

## **SLEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

### **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

This Policy sets out procedures for dealing with any complaints that members of the public may have about Sleaford Town Council's administration and procedures. It includes complaints relating to the Council's employees. The Code of Conduct adopted by the Council covers councillors. Complaints against policy decisions made by the Council are to be referred back to Council (but note the Council's Standing Orders which say that issues shall not be re-opened for six months).

If a complaint about procedures or administration as practised by the Council's employees is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk to the Council, they are to advise the complainant to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk to the Council and be assured that it will be dealt with within fourteen days of receipt.

If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk to the Council he or she should be advised to put it to the Mayor. On receipt of a written complaint the Mayor or the Clerk to the Council (except where the complaint is about his or her own actions), should try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This must not be done without first notifying the person complained against and giving him or her an opportunity to comment. Efforts should be made to attempt to settle the complaint at this stage.

Where the Clerk to the Council receives a written complaint about his own actions, he is to refer the complaint to the Mayor. The Clerk to the Council is to be given an opportunity to comment. The Clerk to the Council or Chairman of Council/Mayor is to report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant. The

Clerk to the Council or Mayor is to bring any written complaint that has not been settled to the next meeting of the Council.

The Clerk to the Council is to notify the complainant of the date of the meeting at which the complaint will be considered, and the complainant will be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally. If the complaint is likely to result in the Disciplinary or Grievance Procedures being used, or Standard Committee action being taken, then it must be deferred until such action is completed.

As soon as possible after the decision has been made, both it and the nature of any action to be taken are to be communicated in writing to the complainant. The Council can defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary. The complaint is to be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.

Complaints about elected, co-opted and independent councillors behaving inappropriately should be made to the Standards Committee of the District Council (via the Monitoring Officer). For more information on how to complain, please contact the Monitoring Officer of North Kesteven District Council on 01529 414155

Sleaford Town Council adopted this policy at its full council meeting on 13 July 2005.

**E Reilly**

Clerk to the Council