

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS ABOUT ADMINISTRATION OR PROCEDURE

Adopted on 10th January 2006

Before the Meeting

- 1 The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Chairman, Clerk or other nominated proper 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 to the Chairman of the Council.
- 3 The Clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and, if unable to settle the matter directly with the complainant, shall advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council or by the committee established for the purposes of hearing complaints.
- 4 The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring such representative as the complainant wishes.
- 5 Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which the complainant wishes 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 Council meeting in public.
- 7 The Chairman shall introduce everyone.
- 8 The Chairman shall explain procedure.
- 9 The Complainant (or representative) will outline the grounds for the complaint.
- 10 The Members shall ask any question of the complainant.
- 11 If relevant, the Clerk or other proper officer shall explain the Council's position.
- 12 The Members shall ask any question of the Clerk or other proper officer.
- 13 The Clerk or other proper officer will be offered the opportunity of a last word.

- 14 The complainant will then be offered the opportunity of a last word.
- 15 The Clerk or other proper officer and the Complainant will 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 are to be invited back).
- 16 The Clerk or other proper officer and the Complainant will return to hear the decision, or to be advised when a decision will be made.

After the Meeting

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