



TEWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Adopted at Full Council Meeting on 26th March 2018 (last reviewed 13th May 2024)

1. Introduction

- i. Tewkesbury Town Council takes its responsibility for good conduct seriously. This procedure details how the Council will respond to complaints made to the Council. This policy does not cover Code of Conduct complaints concerning Councillors.
- ii. The Council will accept written, verbal, and emailed complaints and also complaints made in person.
- iii. All complaints investigations shall be undertaken in the strictest confidence until such time as the matter is resolved.

2. Initial Complaint

- i. In the first instance the Town Clerk will endeavour to resolve the complaint. If this is not possible or appropriate the following procedure applies.

3. Stage One – Formal Response

- i. The Complainant should be asked to formally put the complaint to the Clerk, if the Complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk, he or she should put it to the Town Mayor (as Chairman of the Council).
- ii. The Clerk (or Town Mayor) should acknowledge the complaint in writing within 5 days and attempt to satisfy the Complainant by providing an explanation, in writing, about the Council's procedures or administration in relation to the specific complaint.

4. Stage Two – Committee Investigation

- i. If the Complainant is not satisfied with the response and wishes to appeal, the Clerk shall call a meeting of the appropriate Committee. The Committee shall consist of a least three (3) Councillors who are impartial. The Clerk shall notify the Complainant of the venue, date and time of the meeting at which the Committee will consider the complaint and shall invite the Complainant to attend, accompanied by a representative if wished.

- ii. An agenda will be provided according to current procedures and only invited Councillors will be permitted to attend the meeting
- iii. The Clerk shall request the Complainant to provide, at least five clear working days prior to the meeting, copies of any documentation or other evidence which he or she intends to produce at the meeting. Similarly, the Clerk shall provide the Complainant with copies of any documentation to which the Committee might refer to at the meeting.

5. Stage Two - At the Meeting

- i. The Committee shall conduct the hearing of the complaint in private.
- ii. The Chairman shall make introductions and explain the procedure.
 - a) The Complainant (or representative) shall outline the grounds for the complaint.
 - b) The Committee shall ask any questions of the Complainant.
 - c) If relevant, the Clerk shall explain the Council's position.
 - d) The Committee shall ask any questions of the Clerk.
 - e) The Clerk and Complainant (in that order) shall be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.
 - f) The Clerk and Complainant shall be asked to leave the room while the Committee decides whether or not the complaint is justified (if a point of clarification is necessary, both the Clerk and the Complainant shall be invited to re-join the meeting).
 - g) The Clerk and Complainant shall be invited to return to the meeting to hear the decision or to be advised when the decision will be made.

6. Stage Two - After the Meeting

- i. The decision shall be confirmed in writing within seven working days, together with details of any action taken.
- ii. If the complainant is not satisfied with the Committee's decision then the complainant can ask for the decision to be reconsidered at Full Council, normally within two weeks. The outcome of this decision will be confirmed in writing within seven working days. If the complainant remains dissatisfied the Council will seek assistance from the County Association.

N.B. - Where the term 'Clerk' is given, the term of 'Chairman' could also apply dependant on circumstance