



Connah's Quay Town Council

Title:	Model Local Resolution Protocol Policy
Approved by:	Town Council.
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Version Number:	1.0
Status:	Agreed
Review Frequency:	Every 2 years
Next review date:	2025

Background

The Public Service Ombudsman has agreed to the principle of referring some complaints against Members back to Community and Town Councils for a local resolution.

The Local Resolution Process

Issues which can be considered under this process are low level complaints about Members, including:

- Minor complaints from Members about Members
- Minor complaints from Officers about Members
- Members alleged to have not shown respect and consideration for others – either verbally or in writing

Issues which will not be considered under this process include:

- Complaints instigated by a member of the public
- Serious complaints – breaches of the Code of Conduct/failure to disclose interests/bullying/abuse of position or trust/repeated breaches
- Complaints made by the Clerk/Proper Officer
- Vexatious, malicious or frivolous complaints
- Members' complaints about officers which should be dealt with using the Council's internal complaints process
- Repetitive low level complaints

Complaints of this nature must be directed to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

The Process

The complaint

The complaint should be sent to the Clerk/Proper Officer of the Council who will undertake a first sift to ensure that the complaint is at a low level and should not be dealt with by way of a complaint to the Ombudsman.

Where appropriate, the Clerk/Proper Officer may firstly seek an early resolution of any such dispute by liaising informally with the individual members concerned prior to the resolution process described below.

It is vitally important that the 'accused' member is given full details of the complaint against them so that in the interests of natural justice they are in a position to prepare their response to the accusation.



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Resolution Process

The involvement of the Chair/Vice Chair of the Council in the following process is not to adjudicate on the complaint, but to attempt to get the members/officers involved to come to an agreement as to how the issue(s) could be resolved on an amicable basis.

The Clerk/Proper Officer will act as a facilitator for the resolution process below.

1. If the complaint is between Members other than the Chair of the Council, the Clerk/Proper Officer and the Chair will meet individually with the complainant and Member subject of the complaint to seek an agreed resolution.
2. If the complaint is between Members, one of whom is the Chair of Council, but not the Vice Chair, the Clerk/Proper Officer and the Vice Chair will meet with the complainant and Member subject of the complaint to seek an agreed resolution.
3. If the complaint has been made by an officer/employee, but not the Clerk/Proper Officer, against a Member other than the Chair of Council, the Clerk/Proper Officer and the Chair of Council will meet with the officer and the Member subject of the complaint to seek an agreed resolution.
4. If the complaint has been made by an officer/employee, but not the Clerk/Proper Officer, against the Chair of Council, the Clerk/Proper Officer and the Vice Chair of Council will meet with the officer and the Chair to seek an agreed resolution.
5. If the complaint has been made by the Clerk/Proper Officer, then it is likely to be best practice that this complaint is forwarded by way of a complaint to the Ombudsman.

Possible results of the process

1. If an agreement is reached by Members and/or officers during this Stage then no further action is required.

Examples of agreements might include issue of a letter of apology, a written undertaking or commitment not to breach the Code of Conduct in the future, a commitment to undertake training or an agreement that on the basis of the evidence that no further action should be taken and the matter be closed.

2. If agreement cannot be reached the aggrieved Member/officer would always have the opportunity of referring the matter to the Ombudsman.

Time for the process

It is the intention that all of the processes can be completed as quickly as possible to resolve the issue.

Timing will depend on the availability of individuals to attend the meetings.