

BRANDON TOWN COUNCIL

Complaints Procedure

Brandon 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 town. If anyone is dissatisfied with the standard of service you received from this Council, or unhappy about an action or lack of action by this Council, this complaints procedure sets out how a complaint may be made to the Council and how the Council will try to resolve complaints. It is the Council's intention to operate a complaints procedure which ensures the satisfactory resolution of complaints from members of the public as swiftly as is practicable.

1.0 DEFINITION OF A COMPLAINT

1.1 For the purposes of this procedure a complaint is defined as “**an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the Council or their staff affecting a customer or group of customers.**”

1.2 This complaints procedure does not apply to:

- complaints by one Council employee to another
- complaints between a Council employee and the Council as employer
- complaints against Councillors; these are covered by the Code of Conduct.

If a complaint about a Councillor is received it will be referred to the District Council Monitoring Officer.

There is no difference between a ‘formal’ and an ‘informal’ complaint, both are expressions of dissatisfaction that require a response.

2.0 RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS

2.1 Complaints will be dealt with by the Clerk or their assistant in the absence of the Clerk. They will ensure that they receive, record and deal appropriately with any complaints received.

2.2 Complaints made against the Clerk or their assistant will be referred immediately to the Chairman of the Council.

3.0 RECEIPT OF COMPLAINTS

3.1 Complaints may be made about the Council's procedures or administration to the Clerk in person, by phone, or by writing or emailing the Clerk. The contact details are set out below.

3.2 If complaints are received verbally then the Clerk will make a written record of the complaint.

3.3 Complaints made via a third party may be accepted if it is considered that the complainant is not able to complain personally due to age, mental or physical infirmity or other special circumstances. If it is considered that the complainant is capable then their permission must be sought before pursuing the complaint and response to the complaint should be made to them.

3.4 If anonymous complaints are made, they will be investigated.

4.0 INVESTIGATION & RESPONSE TO COMPLAINTS

4.1 Wherever possible the Clerk will try to resolve complaints immediately. If this is not possible, the Clerk will normally try to acknowledge complaints within five working days.

4.2 The Clerk will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from the complainant and/or from staff or members of the Council.

4.3 The Clerk will notify the complainant within 20 days of the outcome of the complaint and what action (if any) the Council proposes to take as a result of the complaint. (In exceptional cases the twenty working days timescale may have to be extended. If it is the complainant will be kept informed)

4.4 The response informing the complainant of the outcome of the investigation will always include a reiteration of the original complaint (as it is understood by the Clerk) and a full description of the results of the investigation.

4.5 If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response to the complaint, he/she may ask for the complaint to be referred to the Chairman/Vice Chairman of the Council and (usually within eight weeks) will be notified in writing of the outcome of the appeal of the original complaint.

5.0 REMEDIES FOR COMPLAINTS

5.1 When a complaint is found to be justified then consideration will be given to the question of an appropriate remedy which may involve suitable recompense.

5.2 If a complainant is dissatisfied with the response to their complaint, the matter may be referred to the Chairman/Vice Chairman of Council for an appeal.

6.0 RECORDING COMPLAINTS

6.1 The Clerk will keep a record of complaints received.

6.2 The Clerk will report to the full Council all complaints received in confidential closed session. The report will include a brief description of each complaint and details of action taken to resolve each complaint. The individual complaints will only be identified in closed session.

- 6.3 The complaints procedure will be published on the Council's website.
- 6.4 All complaints received will be reported to the Council on an annual basis. The report will include a brief description of each complaint. The individual complainants will not be identified.

Complaints should be directed to:

The Town Clerk
Brandon Town Council
Old School House
Market Hill
Brandon
Suffolk
IP27 0AA
Telephone: 01842 811844
Email: office@brandontc.co.uk