

## EAST COWES TOWN COUNCIL

### **Complaints Procedure**

EAST COWES Town Council will do their utmost to settle complaints and satisfy any complaint made. If a complaint is not settled by the Town Council it cannot refer the complaint to any other body for settlement.

Town and Parish Councils are not subject to the jurisdiction of the Local Ombudsman and there is no independent body to which the complainant can turn to an independent formal assessment.

**Unreasonably persistent or abusive contacts are not appropriate.** Contacts which might be considered unreasonable would include constant repetition of a query when reasonable answer has been given or endless questions of details when the substance of a matter is closed.

### **Code of Practice**

1. If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk and they cannot satisfy the complainant fully, the complainant shall be asked to put the complaint in writing to the clerk.
2. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk he or she shall be advised to put it to the Mayor.
3. On receipt of a written complaint the Clerk or Mayor, shall (except where the complaint is about his or her own actions) try to settle the complaint directly with. If the complaint is about the behaviour of the Clerk or a Councillor they have to be notified first and given an opportunity for comment on the manner in which it is intended to attempt to settle the complaint.
4. If a written complaint is received about the Clerk or Mayor they have to refer the matter to the Council.
5. If a written complaint is dealt with to the satisfaction of the complainant it will be reported at the next council meeting.
6. The clerk or chairman shall bring any written complaint which has not been settled to the next meeting of the Council and the Clerk shall notify the complainant on which date the complaint will be considered and the complainant shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally.
7. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the council meeting in public.
8. As soon as may be after the decision has been made, it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.

9. A Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practise arise on which advice is necessary. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.

**Town Clerk:** Tina Bailey

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