of the council, councillor or any of its employees, the following procedures shall be followed.

1. Where the complaint relates to the work of any employee of the council (such as the clerk), the matter will be dealt with as an employment matter. Assurance will be given that the matter will be dealt with rapidly and that appropriate action will be taken
2. Where the complaint relates to the work of a councillor, the Standards Board will adjudicate. Complainants should be advised to contact this body directly, or through the Monitoring Officer at Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.
3. This procedure relates to the work of the council and is intended to set up a transparent, standard procedure under which all complaints can be dealt with, when the usual informal methods (such as explanation by the Clerk or the Chairman) have not been successful. In this way, any complainant can feel confident that their complaint has been properly and thoroughly considered.
4. At all times, the rules of natural justice will apply. In other words, all parties should be treated fairly and the process should be reasonable, accessible and transparent.

## **CODE OF PRACTICE**

### **When a complaint is first made**

1. The complainant should 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, s/he may be advised to put it to the Chairman of the council.
3. The receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged, and the complainant informed as to when the matter will be considered by the council or the committee established for the purposes of hearing complaints. (Usually the PPP Committee)
4. The complainant will 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 any documentation upon which they wish to rely 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 next Full Council Meeting in public.

7. The Chairman will introduce everyone and explain the procedure
8. The complainant (or representative) will outline the grounds for complaint.
9. Members of the council or committee may then ask any question of the complainant.
10. If relevant, the Clerk will explain the council's position. N.B. If the Clerk is representing the views of the council at the meeting, it is important that they do not offer advice to the council or committee.
11. Members of the council or committee may ask any question of the clerk.
12. The Clerk and then the complainant to be offered opportunity of last word.
13. The Clerk and the complainant to be asked to leave room while committee 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).
14. Both Clerk and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when decision will be made.

### **After the Meeting**

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

### ***Procedure Adoption History***

*As adopted at the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2021*

*Adopted at the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022*