



Bradwell Parish Council Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

Bradwell Parish Council (BPC) has prepared a Complaints Process to assist residents with making complaints against:

- Actions of the Council
- Standard of service you have received from council staff
- Council administration

The Complaints Process does not apply to:

- Complaints about Councillors. Complaints against Councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct adopted by the council. Any complaint received about a Councillor will be passed to the Standards Committee of Milton Keynes City Council
- Complaints by a council employee against another council employee. This is covered in the staffing policies.

The Parish Clerk as Proper Officer of the Council, is responsible for managing the complaints process. However, if a formal complaint is being raised against the Clerk, the same process is followed, but the Chairman of the Council would take the place of the Clerk in managing the process.

Not all complaints are justified and sometimes councils receive repeated complaints from individuals or a group of individuals, when the matter of the complaint (or something very similar), has already been investigated and a conclusion reached. In such cases, continuous complaints or communications should be handled as vexatious.

Clear guidance on the handling of complaints has been produced by the Local Government Ombudsman and can be accessed here: [How to Complain - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

2. The Process

The time to help influence Council decisions is by raising concerns before the Council votes on a matter. You can do this during the public participation section of the council meetings. If you raise a concern after a decision has been made, it is not possible for the Council to reverse a decision within six months from the date of the decision, except by a special motion. The rules relating to this are laid out in the Standing Orders, Section 7. The Parish Council will not acknowledge or consider any complaints that are submitted anonymously. A complainant may advise a councillor of the details of a complaint, but individual Councillors are not able to resolve complaints and the complaint must be made in accordance with the process set out below:

- The complaint should be put in writing to the Clerk (clerk@bradwell-pc.gov.uk) or if the complaint relates to the Clerk the complaint should be put in writing to the Assistant Clerk (communications@bradwell-pc.gov.uk) who will pass the details to the Chair of the Council. Refusal to put the complaint in writing does not mean it will not be investigated, but it is easier to do so if the complaint is in writing.

Complaints Process

- The complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days and where possible we will attempt to resolve your complaint immediately.
- The Clerk or Chair will carry out the initial investigation requesting any additional information necessary from the complainant and/or staff or council members.
- Most cases will be resolved within 20 working days of receipt of a complaint and the complainant will be contacted with the outcome and what action (if any) will be taken. Where the investigation will take longer, and 20 working days will not be sufficient the complainant will be notified.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the response to the complaint they can ask for the matter to be referred to Full Council. Following review at the next practicable Full Council meeting, the complainant will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review.
- On resolution of any complaint the Clerk or Chair will provide a summary report to Full Council. This summary report will exclude the names of the complainants and any council staff involved. Complaints against Council Staff. A complaint against a member of the Council's staff could result in disciplinary action or in cases of gross misconduct, dismissal from the Council's employment. The Council will not under any circumstances enter into any correspondence, or discussion, with any complainant about any action taken, formally or informally against any member of its staff. This is expressly to protect the employment rights to which all employees of the Council are entitled.

Complaints against Councillors

The Bradwell Parish Council complaints policy does not cover complaints against an individual Councillor. If you wish to make a complaint about the behaviour of an individual Councillor you must write to:

The Standards Committee
C/O The Monitoring Officer
Milton Keynes City Council
Civic Offices
1 Saxon Gate East
MK9 3EJ

The Monitoring Officer can only deal with complaints about the behaviour of a Councillor and their failure to follow the Councillor Code of Conduct. They will not deal with complaints about matters that are not covered by the Councillors Code of Conduct.