

FEERING PARISH COUNCIL

Feering Community Centre · Coggeshall Road · Feering · Colchester · CO5 9QB
Telephone / Fax: (01376) 572882 (24 hour Answerphone)
Email: clerk@feeringparishcouncil.wanadoo.co.uk

Procedures for handling a complaint from a service user or member of the public

Complaints about an employee of the council will be dealt with as an employment matter. Assure the complainant that the matter will be dealt with internally as such and appropriate action taken as required.

Complaints about a councillor are now subject to the jurisdiction of the Standards Board, and complainants should be advised to contact them directly or the Monitoring Officer at Braintree District Council for further information.

The following procedures therefore relate to those situations where a complaint has been made about the administration of the council or about its procedures. Their objective is to ensure that all complaints are dealt with objectively and to ensure that complainants can feel satisfied that at least their grievance has been properly and fully considered.

Complaints Procedure – Feering Parish Council

1. Firstly, attempt to resolve the issue through face to face discussions with the Clerk. If this fails, ask the complainant to put their complaint in writing addressed to the Clerk. If the complainant does not wish to put their complaint to the clerk, advise them to address it to the Chairman.
2. The Clerk acknowledges receipt of the complaint and advises when the matter will be resolved by the council.
3. Invite the complainant to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish. Advise the complainant to provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting 7 clear working days prior to the meeting. The council shall similarly provide them with copies of any documentation they wish to rely upon at the meeting
4. At the meeting, the council should consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision of the complaint is announced at the council meeting in public
5. The Chairman introduces everyone and explains the procedures which will be followed to resolve the issue
6. The complainant (or their representative) is invited to outline the grounds for their complaint
7. Members ask questions of the complainant to clarify their understanding of the issue
8. If relevant, the clerk (or other proper officer) explains the council's position
9. Members ask any questions of the clerk or other proper officer to clarify their understanding of the issue.
10. The Clerk and the complainant are offered the opportunity of having one last word
11. Ask the Clerk and the complainant to leave the room whilst Members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made (if a point a clarification is necessary both parties will be invited back together)

12. When invited, the Clerk and the complainant return to hear the decision or to be advised when the decision will be made
13. After the meeting, the decision is confirmed in writing within seven working days, together with details of any action to be taken.
14. The Council should keep full documentation of the complaint and the steps taken to resolve it.