

# WELLS CITY COUNCIL

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR USE IN COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE COUNCIL

Adopted 26<sup>TH</sup> March 2015. Reviewed February 2017

Any member of the public who is dissatisfied with the way a matter has been dealt with by the City Council should contact the Town Clerk, who will make every effort to deal with the matter informally and bring it to a satisfactory conclusion as quickly as possible.

The Town Clerk may make such enquiries as appear necessary and may put the response in writing where appropriate.

In the event that a person wishes to take it further, this document sets out the procedure to be followed.

**The following procedure has been adopted for dealing with complaints about the Council's administration or its procedures. Complaints about a policy decision made by the Council will be referred back to the Council or relevant Committee as appropriate, for consideration.**

**This procedure does not cover complaints about the conduct of a Member of the City Council. Such complaints should be made through Mendip District Council.**

### **Before the Meeting**

1. A complaint about the City Council's procedures or administration must be put in writing to the Town Clerk. If the complaint is notified orally to a Councillor or to the Town Clerk, a written record of the complaint will be made. The complaint must include the name and contact details of the complainant and the specific nature of the complaint.
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Town Clerk or another nominated officer of the Council, he or she should address it to the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
3. The Town Clerk, or other nominated officer, will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the committee established for the purposes of hearing complaints (the Finance and General Purposes Committee). Due to the Data Protection Act, complaints will normally be heard in confidential session; the complainant will be advised on this.
4. The complainant will be invited to attend the meeting and to bring with them a representative if they wish.
5. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied on. The council shall provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting and shall do so promptly, allowing the claimant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.

### **At the Meeting**

6. The Complaints Committee (F&GP) shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint will be announced at the meeting, in public.
7. The Chairman should introduce everyone and explain the procedure.

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8. The complainant (or representative) should outline the grounds for complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by (i) the Town Clerk or other nominated officer and then (ii) members.
9. The Town Clerk or other nominated officer will have an opportunity to explain the council's position and questions may be asked by (i) the complainant and (ii) members.
10. The Town Clerk or other nominated officer and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.
11. The Town Clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be asked to leave the room while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, *both* parties shall be invited back.
12. The Town Clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be given the opportunity to wait for the decision, but if the decision is unlikely to be finalised on that day they should be advised when the decision is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them.

### **After the Meeting**

13. The decision should be confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken.

### **Contacts:**

#### **Town Clerk**

Address: Wells City Council  
Market Place  
Wells  
Somerset BA5 2RB

Telephone: 01749 673091

Email: [townclerk@wells.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@wells.gov.uk)

#### **Chairman of Finance & General Purposes Committee**

Address: Wells City Council  
Market Place  
Wells  
Somerset BA5 2RB

Telephone: 01749 673091

Email: [reception@wells.gov.uk](mailto:reception@wells.gov.uk)