



MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The following procedure should be followed by anyone wishing to make a complaint about Much Wenlock Town Council.

If you have a complaint about a Town Councillor under the Code of Conduct, you should contact the Monitoring Officer at Shropshire Council, who is the responsible person for dealing with complaints about the behaviour of Councillors:

The Monitoring Officer
Legal and Democratic Services
Shropshire Council
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND

Or via the Shropshire Council website: www.shropshire.gov.uk

If you have a complaint about the Town Clerk, you should contact the Town Mayor:

The Town Mayor
Much Wenlock Town Council
The Corn Exchange
High Street
Much Wenlock
TF13 6AE

If you have any other complaint, you should contact the Town Clerk:

The Town Clerk
Much Wenlock Town Council
The Corn Exchange
High Street
Much Wenlock
TF13 6AE

Email: townclerk@muchwenlock-tc.gov.uk
Tel: 01952 727509

In order for your complaint to be dealt with, the following procedure has been adopted so you can be assured your complaint will be properly and fully considered. It is hoped that by following this transparent process, your concerns will be resolved as efficiently and effectively as possible.

This procedure will be followed where complaints cannot be resolved informally by the Town Clerk or the Mayor.

1. Much Wenlock Town Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or are visitors to the locality. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from this Council or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by this Council, this Complaints Procedure sets out how you may complain to the Council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.
2. This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about Council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how Council employees have dealt with your concerns.
3. This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:
 - 3.1. Complaints by one Council employee against another Council employee, or between a Council employee and the Council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the Council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.
 - 3.2. Complaints against Councillors. Complaints against Councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council on 3rd March 2022 and, if a complaint against a Councillor is received by the Council, it will be referred to the Monitoring Officer of Shropshire Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against Councillors can be found on the Shropshire Council website: www.shropshire.gov.uk
 - 3.3. Alleged criminal activity. This should be reported to the police.
4. You should make your complaint about the Council's procedures or administration to the Town Clerk. You may do this in person, by phone, or by writing to or emailing the Town Clerk. Contact details are given above. All formal complaints must be communicated in writing. Complaints will be treated as confidential.
5. Wherever possible, the Town Clerk will try to resolve your complaint informally and immediately. If this is not possible, the Town Clerk will normally acknowledge your complaint within five working days and advise who will be dealing with your complaint.
6. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Town Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Mayor, who will try to resolve your complaint or report your complaint to the appropriate Committee of the Council.
7. Each complaint will be investigated, with further information being obtained as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the Council. Please provide as much information as possible about the cause of your complaint, including relevant events, dates, etc., as well as your contact details. You may be invited to make verbal representations to the person or committee investigating your complaint.
8. The Town Clerk or the Mayor will notify you within 12 weeks of the outcome of your complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take in relation to your complaint. If, for any reason, this timescale cannot be met, the Town Clerk or Mayor will advise you of this before expiry of the 12 weeks.
9. If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the full Council. You will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint within eight weeks. This concludes the complaint process.

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH UNREASONABLE AND PERSISTENT COMPLAINANTS

In order to deal with complaints which may be made about Council administration, operations and services efficiently and effectively the Town Council has a Complaints Procedure.

However, sometimes complainants may make frequent contact with the Town Clerk's office to the extent that such contact hinders the normal day to day running of the Town Council operations. In this event, with approval from the Council, the Town Clerk will implement the procedure for dealing with frequent or vexatious complainants, since such complaints can be time consuming and lead to unnecessary additional cost to the council tax payer.

The Town Council's procedure for dealing with unreasonable and persistent complainants will become operative if the complainant is deemed to be unreasonably persistent either by written or oral communication or excessive visits to the Town Clerk's office.

PROCEDURE

A vexatious complainant will be notified that the Council's procedure for dealing with unreasonable and persistent complaints is to be enforced, together with the reason why. The complainant will then be asked to adopt one or all of the following methods of contact:

- to contact ~~with~~ the Town Council in a particular form, for example, letters only;
- to contact only a specific, named officer;
- to restrict telephone calls to specified days and times; and/or
- to enter into an agreement about future contact with the Town Council.

In all cases where a complainant is deemed to be unreasonable and persistent, the Council will write to the complainant to justify its course of action and explain for how long the measures will be operative.

The complainant may challenge the Council's decision, although proof that the complaint has not been sufficiently dealt with will be required. If deemed to be a fair challenge, the Council will conduct a review of the complaint and will re-consider whether the complaint should still be treated as unreasonable and/or vexatious.

If a complainant persists in communicating with the Council once their case has been closed, the Council reserves the right to terminate all further communication. The case will only be re-visited if the complainant can provide fresh evidence that may affect the Council's previous decision concerning the original complaint. If the Council feels that re-opening the complaint cannot be justified, the complainant will be notified in writing that the case has been closed and there will be no further communication.

New complaints received from complainants previously deemed to be unreasonable and or vexatious will be treated on their merits.

Complaints will be kept on file for no more than five years.