



Pershore Town Council

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This Council is not subject to the jurisdiction of the Local Ombudsman and there is no independent body to which the complainant can turn for an informal assessment. Therefore, every complaint will be dealt with according to the code below, however trivial it may initially seem. The Code of Practice set out below will be used to deal with complaints made directly to the Council or referred back to the Council from other bodies.

Complaints are valuable as they provide a chance to put things right if there has been an error, and to ensure the errors are not repeated. It is essential that complaints are dealt with positively. The Town Council is open to hearing people's comments and committed to making full use of feedback to contribute to continuous service improvement.

Code of Practice

1. If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified verbally to a Councillor or the Clerk and they cannot satisfy the complainant, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing or via email to the Clerk and it will be dealt with promptly after receipt. A response will be sent to the complainant within seven working days explaining what the next steps will be.
2. If a complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk, he or she should be advised to put the complaint to the Chairman.
3. a) On receipt of a written complaint the Clerk or Chairman, shall (except where the complaint is about his or her 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 a member of staff without first notifying the person the complaint relates to. This person should be given the opportunity to comment on the manner in which it is intended to settle the grievance.
b) Where the Clerk or Chairman receives a written complaint about his or her own actions, he or she should immediately refer the complaint to the Management Group.
4. If the complaint relates to a member of staff this should be dealt with by their line manager, most usually the Town Clerk under employment legislation.
5. If the complaint relates to a councillor, the complainant should be advised that this cannot be considered by the Town Council but the complaint should be directed to the Monitoring Officer at the District Council.
6. The Clerk or Chairman should report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint which has been resolved by direct action with the complainant.

7. The Clerk or Chairman should bring any written complaint which has not been settled to the next meeting of the Management Group and the complainant should be notified of the date on which the complaint will be considered and be given the opportunity to explain the complaint verbally and bring any evidence of their complaint with them to the meeting.

8. The Management Group should only defer dealing with a written complaint if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is required. The complaint should then be dealt with once the advice has been sought. The complainant should be informed of the reason for the delay in responding to the complaint.

9. Once the Management Group have made a decision about the complaint, they should notify Council at the next meeting of that decision.

10. The complainant should be notified within 7 working days after the Council meeting of the decision and the option of lodging an appeal if they are not satisfied.

11. Should the complainant not be satisfied with the decision, the appeals process will involve the complaint being brought to the next scheduled Council meeting for discussion and a decision.

12. The Council should consider whether the complaint should be discussed in the absence of public and press; however, any decision made about the complaint should be announced at the Council meeting in public.

13. The complainant should be advised of the Council's decision within 7 working days of the Council meeting.

14. Complaints against the Clerk will be dealt with by the Town Council as an employment matter to protect the rights to which employees of the Town Council are entitled. However, as with item 10 above, the Clerk will be entitled to the same right of appeal to full council against any decision made by the Management Group.

Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.

Unreasonable and vexatious complaints.

There will be circumstances when a complainant persists in wishing to pursue a complaint when it clearly has no reasonable basis, or when the Council has already taken action in response, or where some other process, whether through the courts or some other recognised procedure, should, or has been taken. These matters will be referred to the Town Council by the Clerk with a summary of the issues and of the attempts made to resolve the complaint. The Town Council may, in such circumstances, decide that no further action can usefully be taken in response to the complainant and inform the complainant so, making it clear that only new and substantive issues will merit a response.

If you do have a complaint, you can contact us through the Town Clerk at:-

Town Clerk
Persore Town Hall
34 High Street
Persore
WR10 1DS
561561

townclerk@persore-tc.gov.uk

01386