



## NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

### Complaints Policy and Procedures

1. This Policy sets out procedures for dealing with any complaints that anyone may have about Council's administration and procedures. It applies to the Town Council's employees. Councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct adopted by Northam Town Council on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2012. Complaints against policy decisions made by Council shall be referred back to Council (but note the paragraph of Council's Standing Orders, which says that issues shall not be re-opened for six months).
2. If a complaint about procedures or administration as practised by the Council's employees is notified orally to a Councillor or the Town Clerk, they should seek to satisfy the complaint fully. If that fails, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Town Clerk and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt.
3. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Town Clerk, he or she should be advised to put it to the Chairman of Council.
4. (a) On receipt of a written complaint, The Chairman or the Town Clerk (*except where the complaint is about his or her own actions*), shall try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This shall not be done without first notifying the person complained against and giving him or her an opportunity to comment. Effort should be made to attempt to settle the complaint at this stage. Complaints about an

employee of the Council will be dealt with as an employment matter.

(b) Where the Chairman receives a written complaint about the Town Clerk's own actions, he or she shall refer the complaint to The Chairman of the Human Resources Committee. The Town Clerk shall be notified and given an opportunity to comment.

5. The Town Clerk or Chairman shall report to the next meeting of full Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
6. The Town Clerk or Chairman shall bring any written complaint that has not been settled to the next meeting of full Council. The Town Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered and the complainant shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally. (Unless such a matter may be related to Grievance, Disciplinary or Standard Board proceedings that are taking, or likely to take place when such a hearing may prejudice those hearings when the complaint will have to be heard under In Committee business to exclude any member of the public or the press, or deferred on appropriate advice received).
7. Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.