



Protocol for dealing with complaints

Introduction

1. Complaints about an employee of Credition Town Council should be dealt with as an employment matter. A complainant will be assured that the matter will be dealt with internally as such and appropriate action taken as required.
2. This procedure is aimed at those situations where a complaint has been made about the administration or the procedures of the Council and is not an appropriate forum for a complaint against an individual.
3. Credition Town Council will undertake to investigate all complaints made in accordance with this protocol and shall convene special meetings as necessary to meet the deadlines of this procedure.
4. At all stages of the complaint, the Town Clerk will be responsible and will be the point of contact.

Conduct of councillors

5. Mid Devon District Council is required by the Localism Act 2011 to have in place arrangements for dealing with allegations that councillors, and co-opted members have failed to comply with the Code of Conduct. They also investigate and determine those allegations. All complaints must be made in writing. Their arrangements cover district councillors, councillors from parish and town councils within Mid Devon and co-opted members of those councils.

To make a complaint about a Councillor, please visit [Complaints about councillors - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](https://www.middevon.gov.uk/complaints-about-councillors) or write to the Monitoring Officer, Mid Devon District Council, Phoenix House, Phoenix Lane, Tiverton, Devon, EX16 6PP.

Procedure

6. In the first instance, complaints made will be responded to by the Proper Officer within 14 days.
7. The council will not deal with anonymous complaints.
8. Where possible, complaints will be dealt with through correspondence (letter/email), but where appropriate the Proper Officer will offer to discuss the complaint informally over the telephone or through a visit to the council offices. Every effort will be made to resolve the complaint at this stage.
9. Complaints resolved by direct action will be reported to Full Council, reported as correspondence.



10. Unresolved complaints will be reported to the relevant committee and the formal complaint process will commence, as detailed below.

Before the meeting

11. The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about Credition Town Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk or other nominated Proper Officer
12. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk or other Proper Officer, they may be advised to put it to the Mayor.
13. The Clerk shall 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.
14. The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish.
15. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence which they wish to refer to at the meeting. Credition Town Council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

At the meeting

16. Credition Town Council shall consider whether the meeting warrants the exclusion of public and press.
17. Meetings will be held using the following format:
 - Chairman to introduce everyone
 - Chairman to explain procedure
 - Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint
 - Members to ask any question of the complainant
 - If relevant, Clerk, or other proper officer, to explain the Council's position
 - Members to ask any question of the Clerk, or other proper office
 - Clerk, or other proper officer, and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in that order)
 - Clerk, or other proper officer, and complainant to be asked to leave room while Members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made (If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties to be invited back)
 - Clerk, or other proper officer, and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when decision will be made.



After the meeting

18. Decision confirmed, in writing, within seven working days, together with details of any action to be taken.
19. The complaint will be considered closed, once the protocol for dealing with complaints has concluded.