

TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



COMPLAINTS POLICY

Introduction

Telscombe Town Council aims to provide the best possible service to its residents. The Local Government Ombudsman has no jurisdiction over Town and Parish Councils and therefore this complaints procedure has been adopted by the Council in order to allow members of the public the opportunity to submit a complaint regarding the administration of the Council or its procedures, and have the complaint dealt with in a fair and timely manner.

This procedure is designed for those complaints that cannot be satisfied by less formal measures or explanations provided to the complainant by a Council officer or member of the Council. This procedure applies to all services provided by the Town Council. It is not relevant to complaints about members of staff which will be dealt with as an employment matter. Complaints regarding a Councillor are subject to the jurisdiction of the Code of Conduct and will be forwarded to the District Monitoring Officer at Lewes District Council to review.

In the first instance, every effort should be made to resolve complaints to the satisfaction of the complainant prior to involvement of Councillors in the formal complaints procedure process.

1. Complaints Procedure

1.1 The complainant is required to put the complaint against the Council in writing to the Town Clerk at Telscombe Civic Centre, 360 South Coast Road, Telscombe Cliffs, E Sussex, BN10 7ES or email stella.newman@telscombetowncouncil.gov.uk

1.2 If the complaint concerns the Clerk, the complaint should be addressed to the Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee (P&R).

1.3 The complainant will be asked if they want the complaint to be treated confidentially. If the complainant waives confidentiality, the Council must comply with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 to safeguard against the unlawful disclosure of personal data.

1.4 The Clerk/Chairman will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 7 working days which will be logged. They should try to resolve the complaint directly.

1.5 The Clerk/Chairman will endeavour to respond to the complaint with a resolution within 21 working days of the date of the letter.

1.6 If needed, a holding letter will be sent to the complainant to allow further time to address the issues.

1.7 If thought necessary, the complaint will be investigated and relevant evidence collated by a panel of 3 members of the P&R Committee and the Town Clerk (unless the complaint concerns the Town Clerk).

TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



1.8 Within 10 working days, if thought necessary, the complainant will be invited to a meeting of the panel and can bring with them such representation as they wish.

1.9 The meeting will be arranged within 10 working days of the invitation letter.

2. Complaints Meeting

2.1 The Complaints Panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members.

2.2 The Chairman of the panel will introduce everyone and explain how the meeting will proceed.

2.3 The complainant (or representative) should outline the grounds for complaint.

2.4 Panel members may ask questions of the complainant.

2.5 If relevant, the Clerk or Chairman of the panel, will explain the Council's position and questions may be asked by everyone present.

2.6 The Chairman of the panel and the complainant will have the opportunity of summarising their respective positions.

2.7 The Chairman will inform the complainant that they will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, within five working days of the complaints meeting.

3. After the meeting

3.1 Decision confirmed in writing within 7 working days giving reasons for the decision, together with details of any action to be taken by the Council if appropriate. If the complainant is not happy with the decision they should be informed they have the right to appeal the decision in writing within 10 working days of the date of the decision letter.

4. Appeal Process

4.1 An appeal will be heard by an Appeal Panel consisting of three members of the P&R Committee who have not been involved in the case. The appeal panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members.

4.2 Generally, within a reasonable period of time, e.g., 7 working days of receipt of a written appeal, the complainant shall be invited to a meeting of the panel and can bring with them such representation as they wish.

5. Appeal Meeting

5.1 The Chairman of the panel will introduce everyone and explain how the meeting will proceed.

TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



5.2 The complainant (or representative) will outline the grounds for appealing against the decision of the Complaints Panel.

5.3 Panel members may ask questions of the complainant.

5.4 The Chairman will inform the complainant that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, within five working days of the appeal meeting.

5.5 The Appeal Panel may decide to uphold the decision of the Complaints Panel or substitute its own decision.

5.6 The decision of the Appeal Panel is final.

Policy	Complaints
Review Cycle	Every 3 years, or earlier in the event of legislative changes
Date Last Adopted	20 th March 2024
Previous Adoption Dates	March 2021 March 2018 March 2015
Responsibility	Policy & Resources Committee and then adoption by Full Council