



**Burnham-on-Sea
& Highbridge**
TOWN COUNCIL

Complaints Procedure

Date Adopted: 15th May 2023, reviewed 13th May 2024, reviewed 19th May 2025, reviewed 18th May 2026

To be reviewed annually

This complaints procedure applies to complaints about the council's service, its administration and procedures. It might also be used to address a complaint about how the council has dealt with your concerns.

Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge Town Council is committed to providing and improving the quality of service for the benefit of the people who live and work in its area. If you are dissatisfied with the level of service you have received from this Council, or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by this Council, this complaints procedure sets out how you may complain to the Council and how we will try to resolve your complaint.

We hope that most complaints can be settled quickly and informally through contact with a councillor or member of staff. We will aim to put matters right or give you an explanation. If that isn't possible or if that approach hasn't worked for you, you should follow this complaints procedure.

We regret that we are usually unable to acknowledge or consider complaints that are submitted anonymously and you are therefore encouraged to supply your name and address in all correspondence.

We take all complaints seriously and do our best to learn from them. We will investigate complaints in a fair and confidential way. Making a complaint about us does not mean that in future you will be treated differently to any other resident.

How to make a complaint

All complaints will be addressed according to the following procedure:

You may make your complaint about the Council's procedures or administration to the Town Clerk. You may do this in person or by writing to the Town Clerk at The Old Courthouse, Jaycroft Road, Burnham-on-Sea, TA8 1LE or emailing townclerk@burnham-highbridge-tc.gov.uk.

Your complaint will initially be dealt with by the Town Clerk who will acknowledge it within five working days.

The Town Clerk will investigate your complaint and might ask for further information if necessary from you and/or from councillors or staff.

The Town Clerk will try to resolve your complaint within fifteen working days. However, if the matter requires consideration at a committee meeting, it might take up to eight weeks before a full response can be given. You will be informed if this is the case.

If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the Full Council and usually within eight weeks you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint. The Full Council's decision is final.

Matters not dealt with under this complaint's procedure

Complaints about a councillor:

Complaints against Councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Town Council. All complaints should be made to the Monitoring Officer at Somerset Council.

The Monitoring Officer
Somerset Council,
County Hall, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4DY
Email – monitoringofficer@somerset.gov.uk

If a complaint against a Councillor is received by the Town Council, it will be referred to the Monitoring Officer at Somerset Council.

Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against Councillors may be obtained from the Somerset Council website <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/complaints-about-councillors> or telephone 01823 357628.

Complaint about a member of staff:

Any complaints about staff, including the Town Clerk, will be dealt with under this Council's Disciplinary and Grievance procedure. The Council will not, under any circumstances, enter into any correspondence or discussion about any action taken, formally or informally.

Complaints about staff should be sent to the Town Clerk and marked as confidential. Please be aware that individual councillors have no staff management responsibility and will redirect any complaints to the Town Clerk.

Complaints about the Town Clerk should be addressed to the Chair of the Human Resources Sub-Committee.

Comments falling short of a formal complaint

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 is also 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.

To register to speak, please email info@burnham-highbridge-tc.gov.uk or telephone 01278 788088.