



Colne Town Council

Complaints Procedure

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Adopted by Full Council: May 2019

Reviewed by Gina Langley, Town Clerk / RFO date: January 2024

Review Term: Annually

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1. Introduction

Colne Town Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or are visitors to the locality. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from this Council or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by this Council, this Complaints Procedure sets out how you may complain to the Council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.

2. Scope of Procedure

This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about Council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how Council employees have dealt with your concerns.

This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:

2.1. Complaints by one Council employee against another Council employee, or between a Council employee and the Council as an employer. These matters are dealt with under the Council's Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.

2.2. Complaints against Councillors. Complaints against Councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council in 2017 and, if a complaint against a Councillor is received by the Council, it will be referred to the Standards Committee of Colne Town Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against Councillors may be obtained from the office at Colne Town Council.

3. Procedure

The appropriate time for influencing Council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the Council debates and votes on a matter. You may do this by writing to the Council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There may also be the opportunity to raise your concerns in the public forum section of Council meetings. If you are unhappy with a Council decision, you may raise your concerns with the Council, but Standing Orders prevent the Council from re-opening issues for six months from the date of the decision, unless there are exceptional grounds to consider this necessary and the special process set out in the Standing Orders is followed.

3.1. You may make your complaint about the Council's procedures or administration to the Town Clerk. You may do this in person, by phone, or by writing to or emailing the Town Clerk. The addresses and numbers are set out below.

3.2. Wherever possible, the Town Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Town Clerk will acknowledge your complaint within 10 working days. If the Town Clerk is able to resolve the complaint, they must report the complaint and resolution to the Finance, Employment and Services Committee at the next meeting.

3.3. If the Town Clerk is unable to resolve a complaint, then they must report the complaint to the Finance, Employment and Services Committee.

3.4. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Town Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Chairman of the Finance, Employment and Services Committee who will report your complaint to the Full Council at the next available opportunity.

3.5. All unresolved complaints reported to the Finance, Employment and Services Committee will be investigated by a Complaints Working Group established for your specific complaint. The Working Group will be a sub-group of the Finance, Employment and Service Committee and be made up of two Councillors and the Town Clerk, ensuring there is cross-party representation in the Working Group. The Complaints Working Group should be made up to ensure that none of its Members have a conflict of interest or are the subject of the complaint. If the Town Clerk is the subject of the complaint, either a third Councillor or the Deputy Clerk will be appointed to the Complaints Working Group in the Town Clerk's stead.

3.6. The Complaints Working Group will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or Members of the Council.

3.7. The Town Clerk or the Chairman of the Finance, Employment and Services Committee will notify you within 21 working days of the outcome of your complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take as a result of your complaint. (In exceptional cases the twenty working days timescale may have to be extended. If this is the case, you will be kept informed.)

3.8. If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the Full Council in writing and you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the Full Council's review of your original complaint within 8 weeks of your letter.

3.9. It is worth noting that the decision made by the Full Council will be final, no further correspondence will be entered into following the determination by the Full Council and no further opportunity to escalate your complaint will be provided.

4. Review of Policy

4.1 This policy will be reviewed, added to, or modified as required from time to time but in any event at least every two years.

5. Contacts

To write a letter to the Town Clerk or any Councillor, please use the following Address:

Colne Town Council
Colne Town Hall
Albert Road
Colne
BB8 0AQ
Phone: 01282 861888

E-mail contact details for the Chairman of the Finance, Employment & Services Committee and the Chairman of Colne Town Council can be found on the Town Council website:

www.colnetowncouncil.org.uk