



# Prestbury Parish Council

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

Any organisation may, from time to time, get things wrong or act in a way that is considered unacceptable by other organisations, contacts, local residents, sub-contractors or whoever. It is important that an organisation is open to complaints, has a proper procedure to deal with them and reviews activities where appropriate to prevent a reoccurrence.

### COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This policy sets out procedures for dealing with complaints that anyone may have about Prestbury Parish Council's administration, procedures or its corporate behaviour or the behaviour of individuals. Complaints against decisions made by the Council shall be referred back to the Council or individual committee as appropriate.

If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a councillor or the clerk and they cannot satisfy the complainant fully and immediately, the complainant shall be asked to put the complaint in writing to the clerk and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly but with an initial acknowledgement of its receipt within five working days.

If a complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the clerk, he or she will be advised to put it to the chairman of the Parish Council.

On receipt of a written complaint, the clerk or chairman, as the case may be, shall (except where the complaint is about his or her own actions) try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant but shall not do so in respect of a complaint about the behaviour of the clerk or councillor without first notifying the person complained of and giving them an opportunity for comment on the manner in which it is intended to attempt to settle the complaint.

Where the clerk or chairman receives a written complaint about his or her own actions,

he or she shall refer the complaint to the Council and be given opportunity to comment. If the complaint relates to the behaviour of a councillor where it could be deemed that the councillor is in breach of the Cheshire East Council Member Code of Conduct 2019 adopted by the Council on 15th May 2019, the complainant will be advised to contact the Cheshire East Council Monitoring Officer at: [MonitoringOfficerCEC@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:MonitoringOfficerCEC@cheshireeast.gov.uk)

The clerk or chairman shall report to the next meeting of the Parish Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.

The clerk or chairman shall bring any written complaint which has not been settled to the next meeting of the Council and the clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered, and the complainant shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally (such a hearing will be heard under confidential business to exclude any member of the public or press. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.

As soon as may be after the decision has been made, it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.

The Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next Council meeting after the advice has been received.

Prestbury Parish Council will not consider any anonymous communication.

In the event of serial facetious, vexatious or malicious complaints from a member of the public, the Council should consider taking legal advice before writing letters to the complainant.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

ADOPTED ON – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021