

Brereton Parish Council

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This procedure is not meant to be a substitute for Cheshire East's Complaints Procedure for dealing with Code of Conduct Complaints but rather alongside or an alternative and does not prevent the complainant from using either or both.

Before the Meeting

1. The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures, administration or the conduct of a Member in writing to the clerk or if the complaint is about the Clerk – to the Chairperson
2. The clerk or other nominated officer shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the council. All complaints will be treated as confidential.
3. The complainant shall be invited to attend a meeting and to bring with them a representative if they wish.
4. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied on. The council shall provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting and shall do so promptly, allowing the claimant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.

At the Meeting

5. 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.
6. The chairman should introduce everyone and explain the procedure.
7. The complainant (or their representative) should outline the grounds for complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by (i) the clerk or other nominated officer and then (ii), members.
8. The clerk or other nominated officer will have an opportunity to explain the council's position and questions may be asked by (i) the complainant (ii), members.
9. The clerk or other nominated officer and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.

10. The clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be asked to leave the room while members decide whether the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, *both* parties shall be invited back.
11. The clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be given the opportunity to wait for the decision but if the decision is unlikely to be finalised on that day they should be advised when the decision is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them.

After the Meeting

12. The decision should be confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken.
13. If the complainant does not accept the decision they can of course use the Cheshire East's Complaints Procedure. The complainant can only use the Cheshire East Complaints Procedure for complaints under the code of conduct about members individual conduct.