

# Belbroughton and Fairfield Parish Council

## Complaints Procedure

1. If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a Local Councillor or to the Clerk and they cannot satisfy the complainant fully, then the complainant shall be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk and the complainant assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt.
2. If a complainant prefers not to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk, s/he shall be advised to put it to the Chairman.
3. On receipt of a written complaint the Clerk or Chairman, as the case may be, shall (except where the complaint is about his/her own actions) try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant, but shall not do so in respect of a complaint about the behaviour of the Clerk or Councillor without first notifying the person complained of and giving him/her an opportunity for comment on the manner in which it is intended to attempt to settle the complaint.
4. *Where the Clerk receives a written complaint about his or her own actions s/he shall forthwith refer the complaint to the Chairman; similarly if the Chairman receives a complaint about his or her own actions it should be referred to the Clerk.*
5. The Clerk or Chairman shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
6. The Clerk or Chairman 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 complaint will be considered, and the complainant shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally.
7. *If the complaint relates to the actions of a Councillor then that Councillor will take no part in the consideration of the complaint.*
8. 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.
9. As soon as may be after the decision has been made it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
10. The Council will defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary from CALC or other source of legal advice. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.
11. The Council will involve the District Council's Standards Committee to review a complaint against a Councillor where it is felt appropriate.
12. A summary of any complaints received during the year will be included in the Annual Report.

**4<sup>th</sup> May 2020**