Complaints Procedure 2022-23

Introduction

Felixstowe 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.

1. This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.

2. This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:

   2.1. 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.

   2.2. Complaints against Councillors. All Town Councillors must abide by the Suffolk Local Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on *14 June 2014*. Complaints against Councillors should be referred directly to the Monitoring Officer of East Suffolk Council. Further information on how to make a complaint and the procedure in this situation is available on the East Suffolk website here: http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/yourcouncil/councillors/complaints-about-the-conduct-of-a-district-town-or-parish-councillor/

3. You may make your complaint about the council's procedures or administration to the Clerk. You may do this in person, by phone, or by writing to or emailing the Clerk. The addresses and numbers are set out below.

4. Wherever possible, the Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Clerk will normally try to acknowledge your complaint within five working days.

Making a Formal Complaint

5. If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk and it is not possible to satisfy the complainant fully forthwith, the complainant or their representative shall be asked to put his complaint in writing to the Clerk and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt.

6. If the complainant or their representative does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk or other proper officer, they are advised to put it to the Mayor (as Chairman of the Council).

7. The Clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant or their representative when the matter will be considered by the Town Council's Appeals Committee.

8. The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish.

9. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant or their representative 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 or their representative with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

At the Meeting

10. The Appeals Committee 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 next meeting of the Town Council in public.

11. Chairman to introduce everyone.

12. Chairman to explain procedure.

13. Complainant or their representative to outline grounds for complaint.

14. Members to ask any question of the complainant or their representative

15. If relevant, Clerk or other proper officer to explain the Council's position.

16. Members to ask any question of the Clerk or other proper officer.

17. Clerk or other proper officer and complainant or their representative to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).

18. Clerk or other proper officer and complainant or their representative 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, <u>both</u> parties to be invited back.)

19. Clerk or other proper officer and complainant or their representative return to hear decision, or to be advised when decision will be made.

After the Meeting

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

21. If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the Finance & Governance Committee or to the full Council (as appropriate) and (usually within eight weeks) you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint.

Contacts

Town Clerk

Address: Town Hall
Undercliff Road West
Felixstowe
IP11 2AG

Telephone: 01394 282086
Email: townclerk@felixstowe.gov.uk

Mayor of Felixstowe

The Mayor can be contacted via the address or telephone number above or via his or her contact details which are available from the Town Council website or notice boards.
Email: mayor@felixstowe.gov.uk