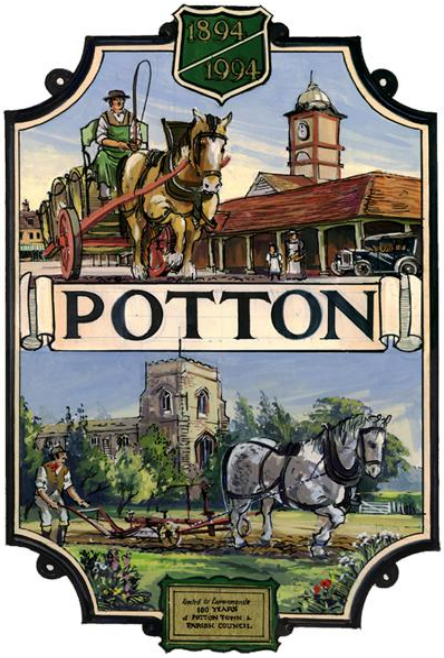
Potton Town Council



Complaints Procedure

Jonathan Whitehurst
Town Clerk

Adopted: 2nd April 2019

Last reviewed: January 2026

Procedure for Handling Complaints

1. The following procedure will be adopted for handling 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.

2. This procedure does not cover complaints about the conduct of a member of the Town Council. Any complaint that a Councillor may have breached the Council's adopted Code of Conduct should be referred to the Monitoring Officer of Central Bedfordshire Council's Monitoring Officer or the Local Standards Committee.

3. If a complaint about procedures, administration or the actions of any of the Council's employees is notified orally to a Councillor, or to the Town Clerk, a written record of the complaint will be made, noting the name and contact details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint.

4. The complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Town Clerk at the Town Council office. The complaint will be dealt with within 21 days of receipt.

5. (a) On receipt of a written complaint, the Town Clerk (except where the complaint is about the Town Clerk's own actions) or Chairman of the Council (if the complaint relates to the Clerk), will seek to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This will not be done without first notifying the subject of the complaint and giving him or her an opportunity to comment. Efforts should be made to resolve the complaint at this stage.

   (b) Where the Town Clerk or a Councillor receives a written complaint about the Clerk's actions, he or she shall refer the complaint to the Chairman of the Council. The Town Clerk will be formally advised of the matter and given an opportunity to comment.

6. The Town Clerk (or Chairman) will report any complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant to the next meeting of the Council.

7. The Town Clerk (or Chairman) will report any complaint that has not been resolved to the next meeting of the Council. The Clerk will notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered and the complainant will be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint to the Council.

8. Matters relating to grievance or disciplinary proceedings that are taking, or are likely to take place, should be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary and Grievance procedures.

9. The Council may consider whether the circumstances of any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public, but any decision about the complaint will be announced at the Council meeting in public.

10. The Council may consider in the circumstances of any particular complaint whether to make any without liability payment or provide other reasonable benefit to any person who has suffered loss as a result of the Council's maladministration. Any payment may only be authorised by the Council after obtaining legal advice and advice from the Council's auditor on the propriety of such a payment.

11. As soon as possible after the decision has been made (and in any event not later than 10 days after the meeting) the complainant and the subject of the complaint will be notified in writing of the decision and any action to be taken.

12. The Council may defer dealing with any complaint if it is of the opinion that issues arise on which further advice is necessary. The advice will be considered and the complaint dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.