



PERSHORE TOWN COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

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.

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 the Clerk or a Councillor 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. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. Once the Management Group have made a decision about the complaint they should notify Council at the next meeting of that decision.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. The complainant should be advised of the Council's decision within 7 working days of the Council meeting.