



HASLEMERE TOWN COUNCIL
COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE
March 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

Haslemere Town Council is committed to acting with professionalism and integrity at all times. Complaints are valuable to us because they provide a chance to put things right if there has been an error, and to make sure that mistakes are not repeated.

2. WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?

The Local Government Ombudsman defines a complaint as “any expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the Council or its staff, which affects the individual resident or group of residents”.

3. WHAT DOES THE PROCEDURE NOT DEAL WITH?

Type of Conduct	Refer to
Alleged financial irregularity	Local electors have a statutory right to object to a Council’s audit of accounts (s. 16 Audit Commission Act 1998). Details of the Council’s external auditor can be found on its website, or on request from the Town Clerk
Alleged criminal activity	The police.
Members’ breach of code of conduct	Complaints should be referred to Waverly Borough Council’s Monitoring Officer. Details on WBC website www.waverley.gov.uk
Complaints against Town Hall officers	Complaints against staff will be forwarded to the Chair of Staffing for consideration by the Staffing committee.

4. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. It is possible that minor complaints can be resolved without the need for the formal complaints procedure and residents are encouraged to initially speak to the Town Clerk or, if the issue involves the Town Clerk, the Town Mayor.
2. All formal complaints should be made in writing to the Town Clerk stating the nature of the complaint and whether or not the complainant would like the Council to treat the complaint confidentially.



3. If the complaint concerns the actions of the Town Clerk, the complaint should be made to the Town Mayor.
4. Complainants may either email their complaint or send it in hard copy – contact details can be found at the end of this document.
5. Within 5 working days of receipt of a complaint the Town Clerk (or Mayor) shall:
 - acknowledge it
 - confirm whether or not the matter will be dealt with confidentially
 - specify who is dealing with the complaint
 - provide the complainant with a copy of this procedure document.
6. The Town Clerk (or Mayor) will consider the case and, where appropriate, ask the complainant and other parties for further information.
7. Once the evidence has been received, the Town Clerk, Mayor and Chair of Finance and Audit committee will form a complaints working party to agree a response to the complainant. If the complaint involves those people their deputies should deputise for them, or, if this is not possible, three other councillors will be asked to step in to form the working party.
8. The complainant should be notified of whether or not their complaint has been upheld, the reasons for the decision, and any action to be taken, within 20 working days. If this is not practically possible (for instance if a witness is on holiday) this term may be extended and the complainant notified of the reason.
9. The decision of the complaints panel is final and the Council is under no obligation to enter into further correspondence on the matter.

5. CONTACT DETAILS

Town Clerk	Town Hall High St Haslemere, Surrey GU27 2HG 01428 658828 town.clerk@haslemeretc.org
Town Mayor	Address and telephone as above mayor@haslemeretc.org
Waverley Borough Council	www.waverley.gov.uk 01483 523333

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