



BRADFELD PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council: Mrs Marie Snell

Bradfield Village Hall, The Street, Bradfield, Essex CO11 2UU Tel: 07851 760264

E-mail: clerk@bradfieldparishcouncil.org.uk

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

*Policy adopted by Bradfield Parish Council
at a meeting of the Full Council on 7th July 2026.*

Introduction

Bradfield Parish Council is dedicated to providing a quality service for the benefit of the community. If you believe you have not received the level of service you would expect from the Council, this complaints procedure sets out how to raise your concerns. If there is an occasion when you feel that the Council has done something wrong or badly or failed to do something that you expected, or if you have a complaint about the attitude or conduct of a councillor or Council employee then you may feel you need to complain.

The purpose of this document is to inform you:

- a) How to complain to Bradfield Parish Council
- b) How we will deal with your complaint
- c) What service you can expect.

In all instances you can expect your complaint to be acknowledged within three working days of receipt, and if the matter cannot be resolved immediately, because further investigation is needed, you will be advised of the timescales involved and you will be kept informed of progress on a weekly basis should the investigation prove to be lengthy.

Scope of the policy

Not all complaints will be dealt with under a complaints procedure, and in many cases, the matter can be resolved quickly and informally through the normal channels of communication. This complaints procedure applies to complaints about the Council's actions, activities, procedures, and Council staff.

This policy does Not apply to:

- **Complaints about a Member's or Members' conduct.** Alleged breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct are dealt with by the district council's Monitoring Officer. A copy of the Tendring District Council Complaints Procedure can be found [here](#). Any complaints received by Bradfield Parish Council that relate to a member's conduct in breach of The Code, will be referred, or you may contact Tendring District Council directly. If you are unsure whether your complaint constitutes a breach of The Code of Conduct, then please contact the Clerk to the Council in the first instance who will assist you.
- **Allegations of financial irregularity.** Local electors may object to the Council's audit of accounts (s27 (1) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014). Objections should be lodged with the Council's appointed auditor.
- **Allegations of criminal activity.** Please contact the Police.

- **Feedback, constructive criticism, and suggestions.** Please submit your thoughts to the Parish Clerk at the address below.
- **Decisions made by the council or committee thereof.** Concerns about the decisions made by the council must be raised with the External Auditor.

A) How to Complain

Contact the Clerk to the Council, (contact details above) and ask them to investigate for you or explain the actions of the Council. The Clerk will liaise with the Chairman (or the Vice Chairman if the complaint is against the Chairman) in an attempt to find an amicable solution.

If your complaint is about the Clerk please contact the Chairman (contact details above).

At this stage the Council will attempt to find an amicable resolution to all queries or complaints.

If you are still not satisfied: Please put your complaint in writing. Please use the complaints form enclosed with an accompanying letter if you wish to give more details, and send to Bradfield Parish Council office as detailed above or to the Chairman if the complaint is about the Clerk. If you need help with completing this form we can arrange for someone to help you. Please ensure that you include all relevant information on this form as the Council will use this to assess the details of your complaint.

PLEASE NOTE - If the complaint is against an individual councillor and you consider that the actions of that Councillor are so serious as to have breached the Council's Code of Conduct THEN YOU MUST contact Tendring District Council's Monitoring Officer (contact details at the bottom of the page) as this Council have no jurisdiction on such matters and are unable to issue sanctions relating to the behaviour of individual councillors

Upon receipt of your written complaint a copy will be circulated to all councillors/Clerk (including the subject of the complaint if the complaint is against an individual), and the matter will be considered by the Council at a Full Council meeting (or personnel sub-committee meeting for employee matters), which will take place on a date and time to be determined by the Chairman (or Vice Chairman if the complaint is against the Chairman). The quorum for the meeting will be decided in accordance with the Council's current Standing Orders and if the complaint is against an individual member then the subject of the complaint will not be included as a voting member for the purposes of calculating the quorum.

If the complaint is against the Clerk then the matter will be dealt with as a confidential staff matter by the personnel committee.

B) How we handle your complaint

Procedures at the Full Council/Committee Meetings

It is unlikely that the Council would consider it necessary to invite you to any kind of 'hearing' – please ensure you have included all necessary and relevant details in your written complaint.

The Council (or Personnel Committee for employee matters) will decide whether or not to hold the meeting to consider the complaint in public. Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media may be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this matter. If it is considered to be in the public interest, and the matter does not relate to confidential personnel details, the minutes of the meeting will be made publically available at a later date.

The Council will reach a decision as to whether to uphold the complaint in full or part and will recommend a remedy to the complaint. You will be advised if the Council considers that it requires any further information from you before reaching a decision.

If the complaint is against a member of the Council and an informal remedy such as an apology is not considered appropriate, the Council may defer the matter to the Borough Council's Standards Committee for guidance as to the appropriate action. This Council cannot consider complaints which it considers may constitute a serious breach of the Council's Code of Conduct or where you have mentioned that you consider the Code of Conduct has been breached.

If the complaint is against an employee it will be dealt with under our personnel procedures and any sanctions on the employee will be confidential.

The final decision will be communicated to all parties in writing if required – there will be no further correspondence from this Council on the matter.

C) What service you can expect

Timescales

In all instances, you can expect your complaint to be acknowledged, in writing, within 3 working days of receipt. We will aim to determine your complaint, including those in relation to Freedom of Information requests, within 20 working days. Where this is not possible, because further investigation or consultation is needed, you will be contacted, to provide an explanation and offer a revised timeframe. If further investigation proves to be lengthy, you will be advised of the timescales involved (if known) and you will be kept informed of progress on a weekly basis. We aim to fully investigate and resolve a complaint within 12 weeks.

Confidentiality

Bradfield Parish Council is committed to complying with its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations in order to safeguard against the unlawful disclosure of personal data. Bradfield Parish Council will not disclose the identity, contact details or other personal data about an individual complainant unless they consent or disclosure is otherwise fair and lawful under the GDPR 2018 e.g. for the performance of contractual obligations. Bradfield Parish Council will take care to maintain confidentiality where circumstances demand (e.g. where matters concern financial or sensitive information or where third parties are concerned). Only the necessary information will be provided to professional bodies for the purposes of seeking professional or legal advice. Impartiality Your complaint will be dealt with fairly and those responsible for determining complaints will do so without prejudice.

Helpful Contacts

Clerk to the Council
Mrs Marie Snell
Bradfield Village Hall
The Street
Bradfield
Essex
CO11 2UU

Alleged breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct

Monitoring Officer
Legal Department
Tendring District Council
Town Hall
Station Road
Clacton on Sea
Essex
CO1 1SE
Tel: 01255 686868
Email: standards@tendringdc.gov.uk
<https://www.tendringdc.gov.uk/content/complaints-about-councillors>

Financial Irregularity, Objections to the Annual Accounts and Decisions of the Council

PKF Littlejohn LLP
Ref: SBA
2nd Floor
1 Westferry Circus
Canary Wharf
London
E14 4HD
Email: sba@pkf-littlejohn.com

Reviewed and Adopted – 7th July 2026
Last reviewed 7th May 2024

COMPLAINTS FORM – BRADFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Name.....

Address.....

.....

..... **Post Code**

Telephone (day)..... **Telephone (eve)**.....

What do you consider the Council has done wrong or failed to do?

How has the problem affected you?

What should the Council do to put things right?

Who have you spoken to about this and when? Please quote any reference numbers.

Signed.....

Dated.....

(to be signed by the person making the complaint)