



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

This policy is in two parts.

Part One - sets out the process on how complaints received, regarding the procedures or administration of the Town Council, is managed.

Before the Meeting

1. The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the Council's **PROCEDURES OR ADMINISTRATION** in writing to the Town Clerk, or other nominated proper officer.
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk, or other proper officer, they may be advised to put it to the Town Mayor.
3. The Clerk shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the relevant Committee or Working Party.
4. Should the complainant then appeal, in writing, against this decision, a Complaints Committee, established for the purpose of hearing complaints, would need to be convened (normally comprising of three members, who are to be selected from more than one political party represented on the Council.)
5. The Clerk shall acknowledge receipt of the appeal and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Complaints Committee.
6. The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them a representative of their choice.
7. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The Council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

At the Meeting

8. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
9. Chairman to introduce everyone.
10. Chairman to explain procedure.
11. Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint.
12. Members to ask any question of the complainant.
13. If relevant, Clerk, or other proper officer, to explain the Council's position.
14. Members to ask any question of the Clerk, or other proper officer.
15. Clerk, or other proper officer, and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in that order).
16. Clerk, or other proper officer, and complainant to be asked to leave room while Members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. (If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties to be invited back).
17. Clerk, or other proper officer, and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when decision will be made.

After the Meeting

18. Decision confirmed, in writing, within seven working days, together with details of any action to be taken.

Part two - sets out Leighton-Linslade Town Council's approach to dealing with those relatively few complainants whose actions or behaviour are considered unacceptable in that their approaches to the council or its staff, either in person, by telephone or by correspondence are carried out in an obsessive, persistent or aggressive manner. The term complainant includes anyone acting on behalf of a complainant.

19. With the exception of such immediate decisions taken at the time of an incident, decisions to restrict contact with Town Council will only be taken after careful consideration of the situation by a more senior member of staff in consultation with the Town Clerk and the Town Mayor.

Approved by the Policy and Finance Committee 14 September 2015