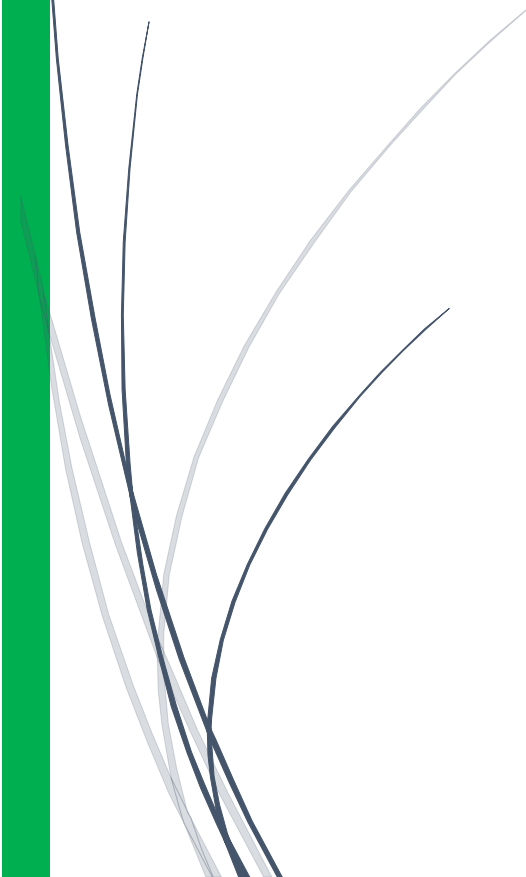


# Winchcombe Town Council

## Public Complaints Procedure



Winchcombe



# **WINCHCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

## **Code of Practice for Handling Complaints**

Winchcombe Town Council recognises that from time to time there will be concerns expressed by members of the public over the activities of the Council or one of its members or employees.

This is the Council's procedure for the handling of complaints which allows people to have a method of address to the Council if they feel they have a complaint or have been unfairly treated in their dealings with the Council staff, Councillors, the Council, or its Committees.

## **What the complaints procedure does not cover**

- Financial irregularity (instead refer to the local elector's statutory right to object to a Council's audit of accounts (Audit Commission Act 1998 s.16 or consult with the Council's auditor or the Audit Commission)
- Criminal activity (instead refer to the Police)

## **General Complaints**

1. All complaints must be made in writing (by post or through email) and addressed to the Clerk
2. On receiving a written complaint, the Clerk shall try to settle or resolve the complaint directly
3. If the complaint is about the behaviour of a member or employee of the Council, the Clerk must also notify the person and offer the opportunity for them to comment on the manner in which it is intended to try and settle the complaint
4. If necessary, the Clerk will send a holding letter to the complainant to allow further time to address the issues raised
5. The Clerk or Chair shall bring any written complaint which has not been settled to the next meeting of the Council and 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

6. The Clerk shall consult with the Chair / Vice Chair to consider whether the written complaint warrants discussion at a Council meeting in the absence of the press and public i.e. in closed session. The decision on the complaint shall be recorded for the minutes which are then in the public domain
7. The Clerk will communicate in writing the decision that has been made by the Council and any action to be taken by the Council.

All complaints must be dealt with in writing (either by post or via email) to ensure a complete paper trail record is kept.

### **Complaints against an Officer of the Council**

1. All complaints must be submitted in writing
2. If the complaint is against the actions of the Clerk, it should be submitted in writing to the Chair
3. If the complaint is made against the actions of an employee, it will be considered as an employment issue and should be dealt with in conjunction with the internal Disciplinary Procedure. The Clerk will present the complaint to the Council for consideration at a meeting held in the absence of the press or public
4. If the complaint is made against the actions of the Clerk, it will be considered as an employment issue and should be dealt with in conjunction with the internal Disciplinary Procedure. The Chair will present the complaint to the Council for consideration at a meeting held in the absence of the press or public
5. The Complainant may be invited to attend part of the meeting to explain the nature of their complaint, in the absence of the public and press
6. Before the meeting starts the Chair will introduce all the parties present
7. Persons mentioned in the complaint will have the opportunity to explain the nature of their actions to the meeting, in the absence of the public and press
8. The result of any council consideration of a complaint will be announced at the next Council meeting in public

### **Complaints against an elected or co-opted Member of the Council**

Parish and Town Councillors sign up to a Code of Conduct upon taking office. A member of the public who wishes to submit a complaint about a breach of this code should do so

in writing to the Monitoring Officer at the following address outlining the complaint and the reasons why you feel the Councillor has breached the Code of Conduct:

The Monitoring Officer  
Tewkesbury Borough Council Offices  
Gloucester Road  
Tewkesbury  
Gloucestershire  
GL20 5TT

Contact details for the current Winchcombe Town Council Chair / Vice Chair can be found at [www.winchcombetowncouncil.co.uk](http://www.winchcombetowncouncil.co.uk)

The Winchcombe Town Council Clerk can be contacted at [clerk@winchcombetowncouncil.co.uk](mailto:clerk@winchcombetowncouncil.co.uk) or in writing to:

Winchcombe Town Council  
Abbey Fields Community Centre  
Back Lane  
Winchcombe  
Gloucestershire  
GL54 5QH