

## **Norton On Derwent Town Council**

### **Complaints Procedure**

#### **Adopted by the Council on 8 December 2014**

#### 1. Types of complaints and procedures for their resolution.

i) Where a complaint is made about a member of the council the complainant will be given the contact details of the Monitoring Officer for Ryedale district from whom advice over the procedure to be followed would be given.

ii) Where the complaint is about an employee of the council, the matter will be dealt with under the council's Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure and the complainant advised accordingly.

iii) Where a complaint is made about council administration and procedures, either the council will itself deal with the complaint or appoint a committee to deal with it. The committee will be composed of five members including the town mayor and deputy town mayor ex officio. Standing Order 1Y applies re the committee quorum. The committee will have full power to deal with the complaint but will report its findings at the next meeting of the council.

The council, prior to deciding whether it is to deal with the complaint or refer it to a committee, will determine the role of the town clerk, ie is he to represent the position of the council or advise the council or, if appointed, the committee, it being understood that he cannot do both. Should he represent the position of the council and it is decided that advice might be needed, then the town mayor, on behalf of the council, will contact Yorkshire Local Councils Associations.

iv) Where a complaint is made about a council contractor or, if relevant, the people in his employment or the implementation of a contract, the town clerk, will deal with the complaint and report his decision to the council or, if he thinks the complaint needs to be dealt with by the council, draft a report and take it to the next meeting of the council.

#### 2. Procedure for dealing with complaints about council administration and procedures.

##### i) Before the meeting:

a) The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the town clerk.

b) If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the town clerk, they will be advised to put it to the town mayor.

c) The town clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered, in the first instance by the council who may appoint a committee to deal with it.

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

e) Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which he wishes to refer to at the meeting. The council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which it wishes to rely at the meeting.

ii) At the meeting:

- a) The council or the 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 meeting in public. If a committee deals with the complaint, the committee will report its decision publicly at the next meeting of the council.
- b) Chairman to introduce everyone.
- c) Chairman to explain procedure.
- d) Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint.
- e) Members to ask any question of the complainant.
- f) If relevant, the town clerk to explain the council's position.
- g) Members to ask any question of the town clerk.
- h) The town clerk and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).
- i) The town clerk and the complainant to be asked to leave the room while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made.  
(If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties to be invited back).
- j) The town clerk and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when decision will be made.

iii) After the meeting:

The decision confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken or, if a committee deals with the complaint, the day following the next meeting of the council.

3. Procedure for dealing with complaints about a council contractor or, if relevant, the people in their employment or the implementation of a contract.

- i) The town clerk to establish the seriousness of the complaint to determine whether to deal with it themselves without reference to the contractor or the contractor needs be involved, or whether the council should deal with it (eg failure to cut a section of grass would not be deemed serious but poor work over a number of weeks would).
- ii) Where the issue is deemed to warrant discussion with the contractor the town clerk will ensure that the contractor has the opportunity to respond fully to the complaint and, if it is deemed appropriate, to meet the complainant with the town clerk in attendance. Otherwise the town clerk will contact the complainant and bring the matter to a conclusion.
- iii) Where the issue requires the council's involvement, the town clerk will draft a report for the council's consideration and the council itself will determine how to proceed.