

DRAUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS

The Council will handle complaints in line with the following procedures, which have been designed in line with NALC guidance and model procedures (attached).

As a first step, in the event of any dissatisfaction with the Council, members of the local community, including local electors, may at any time ask for an appointment with any member of the Council, or with the Clerk, to discuss the matter, or to attempt to resolve a problem. If appropriate, the matter in question will be placed on the agenda for debate at the next Council meeting, and the member of the local community raising it may attend and address the Council direct.

If these measures do not result in a satisfactory outcome, and the member of the local community wishes to make a formal complaint, the following complaints procedures may be followed:

1. A formal written complaint letter must be sent to the Clerk, or, if the complaint involves the Clerk, to the Chairman of the Council.
2. The Clerk (or Chairman as the case may be) will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within three days, will send the complainant a copy of these procedures and will ascertain whether the complainant wishes the matter to be treated confidentially.
3. The formal complaint will be considered at the next Council meeting. If the matter is to be treated confidentially, members of the public and press will be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of this agenda item.
4. At the meeting, the Council will appoint three members to a sub-committee with responsibility to continue dealing with the complaint, if necessary, and will appoint an additional member to the sub-committee who will be independent of any involvement with the Council and will take the role of independent impartial arbitrator.
5. The Clerk will write to the complainant explaining the outcome of the Council's consideration of the complaint and explaining how to take matters further if necessary.
6. If the complainant wishes to take matters further, a meeting of the sub-committee will be convened for the purpose of investigating the complaint further.
7. Complainants will be asked by letter to attend the sub-committee meeting and may bring a friend or relative with them if they wish. Complainants will be asked to provide any new information or supporting evidence to the sub-committee and will be invited to make verbal representation to the meeting. The sub-committee meeting will proceed in line with the guidelines set out in the attached NALC model procedures, and otherwise in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.
8. The conclusions reached by the sub-committee will be reported to the next meeting of the Council.
9. Minutes of the sub-committee meeting will be kept and will be available to all parties concerned with the complaint investigation within 3 days of the Council meeting to which the sub-committee reports.

10. Following consideration of the conclusions and recommendations, if any, of the sub-committee, the decision of the Council will be communicated to the complainant within 2 days of the Council meeting. The Council will give reasons for its decision, together with details of any action to be taken. This decision will be final.

A full record of formal written complaints made to the Council will be kept. The record will include information on:

- the nature of the complaint
- how the complaint was dealt with
- actions taken or proposed to be taken as a result of the complaint.

These procedures will be reviewed annually as part of the Council's Publication Scheme at the Annual Council Meeting, and will be made available on the Council's website.