

## Complaints Procedure

Chappel Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or are visitors to the locality. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from this Council, or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by this council, this Complaints Procedure sets out how you may complain to the Council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.

### **When does this Procedure apply?**

This procedure applies when a complaint has been made about the administration of the Council which cannot be resolved in an informal way by the Clerk or the Chairman.

This Complaints Procedure does not apply to

- complaints about staff (these are an employment matter);
- complaints by one council employee against another council employee, or between a council employee and the council as employer.
- complaints against councillors. Complaints against councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members and, if a complaint against a Councillor is received by the Council, it will be referred to the Standards Committee of Colchester City Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against Councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of Colchester City Council.

### **Making a formal complaint**

1. The appropriate time for influencing Council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the Council debates and votes on a matter. You may do this by writing to the Council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There may also be the opportunity to raise your concerns in the public participation section of Parish Council meetings. If you are unhappy with a Council decision, you may raise your concerns with the Parish Council, but Standing Orders prevent the Council from re-opening issues for six months from the date of the decision, unless there are exceptional grounds to consider this necessary and the special process set out in the Standing Orders is followed.
2. All formal complaints against Chappel Council must be made in writing to the Clerk giving full details of the complaint.

[parishclerk@chappel.org](mailto:parishclerk@chappel.org)

3. Wherever possible, the Clerk will try to resolve the complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Clerk will, within seven working days of receipt, acknowledge the complaint in writing and tell the complainant when the Council will consider the complaint.

4. A complainant who does not wish to report their complaint to the Clerk, may make their complaint directly to the Chairman of the Council who will report the complaint to the Council

[sue.chamley@chappel.org](mailto:sue.chamley@chappel.org)

5. The complainant must state at the outset if he wants the complaint to be treated confidentially.
6. The Clerk or the Council will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from the complainant and/or from staff or members of the Council.
7. The Clerk or the Chairman of the Council will notify the complainant within 20 working days of the outcome of their complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take as a result of the complaint. (In exceptional cases the twenty working days timescale may have to be extended. If it is, the complainant will be kept informed).
8. If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the full Parish Council and (usually within eight weeks) you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint.

Re Adopted: 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Chairman .....