

## Agenda item 7

### For decision – Approve the Complaints Procedure

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As part of our annual review of chapters in FTC’s constitution it became apparent that we do not have a clear complaints procedure designed for members of the public.

Chapter 4, Staff Handbook, advises members of staff on the complaints procedure that they should follow if they have a complaint against a colleague or Cllr. Similarly, Chapter 9, Councillors Code of Conduct, contains the procedure for complaints against a Cllr.

Recently the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) published a model complaints procedure. This was timely for FTC as we have been proactively reviewing our data protection procedures.

The draft Complaints Procedures is below.

<b>Recommendation</b>
Approve and adopt the Complaints Procedure as part of the constitution

# Frome Town Council Constitution

## Chapter (tbc) - Complaints Procedure

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Date Adopted: 4 July 2018  
Review Date: July 2020

A copy of this document is also available in different formats such as large print, Braille, audio or in a different language, please contact the office if this is required.

Frome 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. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from this council, or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by this council, this complaints procedure sets out how you may complain to the council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.

1. This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.
2. This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:
  - complaints by one council employee against another council employee, or between a council employee and the council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the council's disciplinary and grievance procedures, which can be found in Chapter 4 Staff Handbook.
  - complaints against councillors. Complaints against councillors are covered in Chapter 9 Councillor Code of Conduct and, if a complaint against a councillor is received by the council, it will be referred to the Town Clerk. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of Mendip District Council.
3. The appropriate time for influencing Council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the Council debates and votes on a matter. You may do this by writing to the Council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There is always an opportunity to raise your concerns in Council meetings. If you are unhappy with a Council decision, you may raise your concerns with the Council.
4. You may make your complaint about the council's procedures or administration to the Town Clerk. You may do this in person, by phone, or by writing to or emailing. The addresses and numbers are set out below.
5. Wherever possible, the Town Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Town Clerk will normally try to acknowledge your complaint within five working days.
6. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Town Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Mayor who will report your complaint to the Council Matters Committee.
7. The Town Clerk or the Mayor will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or Cllrs of the Council.

8. The Town Clerk or the Mayor will notify you within 20 working days 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 cases the twenty working days timescale may have to be extended. If it is, you will be kept informed.)
9. If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to either the Council Matters Committee (where the complaint was made to the Town Clerk) or the Council (where the complaint was made to the Mayor and (usually within 20 working days) you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint.