

# DONYATT PARISH COUNCIL

## CODE OF PRACTICE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS

The following procedure has been adopted for dealing with complaints about the Council's administration or its procedures. Complaints about a policy decision made by the Council will be referred back to the Council, for consideration.

This procedure does not cover complaints about the conduct of a Member of the Parish Council. Such complaints should be made through the District Council.

### **Before the Meeting**

- 1 The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk.
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk they may be advised to put it to the Chairman of the Council.
3. The Clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council.
4. The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish.
5. 7 clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The Council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

### **At the Meeting**

6. The Council shall 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. Chairman to introduce everyone.
8. Chairman to explain procedure.
9. Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint.
10. Members to ask any question of the complainant.
11. If relevant, Clerk to explain the council's position.
12. Members to ask any question of the Clerk.
13. Clerk and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).
14. Clerk and complainant to be asked to leave room while Members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. (If a point of clarification is necessary, parties to be invited back).
15. Clerk and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when decision will be made.

### **After the Meeting**

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