

# SHILDON TOWN COUNCIL

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. This procedure is to be followed for all complaints regarding the administration of the Council's services or its procedures. **It is not appropriate for complaints regarding the conduct of individual employees of the Council or for complaints regarding the conduct of individual elected Members.**
2. A complaint is defined by the Council as '**any expression of dissatisfaction with services delivered, or procedures adopted, by the Council whether received in writing, in person, by telephone or e-mail.**'

### First stage

3. Initially all complaints should be addressed to and will be dealt with by the Town Clerk.
4. All complaints will be responded to within 7 working days. However if the complaint is particularly serious or complicated, a response will be provided within 7 working days indicating when a full response is likely to be received.

### Second stage

5. If a complainant is unhappy with the response a request may be made to the Town Clerk for the Complaints Committee of the Council to hear the complaint.
6. The complainant shall be invited to attend a meeting of the Complaints Committee and bring with them such representative as they wish.
7. The complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence which they wish to refer to at the meeting at least 7 working days prior to the meeting. Similarly the Council shall provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they intend to rely within the same time period.
8. The Committee shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the press and public. However any decision on a complaint shall be announced at a Council meeting in public.
9. The complainant shall outline the grounds for the complaint.

10. Members will ask any question(s) of the complainant they deem necessary.
11. The Town Clerk will explain the Council's position.
12. Members will ask any question(s) of the Town Clerk they deem necessary.
13. The Town Clerk and the complainant will be offered any opportunity of any further comment.
14. The complainant and the Town Clerk will be asked to leave while the Committee decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been justified.
15. The complainant and the Town Clerk return to hear the decision or to be advised when a decision will be made.
16. The decision will be confirmed in writing within 7 working days together with details of any action to be taken.