

# TADCASTER TOWN COUNCIL



The Ark, 33 Kirkgate, Tadcaster. North Yorkshire. LS24 9AQ

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Office Open: Monday to Thursday, 9.30 am to 12.30 pm (closed Fridays)

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CLERK TO THE COUNCIL: Jane L Crowther

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 1 Tadcaster 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 anyone is dissatisfied with the standard of service received from the Council, or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by the Council, this Complaints Procedure sets out how you may complain to the Council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.
- 2 This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about **COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION** and procedures and may include complaints about how **COUNCIL EMPLOYEES** have dealt with your concerns
- 3 This Complaint Procedure **does not** apply to:
  - 3.1 **Complaints by one Council employee against another Council employee, or between a Council employee and the Council as an employer.** *These matters are dealt with under the Council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.*
  - 3.2 **Complaints against Councillors.** *Complaints against Councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members and if a complaint is received by the Council, it will be deferred to the Monitoring Officer at Selby District Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against Councillors may be obtained from Selby District Council.*
- 4 You may make your complaint about the Council's procedures or administration to the Clerk to the Council. You may do this in person, by telephone or by writing to or emailing the Clerk. Please confirm at the outset whether you wish your complaint to be treated confidentially.
- 5 Wherever possible, the Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Clerk will acknowledge your complaint within five working days and advise you when and how your complaint will be dealt with.
- 6 If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Clerk – or if your complaint concerns The Clerk or other nominated officer - then it should be sent to the Chairman of the Council or Chairman of relevant Committee or Sub-Committee, if one is established for the determining complaints.
- 7 The receipt of any complaint will be acknowledged in writing within a specified timeframe – see 5 above - stating who will be dealing with the complaint; the timeframe for investigating the complaint; whether there is an opportunity for the complainant to make verbal representation

(and bring someone along when doing so) and when this will occur; whether there will be an opportunity to appeal the outcome of the complaint and an explanation of the appeal process.

- 8 The Clerk or the Council (as appropriate) will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the Council.
- 9 If your complaint is to be dealt with at a Council Meeting, the following procedure will come into force:
  - a) Seven clear days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Clerk/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 with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting
  - b) At the meeting, the Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the media and the public. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public session.
  - c) The Chairman will introduce everyone
  - d) The Chairman will explain the procedure
  - e) The Complainant (or representative) will outline the grounds/nature of the complaint
  - f) Members may ask any questions of the complainant
  - g) If relevant, the Clerk as the Proper Officer, to explain the Council's position
  - h) Members may ask any questions of the Clerk
  - i) The Clerk, as the Proper Officer, and the complainant, to be offered the opportunity of the last word – in this order
  - j) The Clerk, as the Proper Officer, 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)
  - k) The Clerk, as the Proper Officer, and the complainant, to return to hear the decision, or to be advised when a decision will be made
  - l) After the meeting, the decision taken will be confirmed in writing within seven working days, together with details of any action to be taken.
- 10 The Clerk or the Chairman of the Council will notify you within 20 working days of the appropriate Council meeting of the outcome of your complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take as a result of your complaint. (In exceptional circumstances, the timescale may have to be extended. If it is, you will be kept informed.
- 11 If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the full Council and usually, within eight weeks, you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint.
- 12 If you do not think your complaint has been dealt with fairly, you can find out how to take your complaint further by contacting the Local Government Ombudsman [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

Policy first adopted by Tadcaster Town Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014

*Ttc/cp/August 2014*

*Ttc/cp/Sept/2014 - amended*