



# **TOPPESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**



## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### ***For service users or members of the public.***

(Complaints about staff are treated as a personnel matter, complaints about a member should be addressed to the Monitoring Officer of Braintree District Council, which is responsible for upholding standards for Members of the District Council and also for Members of Parish and Town Councils within the District).

If a complaint cannot be satisfied in an informal way by the Clerk, or the Chairman, then the following Code of Practice will be adhered to regarding complaints about the Council's procedures or administration:

1. The person making the complaint will be asked to write to the Clerk, giving full details of the complaint. If they do not wish to write to the Clerk, they may write to the Chairman.
2. All formal complaints will be heard at full council meeting, which if practicable, will be the next meeting after receiving the complaint.
3. Within five working days of receiving the complaint, the Clerk will acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the Council will consider their complaint.
4. The complainant shall be invited to attend the meeting and may bring a representative with them. If the Council, after seeking the view of the complainant, consider it necessary, the matter may, by resolution of the Council be heard in private session.
5. Copies of any documentation relating to the complaint should be made available to the Council and the complainant, seven working days prior to the meeting.

## **At the Meeting.**

The Council shall decide whether the circumstances of the complaint warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint will be announced at the meeting in public.

1. The Chairman will introduce everyone and explain the Council's procedure on handling a complaint.
2. The complainant or their representative will be asked to outline the grounds for complaint.
3. Councillors may ask the complainant any questions.
4. If relevant, the Clerk to explain the Council's position.
5. Councillors may ask the Clerk any questions.
6. First the Clerk, and then the complainant, will be offered the chance to have a final say.
7. The Clerk and the complainant to be asked to leave the room whilst the Council decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made.
8. The Clerk and the complainant to return to the meeting to hear the decision that has been made, or to be advised when the decision will be made.

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