



SAXMUNDHAM TOWN COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Annual Approval: July 2024

Minute Item: 51/24TC



Before processing a complaint

1. All formal complaints against the Town Council must be communicated in writing.
2. The complainant must be asked at the outset to confirm if he/she wants the complaint to be treated confidentially. It is unlikely that the complainant will waive confidentiality but, if they do, the Town Council must comply with its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation to safeguard against the unlawful disclosure of personal data.
3. Complaints should normally be sent to the Town Clerk to the Town Council, by e-mail to townclerk@saxmundham-tc.gov.uk.
4. Complaints about the conduct of Town Council staff shall be addressed to the Chair of the Town Council. Such complaints shall be considered, and any response agreed, by the Resources Committee at a properly convened meeting. Members shall not be permitted to personally respond on behalf of the Town Council to complaints regarding the conduct of Town Council staff.

Receipt of the complaint

5. Receipt of a complaint will be acknowledged in writing within seven days, indicating the following information:
 - Who will be dealing with the complaint (e.g. title of member of staff, a particular committee or sub-committee)
 - The timeframe for investigating the complaint
 - Whether there will be an opportunity for the complainant to make verbal representations (and bring a friend when doing so) and when this will occur
 - The timeframe for determining the complaint
 - Whether there is an opportunity to appeal the outcome of the complaint and an explanation of the appeal process
 - Whether the complaint will be treated as confidential (most likely)
 - Confirm the next steps in the complaints procedure

Investigating the complaint

6. The Town Council will investigate the facts of the complaint and collate relevant evidence.
7. If the complainant is to be invited to make a verbal representation they will be invited to a meeting with the Town Clerk (or other nominated officer) or to attend a meeting of the Committee dealing with the complaint.
8. Before the meeting, and within a specified period, the complainant shall provide the Town Clerk (or nominated officer or Committee as applicable) with any new information or other evidence relevant to the complaint, and the Town Clerk (or nominated officer), or the Chair of the relevant Committee, shall provide the complainant with new information or evidence relevant to the complaint.

Meetings with the complainant (if applicable)



9. If the complainant is invited to a meeting, the Town Clerk, nominated officer or Chair of the Committee dealing with the complaint should explain how the meeting will proceed.
10. The complainant should outline the grounds for complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by the Town Clerk (or other nominated officer), or by members if a meeting is held by Committee.
11. The Town Clerk (or other nominated officer) or the Chair of the Committee will have an opportunity to explain the Town Council's position and questions may be asked by the complainant.
12. The Town Clerk (or other nominated officer), or the Chair of the Committee, and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their respective positions.
13. The complainant should be advised when a decision about the complaint is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them.

After the complaint has been decided

14. Within four weeks of receipt of the complaint, the Town Council should write to the complainant with the outcome of the complaint, to include the following:
 - Whether it has upheld or rejected the complaint
 - The reasons for the decision
 - Details of any action to be taken

Record Keeping

15. Adequate records will be retained by the Town Clerk of the details of the complaint and any action that has been taken.