



Complaints Policy

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Issue Number	Date	Detailed amendments
1	May 2021	Adopted
2	21 st March 2024	Reviewed
3	13 th May 2025	New Policy Adopted
4	30 th June 2026	Added in section 5 - Unreasonable, Persistent or Vexatious Complaints

1. Introduction

- 1.1 East Grinstead Town Council values feedback from the public and is committed to providing a high standard of service. If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the Council's services or the actions of its staff, this complaints procedure outlines the steps for making a complaint and how it will be addressed.

2. What can I complain about?

- 2.1 You may complain about the following:

- Poor service or failure to deliver services as promised.
- The behaviour of staff or councillors.
- Failure to follow the Council's procedures or policies.
- Any other concerns related to the Council's activities or decisions.

3. How to make a complaint

- 3.1 To make a complaint, please follow these steps:

3.2 Step 1: Informal Resolution (Initial Contact)

- 3.2.1 If you are dissatisfied with a service, the first step is to raise your concern with the relevant staff member or department. We encourage you to speak directly to the staff involved or contact the Town Council office at:

East Grinstead Town Council
East Court Mansion
College Lane
East Grinstead
West Sussex, RH19 3LT

Telephone: 01342 323636

Email: towncouncil@eastgrinstead.gov.uk

- 3.2.2 Often, a concern can be resolved quickly and informally by discussing the issue with the relevant person.

3.3 Step 2: Formal Complaint

- 3.3.1 If the matter is not resolved informally, you can make a formal complaint. You can submit your complaint in writing (via email or post). Please include the following details:

- Your name and contact details.

- A clear description of the issue or concern.
- Relevant dates, times, and any other important details.
- What outcome you are seeking (if applicable).

3.4 Step 3: Acknowledgment of Your Complaint

3.4.1 Once your complaint has been received, the Council will acknowledge it within 5 working days. This acknowledgment will include the name of the person handling the complaint and an outline of the next steps.

3.5 Step 4: Investigation and Response

3.5.1 The Council will investigate your complaint fairly and thoroughly. The investigation may involve speaking to relevant staff or reviewing records and procedures. We aim to provide a full response within 20 working days. If this is not possible, we will keep you updated on the progress and provide a revised timeline.

3.6 Step 5: Final Response

3.6.1 Once the investigation is complete, you will receive a final response outlining the findings and any actions taken or recommendations made. If the complaint is upheld, appropriate steps will be taken to rectify the situation.

4. Appeal Process

4.1 If you are not satisfied with the Council's response, you may ask for a review of the decision. To do so, you must contact the Town Clerk within 10 working days of receiving the final response, outlining the reasons for your dissatisfaction.

5. Unreasonable, Persistent or Vexatious Complaints

5.1 The Council is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly, consistently, and respectfully. However, the Council also has a duty to protect staff and councillors from unreasonable, abusive, or vexatious behaviour.

5.2 A complaint or correspondence may be considered unreasonable, persistent, or vexatious where a complainant:

- Continues to pursue a matter after the Council's complaints procedure has been exhausted.
- Repeatedly raises the same issue without providing new evidence or relevant information.
- Uses abusive, offensive, threatening, intimidating, or discriminatory language or behaviour.

- Makes excessive or unreasonable demands on Council resources, including frequent or repetitive contact.
 - Refuses to accept a decision where the matter is outside the Council's powers or has already been fully considered.
 - Attempts to harass, bully, intimidate, or undermine staff, councillors, or the Council through direct or indirect communication, including social media.
- 5.3 Where concerns arise regarding a complainant's behaviour, the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, may write to the complainant explaining why their behaviour is considered unreasonable and request that the behaviour changes.
- 5.4 If the behaviour continues, the matter may be referred to Full Council (in confidential session where appropriate) for consideration.
- 5.5 The Council may implement proportionate measures to manage unreasonable or vexatious behaviour. These may include:
- Limiting methods of contact.
 - Requiring communication through a single point of contact.
 - Restricting telephone calls or personal visits.
 - Requiring correspondence to be made in writing only.
 - Declining to respond to repeated correspondence on the same matter where no new issues are raised.
 - Reporting serious incidents to the police or taking legal advice where necessary.
- 5.6 Any restrictions imposed will be proportionate, reasonable, and reviewed periodically.
- 5.7 The Council will continue to consider any new complaints or issues raised on their merits.

6. Confidentiality and Data Protection

- 6.1 All complaints will be treated in confidence, in line with the Council's data protection policies. Personal data provided in a complaint will only be used for the purposes of the investigation and resolution.

7. Monitoring and Improvement

- 7.1 The Council regularly reviews complaints as part of its commitment to improving services. Reports on complaints may be made to the Council as part of ongoing service improvement.

Adopted: 13th May 2025
Reviewed: 1st March 2025