



RAMSEY TOWN COUNCIL

Complaints Policy and Procedure – Approved by Ramsey Town Council 8 November 2018 (reviewed 27 May 2021)

The object of any complaints procedure is to put things right when they go wrong and ensure that mistakes do not reoccur in the future.

What constitutes a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the Town Council's action or lack of action or about the standard of a service delivered by the Council. The complaint may relate to an action taken or a service delivered by the council itself or a person or body acting on behalf of the Council.

What is a complaints procedure?

The way the council manages any report of a problem with the service you are getting or trying to get from the Council, or a problem with things the council does or doesn't do, is via a complaints procedure.

What can be expected?

The aims of a complaints procedure are to ensure the process is:

- well documented and publicised
- easy to understand and use
- helpful and receptive, not adversarial
- objective and based on clear procedures
- capable of putting things right where necessary
- sensitive to the needs and circumstances of the complainant
- adequately resourced and fully supported by the elected town councillors and officers
- regularly analysed to spot patterns of complaint and lessons for service improvement

How to complain

Verbal complaint- these should be to the Clerk of the Council and can be either as a simple phone call or in person. This type of complaint would be to report some minor matter or need for repair to property owned or operated by the Council such as a failed street light. A verbal complaint will normally be dealt with directly by the Clerk without any need for a response. You may make a complaint to a councillor but under legislation governing parish councils a councillor has no authority to act as an individual and must refer the matter to the Clerk.

Written complaint – to register a written complaint please obtain and complete a copy of the Council's complaint form with any information you wish to provide to support your complaint and return it to the Council's address. This should be addressed to the Clerk unless the complaint concerns the Clerk. In this instance the complaint should be sealed and addressed to 'The Council Chairman – Private and Confidential'. Written complaints should be for matters of a serious nature and once resolved will be recorded in the Council's minutes. However certain types of human resource or other sensitive issues

may under certain parts of legislation be exempt from publication. You may also send a letter or email of complaint to the Council, but you may be asked to complete the complaints form in order for a consistent record of communications on complaints to be kept.

Nature of complaint

Before making a complaint, it is important to contact the Council to ensure the Council is the 'Responsible Body' to handle the complaint. It is also important to clearly identify and document the details of the complaint. The way in which a complaint is handles is dependent on the nature of the complaint and different types of complaint are handles in different ways. The following table summarises how different types of written complaint are handled by the Council.

Nature of the complaint	Who to complain to	How to complain	Who will deal with your complaint
Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • processes • procedures • services 	Contact the Clerk of the Council who will provide you with a complaint form	Complete the form and add any supporting evidence. You should receive an acknowledgement from the Clerk in writing.	The Clerk or Council. The Clerk may deal with and respond to the complaint or the matter may be debated by the Council at a council meeting and if so the Clerk's response will be based on the decision of the Council.
Conduct of an employee	Contact the Clerk of the Council who will provide you with a complaint form.	Complete the form and add any relevant evidence to support your complaint. You should receive an acknowledgement from the Clerk in writing. However, if the complaint is about the Clerk, the complaint should be sent to the Chairman of the Council, marked private and confidential.	The complaint may be resolved or escalated and be treated as an internal disciplinary matter to be dealt with under the council's employee disciplinary procedure. In the event that the matter escalates, the Council will provide a copy of the disciplinary procedure on request.
Financial Irregularity	Contact the Clerk of the Council who will provide you with a complaint form. If this fails, contact the Monitoring Officer at Huntingdonshire District Council. The Monitoring Officer will	Complete the form and add any other relevant evidence to support your complaint. You should receive an acknowledgement from the Clerk in writing.	The Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer of the Council should endeavour to provide an explanation. If you are not satisfied you can report the matter to Full Council and/or the External Auditor.

	provide you with a complaint form to register a formal complaint.		
Conduct of a Councillor	Contact the Clerk of the Council first to resolve the matter locally. The Clerk will provide you with a complaint form. If this fails contact the Monitoring Officer at Huntingdonshire District Council, who will provide you with a complaint form to register a formal complaint.	Complete the form and add any other relevant evidence to support your complaint. You should receive written acknowledgement form the Clerk/Monitoring Officer.	The Monitoring Officer. Matters may be lengthy if an investigation is undertaken. The matter may be referred for consideration.
Criminal Activity	Contact the Police. They may ask you to complete forms or be interviewed.	This is a civil matter so complete any forms and provide any relevant written evidence to support your concern	The Police. Depending on severity, the matter may go to court.

Ramsey Town Council Complaint Form

Date	
Name	
Address and Postcode	
Daytime telephone number	
Evening telephone number	
Nature of complaint – please give details of:	
1. What you wish to complain about	
2. When and where the situation took place including date, time and location if possible	
3. The names and if possible the contact details of any others involved	
4. In your opinion what action would resolve the matter	

To register a complaint please complete and return this form (using another sheet if necessary) together with any other information you wish to provide to support your complaint to the Clerk:

Ramsey Town Council
7 Church Green
Ramsey
PE26 1DW

Or email gcook@ramseytowncouncil.org.uk