

## **COWES TOWN COUNCIL**

### **INTERNAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

The grievance procedure is for Town Councillors who may be aggrieved by behaviour, comment or action by other Town Councillors.

1. Councillors should be aware at all times of the need to avoid giving unnecessary offence.
2. If a Councillor feels aggrieved, they should in the first instance, endeavour to resolve their difference or grievance with other members by talking informally to them either directly or through the Town Mayor as an intermediary, unless in their opinion this would be inappropriate.
3. Councillors may then bring a written complaint, via the Town Clerk, before the Town Council Grievance Committee.
4. Upon receipt of a complaint the Town Clerk shall immediately notify the member against whom the complaint is made and shall organise a Grievance Hearing to take place within 14 days. He / she must distribute copies of the complaint to that member and to each empanelled committee member. The Town Clerk should attend the Hearing and record the proceedings that will be held in private.
5. The Grievance Committee will consist of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor, and three other Town Councillors elected by the full Town Council as Third Member, First Alternate and Second Alternate.
6. A Grievance Panel will consist of three members of the Grievance Committee. However, a Grievance Committee member who is party to the dispute must not sit on the panel.
7. Alternates will sit on the Grievance Panel only when at least one of the three primary members is unavailable or disqualified; the First Alternate will then be the first choice.
8. If a full Grievance Panel of three still cannot be formed, other Councillors acceptable to all parties in the dispute may then be co-opted.
9. At the request of any party to the dispute, or a majority of the Grievance Panel, the hearing can be attended by a person provided by the Isle of Wight Council to mediate. This person will not have a vote on the Panel.
10. The member against whom the complaint has been made will be at liberty to make written representation to the Grievance Panel prior to the hearing, through the Town Clerk, who will distribute copies to Panel members and the complainant.
11. At the Grievance Hearing, the complainant and the member against whom the complaint is made, in that order, will present their case to the Grievance Panel, either personally or as represented by a person of their choice. Witnesses may be called.
12. Having considered all representations, the Grievance Panel will decide a means of amicable agreement, such as withdrawal of the complaint or an apology by either or both parties.
13. This Grievance Procedure does not negate a complainant's right to refer an unresolved dispute or any complaint to the Monitoring Officer at the IW Council.