



# PADSTOW TOWN COUNCIL

## Complaint Handling Procedure

POLICY/PROTOCOL/PROCEDURE			
<b>Version</b>	1.1	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>Approval Date</b>	28.6.22	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Town Clerk
<b>Committee</b>	N/A	<b>Approval by</b>	Full Council

VERSION HISTORY		
Date	Version	Comments
10.6.22	1.0	Draft to be considered by Full Council 28.6.22 to replace 2012 Complaints Handling Code of Practice
28.6.22	1.1	Council approved at their meeting. Draft watermark removed, version history updated.

REVIEW RECORD		
Date Review initiated	Review undertaken by i.e. officer/ Cttee/Council	Summary of any recommended updates/changes to be made
June 2022	Draft document pulled together by Support Officer (SD) with comments from Town Clerk.	Draft to be taken to 28.6.22 Full Council meeting for consideration/approval.

## **COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURE**

### **1. PURPOSE OF PROCEDURE**

- 1.1 Padstow 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.
- 1.2 Padstow Town Council recognises that from time to time there will be concerns expressed by members of the public over the activities of the Council, the Council's administration, its procedures or Committees.
- 1.3 The purpose of this procedure is to provide a process for dealing with formal complaints about the Council, its administration, its procedures or Committees. It does not specifically focus upon complaints about an employee of the Council that would be more appropriately dealt with as an employment matter, and in accordance with Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

### **2. VERBAL COMPLAINTS**

- 2.1 On receipt of a verbal complaint by telephone or direct in person, the Clerk will try to satisfy the complainant immediately or as soon as is practicable.
- 2.2 If the Clerk is unable to answer the complaint immediately, then full details of the complaint together with the complainant's telephone number will be recorded so that a further verbal response can be made as soon as possible.
- 2.3 If a verbal response is unable to satisfy, then the Clerk will ask that the complaint be put in writing in order that it can be investigated more fully.

### **3. WRITTEN COMPLAINTS**

- 3.1 On receiving a written complaint by letter, or email, the Clerk will try to settle the complaint directly.
- 3.2 If the complaint is about the behaviour of an employee or contractor of the Council, the Clerk will also notify the person and offer the opportunity for comment on the manner in which it is intended to try and settle the complaint.
- 3.3 If necessary, the Clerk will send a holding letter to the complainant to allow further time to address the issues raised.
- 3.4 The Clerk or Chairman shall bring any written complaint concerning the Council, its administration, its procedures or Committees which has not been settled to the next meeting of the appropriate Committee. The Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date of the meeting. The Complainant will be offered the opportunity to explain the nature of the complaint to the meeting.

- 3.5 The Clerk shall consult with the Chairman to consider whether the written complaint warrants discussion at a Council meeting in the absence of the press and public, whilst the decision on the complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
- 3.6 The Clerk will communicate in writing the decision that has been made by the Council and the nature of any action taken by the Council.

#### **4. COMPLAINTS AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE OF THE COUNCIL**

- 4.1 Complaints made against the actions of an employee will be investigated and dealt with in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.
- 4.2 Any complaint against an employee must be submitted in writing to the Clerk.
- 4.3 If the complaint is against the actions of the Clerk, it should be submitted in writing to the Chairman.

#### **5. COMPLAINTS AGAINST A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL**

- 5.1 The Council is unable to investigate complaints against any of its members. Parish and Town Councillors sign up to a Code of Conduct on taking office which adheres to the principles of public life. The Padstow Town Council Code of Conduct can be viewed on the Council website at [www.padstow-tc.gov.uk](http://www.padstow-tc.gov.uk)
- 5.2 If you wish to submit a complaint for breach of this code, you should do so to the Monitoring Officer at Cornwall Council at the following address:

The Monitoring Officer  
Cornwall Council  
Treyew Road  
TRURO  
Cornwall

Further information can be accessed from [www.cornwall.gov.uk](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk)

#### **6 VEXATIOUS COMPLAINANTS**

- 6.1 A vexatious complainant is one who persists unreasonably with their complaints or makes complaints in order to inconvenience the Council rather than genuinely resolve an issue. This may include making serial complaints about different issues or continuing to raise the same or similar matters repeatedly.
- 6.2 If such complaints affect the Council's ability to undertake its work and provide its services to others, it may alter the way it deals with complaints by not acknowledging or responding to vexatious complaints. Complaints will still be read in case they contain new information.
- 6.3 If a complainant is to be classified as vexatious they shall be informed so and given a timescale of how long this will remain the case.
- 6.4 Should a vexatious complainant make a new complaint about new issues these will be treated on their merits.