

Council Complaints Procedure

1. Trowbridge 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. This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.
3. This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:
 - 3.1. Complaints by one council employee against another council employee, or between a council employee and the council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.
 - 3.2. Complaints about councillors. Complaints about councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members and, if a complaint against a councillor is received by the Town Clerk, it will be dealt with in accordance with the following Standing Orders:

A25. CODE OF CONDUCT

- A25.1 All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the council.
- A25.2 If the Proper Officer receives a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct the Proper Officer will refer the complaint to the Monitoring Officer of Wiltshire Council.
- A25.3 Where the notification in standing order A25.2 above relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Mayor of this fact, and the Mayor shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the council has agreed what action, if any, to take.
- A25.4 If the Proper Officer considers that there are staff, employment and legal issues related to the complaint then, in addition to reporting the complaint to the Monitoring Officer, the Proper Officer will, subject to standing order A18 above, include a report of the matter on the agenda for the first available full council meeting.
- A25.5 At meetings of the Council when a complaint is considered, referred to in A25.4 above, the council may impose limitations on the councillor such as removal from committees and restrictions on attending the council offices, pending further investigation by the Monitoring Officer of Wiltshire Council.
- A25.6 The council may:
 - a. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law; or
 - b. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- A25.7 Upon notification by Wiltshire Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the council shall receive the decision, shall ensure any sanctions imposed are put in place and shall lift any limitations the council has imposed.
- A25.8 Any limitations imposed by the council will be reconsidered at the first meeting of council following the ordinary elections where a formal investigation is ongoing and the councillor has been re-elected.

- 3.3. If such complaints refer to failure to declare a disclosable pecuniary interest or other allegations of a criminal nature the Town Clerk will inform the police. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of Wiltshire Council. (governance@wiltshire.gov.uk)
4. 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 participation 'Open 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.
 5. 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.
 6. Wherever possible, the Town Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Town Clerk will normally try to acknowledge your complaint within five working days.
 7. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Town Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Mayor who will report your complaint to the appropriate committee of the Council or to the Full Council.
 8. The Town Clerk or the Committee of the Council or the Council (as appropriate) will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the Council and may appoint a sub-committee to consider the specific complaint.
 9. The Town Clerk or the Mayor will notify you within 20 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 it is, you will be kept informed.)
 10. If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the full Council and (usually within ten weeks) you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint.

Contacts

The Town Clerk of Trowbridge Town Council: Mr. Lance Allan

Email: lance.allan@trowbridge.gov.uk
info@trowbridge.gov.uk

Or

The Mayor of Trowbridge

Address for both: The Civic Centre
St Stephen's Place
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8AH

Telephone: 01225 765072

Other contact details and the name of the Mayor for the current civic year are available on the Town Council's web-site: www.trowbridge.gov.uk

Lance Allan – Town Clerk & Proper Officer

Signed Dated

This Procedure was approved at a meeting of the Full Council on 18 May 2021. This Procedure will be kept up to date as the size and nature of the Council changes and as new legislation is introduced. Otherwise the date of the next review is May 2025.