

Chawton Parish Council

PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS

This Complaints Procedure is for anyone may have a complaint about Chawton Parish Council's administration and procedures.

1. Complaints should be submitted in writing to the Clerk and must include the following:
 - The nature of the complaint in detail.
 - The subject of the complaint e.g. Member, Clerk etc.
 - The action required,
2. In all cases the Clerk will send a copy of the complaint to the Chair (or the Vice Chair if the complaint is against the Chair).
3. The Chair (or Vice Chair if the complaint is against the Chair) in consultation with the Clerk will contact the parties concerned in an effort to reach an amicable solution to the complaint.
4. A copy of the written complaint will be circulated by the Clerk to all members of the Council and to the subject of the complaint.
5. If an amicable solution cannot be reached by the above means a meeting of the Full Council will be convened as soon as is reasonable practicable.
6. A meeting of the Council will take place on a date and time and place to be determined by the Chair in consultation with the Clerk. The quorum for a meeting will be three members providing that none of the three are subject to complaint.
7. If possible the complaint will be dealt with by way of consideration of written representations. If this is not possible both parties to the complaint will be invited to attend in person and they may be accompanied by an advisor/representative.
8. Where the complaint is heard in person rather than by written representations, the following procedures shall apply:
 - The Chair will invite the complainant to state in full the details of the complaint.
 - The subject of the complaint will be invited to question the complainant.
 - The members of the Council will be allowed to question the complainant.
 - The subject will be invited to answer the complaint.
 - The complainant will be invited to question the subject.
 - The members of the Council will be allowed to question the subject.
 - The complainant will sum up.
 - The subject of the complaint will sum up.
 - The subject and the complainant will withdraw

- The Council will consider the evidence and come to a decision in respect of the complaint. Where the complaint is upheld in full or in part the Council will recommend a remedy to the complaint.
- The complainant and the subject of the complaint will be invited back into the meeting and advised of the decision.

9. The Council shall have full details of any complaint and the manner in which it has been dealt with via the Clerk for report at the next full meeting of the Parish Council.

10. The Council shall at its absolute discretion deal with any matters not specifically covered by the procedure but relevant to its role.

11. If the complaint is against a member of the Council, the Council may defer dealing with the complaint to the District Council's Standards' Committee.