

## **Complaints Procedure**

**(including complaints about services devolved to the Parish Council)**

### **Informal Complaint**

Informal complaints on straightforward matters can be made by contacting the Parish Clerk:

- by email to [clerk@chearsley-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@chearsley-pc.gov.uk) or
- by telephone on 01844 202107

Complaints should be made through the Clerk rather than through individual Councillors who may not be in a position to deal with them.

It is expected that most complaints can be resolved quickly and amicably using this route. However, if this informal approach does not resolve the matter, or if the complaint is of a more serious nature, the Formal Complaint procedure should be used.

### **Formal Complaint**

The Clerk is responsible for managing the Formal Complaints procedure. If a Formal Complaint is being made against the Clerk, this procedure should be followed but the complaint should be made to the Chairman (or in their absence, the Vice-Chairman) instead of the Clerk.

The email addresses are:

- Chairman: [nick-richards@chearsley-pc.gov.uk](mailto:nick-richards@chearsley-pc.gov.uk)
- Vice-chairman: [karen.vear@chearsley-pc.gov.uk](mailto:karen.vear@chearsley-pc.gov.uk)

A Formal Complaint must be submitted in writing or by email, providing as much detail as possible and appropriate. The Clerk will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within three working days. The Clerk will carry out an initial investigation, making reference to the Chairman, Vice Chairman or other Councillors as deemed appropriate having regard to the nature of the complaint and, within ten working days, will provide the complainant with an update or a suggested resolution. If the complainant is satisfied with the resolution, the complaint will be closed. The Clerk will report the complaint to the Council. The complaint will be recorded in the next Council meeting minutes but the details of the complainant will not be recorded.

Where the complaint cannot be resolved in this way, it will be included as an agenda item for the next Parish Council meeting where it will be considered and, if possible, a decision made or course of action agreed. The Clerk will request any further information from the complainant as deemed necessary to enable full consideration by the Parish Council.

All requested supporting information should be provided by the complainant to the Clerk at least ten

working days before the meeting and, if this cannot be achieved, the Parish Council reserves the right to postpone discussion of the matter to its subsequent meeting. If the nature or complexity of the complaint precludes discussion at the next meeting, or if all relevant and necessary information cannot be gathered in time for the meeting, the complainant will be notified.

The complainant will be advised of the date of the meeting at which the complaint will be discussed. The complainant may attend and will have the opportunity of speaking.

The Parish Council will decide whether the complaint warrants the exclusion of the public and press while the matter is being considered. However, the nature of the complaint and resolution action taken will be included in the minutes of the meeting although the name of the complainant will not be disclosed unless he/she instructs otherwise.

If a complaint cannot be decided at that Parish Council meeting, the complainant will be kept informed of the Parish Council's actions and any progress that has been made.

The Clerk or the Chairman of the Council will notify the complainant within twenty working days of the outcome of the complaint and what action (if any) the Council proposes to take.

Chearsley Parish Council will do its utmost to settle complaints and satisfy complainants and their decision on the required course of action is final.

## **Complaints against Councillors**

This policy does not cover complaints against individual Councillors. A complaint against a Parish Councillor, in relation to Code of Conduct matter, should be sent by post or email to:

The Monitoring Officer  
Buckinghamshire Council  
The Gateway, Gatehouse Road  
Aylesbury, HP19 8FF

### **Key Submission Rules**

- **Must be in writing:** Only written complaints are officially accepted and considered.
- **No anonymity:** You must provide your name and contact details. Anonymous submissions are not investigated unless there is an exceptional public interest. You can request that your identity remain confidential from the councillor, but this is only granted under exceptional circumstances.
- **Use the correct form:** The council provides a specific "**Annex 1B**" **Complaint Form** designed for parish councillor complaints, which can be downloaded directly from the official [Buckinghamshire Council Website](#)

## **Review**

This document will be reviewed, and updated if required, annually.

Update date: May 2026