

## *Much Hoole Parish Council*

### **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Please note that this procedure relates to complaints about council administration and procedures. Complaints about individual councillors must be made to the monitoring officer at South Ribble Borough Council. Complaints about the Clerk will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedures of the Parish Council. On receipt of any complaint efforts will be made to resolve the issue immediately and only in the event of a satisfactory solution not being found will the following procedure be used.

#### **Before the Meeting**

1. The complainant will be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the clerk or other nominated officer.
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the clerk or other nominated officer, he or she will be advised to address it to the chairman of the council.
3. The clerk or other nominated officer will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the council or by the committee established for the purposes of hearing complaints. The complainant will also be advised whether the complaint will be treated as confidential or whether, for example, notice of it will be given in the usual way.
4. The complainant will be invited to attend a meeting and to bring with them a representative if they wish.
5. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant will provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied on. The council will provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting and will do so promptly, allowing the claimant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.

#### **At the Meeting**

6. The council will 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 will introduce everyone and explain the procedure.
8. The complainant (or representative) will outline the grounds for complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by (i) the clerk or other nominated officer and then (ii), members.
9. 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 and (ii), members.
10. The clerk or other nominated officer and then the complainant will be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.
11. The clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant will 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 will be invited back.
12. The clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant will be given the opportunity to wait for the decision but if the decision is unlikely to be finalised on that day they will be advised when the decision is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them.

### **After the Meeting**

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