



**CODE OF PRACTICE
FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS**

This Code of Practice is designed for those complaints that cannot be satisfied by less formal measures provided to the complainant by the Clerk, other Proper Officer or the Chairman or nominated Deputy.

The Code is aimed at those situations where a complaint has been made about the administration of the Council or about its procedures.

It is not an appropriate procedure for a complaint against individuals, these should be dealt with by the Monitoring Officer of Rochford District Council

Date effective from:	30th May 2023
Next review:	May 2024

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR HANDLING A COMPLAINT ABOUT THE COUNCIL'S PROCEDURES OR ADMINISTRATION

Procedure

1. The complainant shall be asked to put the complaint about the Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk or other nominated Proper Officer.
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk or other Proper Officer, they shall be advised to put it to the Chairman of the Council.
3. The Clerk shall 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.
4. The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish.
5. Seven 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 or other Proper Officer to explain the Council's position.
12. Members to ask any question of the Clerk or other Proper Officer.
13. Clerk or other Proper Officer and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).
14. Clerk or other Proper Officer 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, both parties to be invited back).
15. Clerk or other Proper Officer and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when decision will be made.

After the Meeting

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