

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



COMPLAINTS POLICY

Policy Number 17		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	25.03.08	GP.065.03.08
2	03.10.16	General review of Policy
3.	03.11.25	GP.28.11.25 - Review of Policy (GP Committee)
4.	01.12.25	FC.69.12.25 - Ratification by Full Council

1.0 AIMS

- 1.1 Uckfield Town Council is committed to providing a high-quality customer service to our residents and service users.
- 1.2 With a culture of continuous improvement, the Town Council utilises customer feedback to better understand how can further enhance service delivery.
- 1.3 This complaints procedure seeks to ensure complaints are:
 - (i) treated fairly and consistently;
 - (ii) dealt with in the stated timescales;
 - (iii) utilised to improve service provision.

2.0 WHAT IS A COMPLAINT

- 2.1 The definition of a complaint is:

“an expression of dissatisfaction about the way in which the Town Council (its staff and contractors) has provided a service. Examples include delay, failure to provide the service, or through staff behaviour.”

3.0 OBJECTIVES

- 1. To work collectively across teams or departments to consider and resolve the complaint in an effective and efficient manner;
- 2. To provide a clear procedure for dealing with complaints;
- 3. To communicate effectively with a complainant throughout the procedure;
- 4. To review complaints procedures with a view to learning from our mistakes;
- 5. To provide a way of rectifying injustice whenever possible;
- 6. To provide a way of monitoring information on customer complaints and ways of reviewing the services
- 7. To ensure that customers are aware of how to complain and to whom.

4.0 HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT:

In many situations it will be possible for an issue to be dealt with straight away, and the cause for complaint, can be resolved almost imminently.

4.1 Informal

If members of the public have any queries or concerns they should be encouraged to speak to Council staff at the time. Council staff will do their best to assist the individual and resolve any dispute there and then. Where necessary or appropriate, the individual can be referred to the Council Offices for further assistance.

4.2 Formal

If the customer/resident is still unhappy they may submit a formal complaint for consideration through the Town Council's two-stage Complaints procedure.

Stage 1

Please submit your complaint in writing by email to admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk, in post to Uckfield Town Council, Civic Centre, Uckfield, TN22 1AE or in person and mark for the attention of the relevant Service Manager.

Each service has a manager:

Estates (Grounds);
Hospitality
Facilities (Buildings)
Administration

Complaints should clearly set out the best means of contact – email, telephone and postal address.

Once submitted, we will acknowledge receipt of any complaints within five working days.

The Service Manager will respond to the complaint within 10 working days.

Any customer/resident who remains unhappy with the response received at Stage 1 of the procedure, may request a review of their complaint by the Town Clerk (Chief Officer) at Stage 2.

Stage 2

Customers or residents who remain dissatisfied with the Town Council's response at Stage 1, can escalate their complaint to Stage 2.

Complaints should be addressed to the Assistant Town Clerk & RFO, and the necessary information provided for a thorough investigation by the Town Clerk (Chief Officer). All information materially significant to the complaint should be submitted at this stage.

Stage 2 complaints will be acknowledged within five days of receipt.

A full response will be provided by the Town Clerk to the Stage 2 Complaint within 20 working days of the acknowledgement.

If at any stage, we need more time to respond to your complaint, we will explain the reason(s) for the delay and notify the customer as to when to expect a full response.

5.0 REVIEW BY FULL COUNCIL

- 5.1 If both Stages 1 and 2 have been exhausted and the complainant is still unhappy, they can request a further and final review by Full Council. The complainant should be informed of the date of the next Full Council meeting and be advised that their complaint will be discussed at that meeting. The decision of the Full Council will be final.

6.0 FURTHER SITUATIONS

Complaint about the Town Clerk

- 6.1 In the event that a complaint is made against the Town Clerk, the complainant should be advised to put their complaint in writing to the Town Mayor.

Complaint about a Councillor

- 6.2 In the event that a complaint is made against a Councillor, the complainant should be directed to the Code of Conduct Policy adopted by the Town Council, and contact made with the Monitoring Officer at Wealden District Council.

Complaint about Information Governance

- 6.3 If a customer is unhappy with the way we have dealt with a request for information under information governance legislation (Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 or Data Protection Act 2018), please contact the Information Commissioner's Office.

7.0 VEXATIOUS COMPLAINANTS

- 7.1 The Council is committed to the fair handling of complaints. We recognise that some complaints may be difficult to resolve and can cause distress. We will not however tolerate unreasonable, aggressive, or abusive behaviour that constitutes harassment. Staff may be prevented from carrying out their roles if they are subject to frequent, lengthy contacts and repetitive information covering the same or similar issues. The Town Council will therefore undertake an assessment of requests that are considered to be vexatious on a case by case basis. Further information is available in our Unreasonably Persistent Complaints & Customer Behaviour Policy.

Date of policy: December 2025

Approving committee: Ratification by Full Council

Date of committee meeting: December 2025

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— policy ends here —