

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Reviewed 12th November 2018

1 Our commitment to you:

1.1 We aim to provide the best possible services to our customers – the people and organisations who make up the community in Ferndown. It may not always be possible to meet everyone's needs but our response should always be helpful, courteous and efficient.

1.2 Problems will arise from time to time and many will be resolved in discussion with officers of the Council. If you have not previously raised your concern with the Council, you should contact the Town Clerk by email, phone, visit or letter and request that action be taken. Such a request will not be treated as a complaint.

1.3 Also, don't forget that 17 Town Councillors are your elected representatives and are available to advise and assist in any way they can with your concerns (their names and contact details are available at www.ferndown.gov.uk or from the Council offices).

1.4 On occasion, however, you may feel that your particular problem has not been given proper attention or has been mishandled and you wish to complain.

2 This document explains how to:

- Make a complaint, and
- How to make a complaint against a Councillor

3 How to make a complaint about the Council:

3.1 A letter of complaint can be sent to the Town Council at the address given below. You will receive an acknowledgement, giving the name of the officer dealing with your case, by return post.

3.2 Where appropriate we may telephone you in the first instance. We aim to respond in writing within 10 working days of receipt of your complaint. If there is likely to be an unavoidable delay beyond 10 working days we will let you know.

3.3 You can ask someone like a friend or relative to help with your complaint, or even make it for you – this will not affect the way we deal with your complaint. Please be assured that any complaint will be treated confidentially and that the fact you have complained will not affect any dealings you have with the Council.

If I am not satisfied, what do I do next?

3.4 Contact the Town Clerk in writing. Receipt of your complaint will be acknowledged within one working day and a response sent as soon as possible (generally within 15 working days of receipt).

If I am still not happy, what do I do?

3.5 You may contact the Local Government Ombudsman if you are still unhappy with the Council's response. A complaint form can be obtained from the Local Government Ombudsman's website at www.lgo.org.uk.

4 How to make a complaint about a Councillor:

4.1 The procedures detailed so far apply to complaints about the Council's service. If you wish to make a complaint about a breach of the Code of Conduct by a District or Town Councillor, an online form can be found at www.dorsetforyou.com/complaints.

4.2 Alternately you may write to:
The Monitoring Officer, Christchurch and East Dorset Councils, Civic Offices,
Bridge Street, Dorset, BH24 1AZ. Alternatively email
rjones@christchurchandeastdorset.gov.uk

4.3 Please tell us if you have any comments about this complaints procedure or our response.

4.4 It also helps to know when we are doing something particularly well so we would appreciate your feedback.