

# **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

## **WINTERBORNE WHITECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL**

1. The complainant should be asked to put any complaint about the Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk, the complainant should be advised to address it to the Chairman of the Council.
2. If the complaint is about a member's failure to comply with the Code of Conduct, the matter will be directed to the Monitoring Officer at Dorset Council. If the complaint is about the Clerk, the Council will pursue through its internal disciplinary process. If criminality is suspected, the Police will be contacted.
3. The Clerk shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council and whether the complaint will be treated as confidential.
4. The complainant shall be invited to attend a meeting and to bring with them a representative if they wish.
5. Seven clear working days before 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.
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 and explain the procedure.
8. The complainant (or representative) should outline the grounds for complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by (i), the Clerk and then (ii), members.
9. The Clerk shall explain the Council's position and questions may be asked by (i), the complainant and (ii), members.
10. The Clerk and then the complainant shall be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.
11. The Clerk and the complainant shall 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 shall be invited back.
12. The Clerk 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.
13. The decision shall be confirmed in writing within seven working days together with any details of action to be taken.

Adopted by Winterborne Whitechurch Parish Council  
14<sup>th</sup> May 2024