

## IVYBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

### COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. Ivybridge Town Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in the town or are visitors to the town, 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 from this Council or anyone acting on behalf of 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 services, administration and procedures, and may include complaints about how Council employees have dealt with your concerns.
3. The Town Council's website includes a form designed to assist with the setting out of your complaint. The form is also available by contacting the Town Council's office.
4. This Complaints Policy does not apply to:
  - i. 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.
  - ii. Complaints made by Councillors against fellow Councillors or the Town Council are dealt with through a separate Protocol
  - iii. Complaints against Councillors by third parties are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members as adopted by the Council and, if a complaint against a Councillor is received by the Council, it will be referred to the Monitoring Officer of South Hams District Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of South Hams District Council.
  - iv. Complaints about democratic decisions taken by the Council decided on a vote.
  - v. Complaints by Councillors against the Town Clerk or Council employees. These matters are dealt with under the Council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.
  - vi. Claims against the Town Council of any description.
5. For complaints (other than those set out in para. iii above, to which separate arrangements apply) in the first instance you should draw the attention of the manager responsible for the service which is the

subject of your complaint to the matter. Details of the relevant manager can be obtained by contacting the Town Council.

6. If you are dissatisfied with the response you receive from the manager you may take your complaint to the Town Clerk.
7. Wherever possible, the Town Clerk will try to resolve your complaint promptly. If this not possible, the Town Clerk will ask the Complaints Sub-Committee to investigate further. In any event, the Town Clerk will normally acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days.
8. If your complaint is about the Town Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Town Mayor who will report your complaint to the Complaints Sub-Committee. The Complaints Sub-Committee will generally consist of 3 Councillors.
9. The Clerk, or where appropriate the Complaints Sub-Committee, will investigate each complaint , obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or staff or members of the Council or from whatever source is necessary. The investigation may involve offering you an interview or requesting further information from you in order to further examine the complaint. If you are invited to attend an interview you may bring a companion with you.
10. The Clerk, or Mayor or Chairman of the Complaints sub-committee will generally aim to notify you within 20 working days of the outcome of your complaint and what action, if any, the Council proposes to take as a result of your complaint. Occasionally, the 20 working days timescale may have to be extended and if so you will be advised of the anticipated revised timescale for a response to your complaint
11. If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the Appeals Panel of the Town Council and (usually within 8 weeks) you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint. It may be that you are invited for an interview with the Appeals Committee and if so you are entitled to bring a companion with you. The decision of the Appeals Panel is final.
12. Any appeal should be submitted in writing, within 14 calendar days of the letter advising of the determination of the complaint setting out the point, or points on which the appeal is based.
13. In the event of vexatious, unreasonable or malicious complaints, the Council reserves the right, having requested the complainant desist from the inappropriate action, to cease communication with the complainant.