

2026

Complaints

POLICY



MARLOW
TOWN COUNCIL



Complaints Policy

In the first instance residents wishing to make a complaint are encouraged to contact the Office, either by email (office@marlow-tc.gov.uk) or by telephone (01628 484024) or in person as we have found that most issues can be resolved informally.

Where issues cannot be resolved informally or the resident wishes to formalise the complaint it must be made in writing to office@marlow-tc.gov.uk or addressed to the Clerk, Marlow Town Council, Court Garden, Pound Lane, Marlow, SL7 2AG. The complaint email/letter should be titled “Formal Complaint” and include details of the complaint (including events, dates and names of those involved) and full contact details. All complaints will be treated as confidential. Anonymous complaints will not be considered.

The Clerk will share the complaint with the Mayor. If together they agree that a simple letter of explanation or apology, if appropriate, from the Clerk will answer the complaint, then this shall be the first course of action.

In all other instances the following procedure will be followed:

1. The Clerk will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days and advise the Complainant as to when and how the matter will be considered.
2. The Complainant will be invited to attend a meeting, at a suitable location, and may bring a representative with them. This meeting would normally take place within 28 days of receipt of the complaint. (Under some circumstances the complaint might be considered at a public meeting, and the Council will consider whether it would be appropriate to exclude the press and public when dealing with the complaint.)
3. At least five working days before the meeting the Complainant and the Council must provide the other party with copies of any documentation or other evidence which they wish to refer to at the meeting.
4. The Mayor will chair the meeting and another councillor will also be in attendance. Format of the meeting:
 - a) The Complainant or their representative will outline the grounds for their complaint.
 - b) Questions may be asked of the Complainant appropriate to the complaint.
 - c) If appropriate, the Clerk will explain the Council’s position.

- d) The Clerk and the Complainant in that order will be offered the opportunity for a final word.
 - e) The Clerk and Complainant will be asked to leave the room while councillors decide whether or not there are grounds for the complaint, and if further clarification becomes necessary, both parties may be invited back into the meeting.
 - f) The Clerk and Complainant will be invited back into the meeting to hear the decision or to be advised on when a decision will be made.
5. The Clerk will confirm the decision in writing within five working days together with details of any action to be taken.

Exceptions and variations to the procedure:

1. Where the complaint involves the Clerk then the complaint should be addressed to the Mayor.
2. In the event that the Mayor is involved in the issue another councillor will be appointed to chair.
3. This Complaints Procedure is not appropriate in the cases of:
 - Financial irregularity
 - Criminal activity
 - Member conduct
 - Employee conduct

These will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's disciplinary procedure, the police or the Audit Commission as appropriate.
4. Complaints about an individual Councillor should be made direct to the Monitoring Officer at Buckinghamshire Council democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
5. Where a Complainant persists in wishing to proceed when the complaint clearly has no reasonable basis, or when the Council has already taken reasonable action in response, or where some other appropriate procedure has been taken, it may be decided by the Mayor and the Clerk that no further action can usefully be taken and will inform the Complainant to that effect, making it clear that only new and substantive issues will merit a response.
6. There is a Vexatious Complaints Policy which sets out the management of abusive, persistent and/or vexatious Complainants. It explains how Marlow Town Council will deal with Complainants that fall within the scope of this definition.