

# Crewe Town Council

## Compliments, Suggestions and Complaints Policy and Procedure



### 1. Introduction

Crewe Town Council is committed to providing a high quality service but we do acknowledge that occasionally things go wrong. We welcome feedback from our customers, and we recognise that complaints, compliments and suggestions are a valuable source of information to help us to improve our services and put things right when they go wrong.

### 2. How to complain

If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from Crewe Town Council, or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by the Council, this Policy and Procedure sets out how you may complain to the council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.

This Policy and Procedure applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.

This Policy and Procedure does not apply to:

- Complaints by one council employee against another council employee, or between a council employee and the council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- Complaints against councillors. Complaints against councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2013 and confirmed annually at the start of the civic year. If a complaint against a councillor is received by the council, it will be referred to the Standards Committee of Cheshire East Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of Cheshire East Council.

The appropriate time for influencing Council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the Council debates and votes on a matter. You may do this by writing to the Council in advance of the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There may also be the opportunity to raise your concerns in the public participation section of Council meetings. If you are unhappy with a Council decision, you may raise your concerns with the Council, but Standing Orders prevent the Council from re-opening issues for six months from the date of the decision, unless there are exceptional grounds to consider this necessary and the special process set out in the Standing Orders is followed.

You may make your complaint about the council's procedures or administration to the Town Clerk. You may do this in person, by phone, via the contact form on the Town Council website, or by writing to or emailing the Town Clerk. The addresses and numbers are set out below.

Wherever possible, the Town Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Town Clerk will normally try to acknowledge your complaint within five working days.

If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Town Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Leader of the Council who will report your complaint to the Finance and Resources Committee of the Council.

The Town Clerk or the Finance and Resources Committee of the Council (as appropriate) will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the Council.

The Town Clerk or the Leader of the Council will notify you within 20 working days of the outcome of your complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take as a result of your complaint. (In exceptional cases the twenty working days timescale may have to be extended. If it is, you will be kept informed.)

If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the Finance and Resources Committee of the Town Council or to the full Council (as appropriate) and (usually within eight weeks) you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint.

### **3. Unreasonable or unreasonably persistent complaints**

All complaints will be processed in accordance with this policy and procedure. However, during the investigation of a complaint, or once the Town Council has concluded an investigation into a complaint, staff or Councillors may have contact with unreasonably persistent complainants or unreasonable complainant behaviour. If the Town Council is satisfied that the original complaint has been, or is being, properly dealt with and that there is nothing further that can reasonably be done; and if the frequency and nature of the contact is unreasonably hindering the carrying out of the Council's business, the Town Clerk or Council Leader may take appropriate steps to limit contact with a particular individual. Such a decision will only be taken after careful consideration, and taking into account all the circumstances. Before applying any restrictions the complainant will be given a warning of the steps that will be taken if his or her actions continue and an explanation of the reasons why.

#### 4. Compliments and Suggestions

Compliments, suggestions and comments should be recorded on the complaints database to assist with the evaluation of services. An acknowledgement thanking the customer for their compliment, suggestion or complaint should be sent within 3 working days. Where appropriate, the customer should be informed of the outcome of any further deliberations on their suggestion or comment.

#### 5. Monitoring and reporting.

The Town Clerk will maintain a database of all complaints, compliments, suggestions and comments received, and actions taken as a result. A summary will be reported annually to Finance and Resources Committee.

#### Contacting the Council

Website contact form: <http://www.crewetowncouncil.gov.uk/contact-us/>

Town Clerk:

Town Clerk  
Crewe Town Council  
Hightown  
Crewe  
CW1 3BY

01270 756975

Email via [www.crewetowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.crewetowncouncil.gov.uk)

Council Leader

Contact info via [www.crewetowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.crewetowncouncil.gov.uk)

**Approved by Council 8/9/15**