

ELLESMERE TOWN COUNCIL

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Ellesmere Town Council Complaints Procedure

Adopted: Monday 2nd July, 2018

This policy is reviewed every year at the Annual Town Council meeting held in May.

Complaints against a Councillor:

A complaint against a Councillor where there is evidence that a Councillor has broken any of the rules as set out in their Code of Conduct please refer the complaint to:

The Monitoring Officer
Shropshire Council
Shirehall
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND

Complaints against the Clerk:

Complaints should be addressed to:

The Mayor,
Ellesmere Town Hall,
1-3 Willow Street,
Ellesmere,
Shropshire,
SY12 0AL

Other complaints:

The Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer,
Ellesmere Town Hall,
1-3 Willow Street,
Ellesmere,
Shropshire,
SY12 0AL

Ellesmere Town Council is committed to providing a quality service for the people who live or work in the area and to the many visitors.

This complaints procedure applies to complaints about the Town Council administration and procedures and may include a complaint about the Council's employees.

This procedure does not apply to:

Complaints by one council employee against another employee or between council employee and council as an employer.

Complaints against Councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members.

All complaints, whether informal or formal, are reported to each meeting of the Town Council and must be submitted in writing.

Ellesmere Town Council will not consider anonymous complaints. A name and address must be included with all correspondence.

Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged by either a member of Council staff or the Mayor within 7 working days and the complainant will be informed who will be investigating the complaint. It is hoped to be able to resolve most non-complex complaints immediately, but for more complex issues an investigation may need to be undertaken.

On receipt of a complaint, the Clerk or the Mayor (if the complaint relates to the Clerk), will seek to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This will not be done without first notifying members of the Staffing & Governance Committee and any person complained about, giving them an opportunity to comment.

Complaint Investigation

If it has not been possible to resolve the complaint informally, the Staffing & Governance Committee will formally meet to investigate the complaint in more detail. If deemed necessary at this stage the complainant may be invited to a meeting with this Committee to discuss the issues raised.

If the complainant is submitting documentation or evidence for the meeting they should provide copies to the Staffing & Governance Committee at least 7 clear working days before the meeting. Similarly the Clerk will supply the complainant with copies of any Town Council documents that are requested, provided these are documents available under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations 25th May, 2018.

The Staffing & Governance committee will present the findings of investigations into complaints to the next Town Council meeting along with any recommendations for any future service improvements identified as a result of the complaint. Under Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 the Council or Committee may consider whether the circumstances warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public.

In the interests of openness and accountability there must be clear relevant reasons or a request from the Complainant for the matter to be held without the presence of the press or public. The decision of the Council or Committee, however, will be made public at the end of the meeting. Investigations will be dealt with as quickly as possible and under normal circumstances the complainant should receive a written response within 20 working days however in the case of complex complaints if it is not possible to meet this timescale the complainant will be informed.

It should be noted that currently the Local Government Ombudsman has no jurisdiction over Parish and Town Councils.

For vexatious and persistent complaints the Town Council adopted an Unreasonably Persistent and Vexatious Complaints Procedure on the 3rd July, 2017.