

**DISCRETIONARY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE REGULATIONS 2008**

**DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS REVIEW PROCEDURES**

**FOR REVIEW HEARINGS**

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure hearings of the Discretionary Housing Payments Review Committee are dealt with in a just, timely and effective way. Throughout the hearing the Committee Members will focus on particular representations made (whether in writing or verbally) and will consider the relevant Discretionary Housing Payments criteria. During the hearing, all parties will be restricted to raising issues directly relevant to the review.

**Step 1**        The Chairman will introduce and welcome the Committee Members, Appellant and Officer(s).

The Chairman will outline the order of business to those present.

(N.B. The Appellant is entitled to attend the meeting of the Discretionary Housing Payments Review Committee and, if they wish, they may be accompanied by a friend or be represented. Should the Appellant decide to be represented, they should advise the Democratic Services Officer in advance so, appropriate arrangements may be made for the hearing.

If the Appellant decides not to attend the appeal, or if they wish to attend but fail to give a reasonable explanation for not being present, the appeal will be decided on the information provided by the Appellant in writing and by the Head of Finance.)

**Step 2**        The Chairman will invite the Officer(s) to outline the Local Authority decision.

**Step 3**        The Appellant and/or their representative, will present their appeal.

**Step 4**        Questioning:  
Questions from the Appellant (if any)  
Questions from the Officer(s) (if any)  
Questions from the Committee Members

**Step 5**        Summing Up:  
Appellant  
Officer(s)

- Step 6** Committee Members have a final opportunity to seek clarification on any points raised.
- Step 7** The Appellant and Officer(s) are invited to withdraw whilst the Committee deliberate in private. The Committee will be accompanied by the Democratic Scrutiny Services Officer whilst they deliberate.
- Step 8** On return the Chairman will announce the decision; which will also be sent to the appellant in writing within seven working days or as soon as possible thereafter.

In cases of concern or doubt, advice should be taken from the Citizens Advice Bureau or a Solicitor.