Fakenham Connect
Oak Street
Fakenham
Norfolk
NR21 9DY
Tel: 01328 853653
e-mail:
info@fakenhamtowncouncil.gov.uk
website: fakenhamtowncouncil.gov.uk

Fakenham Town Council

COMPLIMENTS OR COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

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1. Introduction

Fakenham Town Council is committed to providing quality services for the benefit of people who live, work or visit the Town. However, things can sometimes go wrong and if they do, we need to know to enable us to put them right and take steps to improve our services. The Town Council sees all customer comments and feedback as a good way of evaluating its services. Complaints and comments are an important part of this process and help us to learn and develop. The Council will use this information to help drive improvements.

We aim:

- To make it easy for anyone to make a complaint
- To solve problems as quickly as possible
- To prevent problems for happening again, and
- To encourage good practice

2. Definitions

Compliments – Thanking the Town Council for something done or done particularly well.

Comments – Sometimes members of the public simply wish to comment about a council service, and do not wish to pursue a complaint. If applicable these will be forwarded to the relevant committee.

Complaints - an expression of dissatisfaction with the standard of service you have received that cannot be resolved through the normal day to day operational processes of the service involved. A complaint can only relate to a service that the Council already provides. It cannot relate to requests for new services or services provided by other local authorities.

However, information provided may highlight gaps in service provision that may be relevant to future consideration, and these will be forwarded to the relevant committee as a comment.

3. Scope of Policy

The following list is a guide to the range of complaints which are covered by this Complaints Policy:

- Failure to provide a service or to deliver to an acceptable service standard
- Issues regarding the attitude of staff and or their actions, lack of actions
- Dissatisfaction with the way council policy and procedure has been carried out
- Discrimination of any form as set out in the Equality Act 2010

Where there is any doubt the Town Clerk will decide whether or not a matter comes under the Councils definition of a complaint.

Most of the contact we have with members of the public are enquiries or requests for a service rather than complaints.

The Complaints procedure does not cover;

- Requests for a service
- Requests for information
- Requests for an explanation of a decision made in line with Regulations or Council Policy.
- Provision of information about an issue or problem
- Appeals against Council decisions using established procedures or Regulations
- Investigating matters of employee discipline
- Complaints which need to be referred to the Council's insurers

4. How to Contact us

In Person – either at the time of the event or by making an appointment at our office.
By Telephone - 01328 853653
In Writing to - Fakenham Town Council, Fakenham Connect, Oak Street, Fakenham, Norfolk N21 9DY
By Email to – info@Fakenhamtowncouncil.gov.uk

Complaints about any member of staff will be treated as a personal matter. Complaints about the Clerk should be made to the Chair of the Council.
Complaints about Councillors should be made to the North Norfolk District Council Monitoring Officer.

5. Assessment

If you have provided contact details, your compliant will be investigated, and we will contact you within 10 working days and either give you a full answer or give you a progress report

and explain why we need more time to further investigate. We will also tell you when you can expect a full answer. Anonymous complaints will not be investigated.

6. Review

If the complainant is not satisfied by the Council's response to a complaint about its procedures or administration, the final stage of the procedure allows the right to request a referral to be held at a Full Council meeting.

- All referral requests must be received in writing (unless there is a genuine reason this is not possible) and must include the reasons for the requests, and details of how the member of public believes the complaint should be resolved.
- The referral will be held at the next practicable Full Council Meeting.
- The complainant shall be invited to attend the meeting and may bring a representative with them.
- Copies of any documentation relating to the complaint should be made available to the Council and the complainant, seven working days prior to the meeting
- The Council shall decide whether the circumstances of the complaint warrant the exclusion of the public and press. Any decision on a complaint will be announced at the meeting in public.
- The Chairman will introduce everyone and explain the Council's procedure on handling a complaint.
- The complainant or their representative will be asked to outline the grounds for complaint.
- Councillors may ask the complainant any questions.
- If relevant, the Clerk to explain the Council's position.
- The decision, together with details of any action to be taken, will be confirmed in writing within seven days.
- The decision reached at Full Council will be final. There is no further right to appeal.

7. Unreasonable complaints or complainant behaviour

The Council is committed to making the Complaints procedure as accessible as possible and dealing with all complaints fairly but will not tolerate deceitful, abusive, offensive, threatening or other forms of unacceptable behaviour from complainants. This may be in the form of isolated incidents or serial facetious, vexatious or malicious complaints or behaviours. If this occurs, we will take proportionate action to protect the wellbeing of officers and the integrity of our processes. Some complaints may be justified but be pursued in inappropriate ways. In most instances, if we consider that someone's behaviour is unreasonable we will explain why and ask them to change it. We will also warn them that, if the behaviour continues, we may take action to restrict their contact with the Council. Where the behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of officers, we may report the matter to the police or consider taking legal action. In such cases we may not give the complainant a warning

Reviewed at Governance & Finance 16th June 2026
Ratified at Full Council 24th June 2026