



# **GODMANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

## **Complaints Procedure**

The following procedure should be followed by anyone wishing to make a complaint against Godmanchester Town Council.

The Complaints Procedure will be signed by the incoming Mayor, and read in conjunction with The Town Councillor's Guide, Town Council Standing Orders and the Code of Conduct..

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Underwood', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Clr David Underwood  
Town Mayor**

**18 June 2015**

***Godmanchester Town Council is a non-Party Political Body***





## Amendment History:

<b>Paragraph</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>
Original	Initial version	18 June 2015



## Contents

---

<b>1</b>	<b>GODMANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE.....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1	WHO TO CONTACT .....	5
1.2	WHAT WILL HAPPEN .....	5



# 1 GODMANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

## 1.1 Who to Contact

- 1.1.1 If you have a complaint you should write to the Town Clerk:

Madelaine Liddiard  
Town Hall  
1 Post Street  
Godmanchester  
PE29 2NB

## 1.2 What will happen

- 1.2.1 In order for your complaint about the Town Council to be dealt with, the following Code of Practice has been adopted: so that you can be assured that your grievance will be properly and fully considered. We hope that by following this transparent process, we shall maintain the good reputation of the Council. This procedure will be followed where complaints cannot be resolved less formally by the Town Clerk or the Mayor.
- 1.2.2 On receipt of a written complaint the Town Clerk or Town Mayor, as the case may be, shall (except where the complaint is about their own actions) try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant but shall not do so in respect of a complaint about the behaviour of the Town Clerk or a Councillor without first notifying the person complained of and giving them an opportunity to comment on the manner in which it is intended to attempt to settle the complaint about their own actions they shall forthwith refer the complaint to the appropriate Committee or the Council.
- 1.2.3 The Town Clerk is the Proper Officer of the Council and will represent and advise the Council at any meeting where the complaint will be aired, unless the Clerk is putting forward the justification for action or procedure of the complaint.
- 1.2.4 This complaints procedure is intended to ensure that complaints by members of the public about the Council's actions, or lack of action, or standard of service are dealt with promptly and effectively. The object of the procedure is to put things right when they have gone wrong and ensure that mistakes do not recur in the future.



- 1.2.5 Complaints about the Council's administration and procedures should be made initially to the Town Clerk, and will be dealt with initially by the Town Clerk. If the complainant is unwilling to approach the Town Clerk a complaint may be made to the Town Mayor, who will refer the complaint either to the Town Clerk or to the Council. Complaints may be made in writing, by email, by phone or in person.
- 1.2.6 Complaints which cannot be dealt with immediately to the satisfaction of the complainant will be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days.
- 1.2.7 Complaints should be dealt with promptly. In general complaints will be dealt with within 20 working days of receipt, although this time limit may be extended with the agreement of the complainant, or where legal or other advice may be necessary.
- 1.2.8 Where it appears that the complaint includes an allegation that a criminal offence has been committed the Town Clerk may deal with the complaint by referring it to the police.
- 1.2.9 If a complainant is dissatisfied with the Town Clerk's, or as the case may be, Town Mayor's decision on a complaint, or if the complaint is not dealt with to the satisfaction of the complainant within the time limit set out in the previous paragraph, the complainant has a right of appeal to the Council within 21 days of being notified.
- 1.2.10 Where a complaint is referred to the Council the complainant will be informed of the date, time and place of the meeting. At least ten working days' notice will be given. The complainant will be invited to attend the meeting and also to submit any documents which s/he wishes to refer to. Any such documents must be received by the Town Clerk seven working days before the meeting to enable them to be circulated to members. The Town Clerk will provide the complainant with any documents that s/he wishes to refer to within the same timescale. The Town Clerk will also inform the complainant whether it is likely that the meeting will be open to the press and public or whether the press and public are likely to be excluded (for example because the personal affairs of an individual may be discussed).
- 1.2.11 At the Council meeting the Town Mayor should introduce everyone and explain the procedure. The complainant may outline the grounds of complaint and may then be questioned, first by the Town Clerk and then by Council members. The Town Clerk may outline the Council's position and may be questioned, first by the complainant and then by the Council. The Town Clerk and then the complainant may give a final summary of their position.



- 1.2.12 The complainant and the Town Clerk will then leave the room to allow the Council to reach a decision on the complaint. They will be called back when the Council has reached a decision.
- 1.2.13 Council decisions on a complaint should normally be announced in public. The complainant should be notified of the decision in writing within seven working days, and notified also of what action will be taken.
- 1.2.14 Where a complaint is upheld the Town Clerk should report to a subsequent meeting of the Council what action has been taken to ensure that any mistake does not recur.
- 1.2.15 This procedure does not apply to:
- complaints about the substance of policy decisions made by the Council (although members of the public may make comments or ask questions during the public participation session during every Council meeting);
  - complaints about the conduct of an individual councillor, which should be made to the Monitoring Officer at Huntingdonshire District Council
  - complaints by an employee of the Council about the Council's actions as an employer, which should be dealt with under the Council's grievance procedure.
  - complaints alleging misconduct by an employee, which will be dealt with under the Council's disciplinary procedure.