

## **Compliments or Complaints**

If you have a complaint or a compliment about the Council, or you simply want to comment about our meetings, facilities, services or staff, we would like to hear from you. This form tells you how to complain, and what happens to your complaint on receipt. It also tells you who deals with the complaint, how you can be represented, when a decision is made and how you will be notified of this.

Feedback from our residents, whom we aim to serve efficiently and effectively, is the only way we can continually improve our services.

We aim:-

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

## **How to Contact us with your compliment or complaint**

You can contact Trunch Parish Council by telephone, in writing, or over the internet. A form is included with this leaflet which you can fill in and send back to us. A list of contact details is given on the back page of this leaflet.

## **What we will do when we hear from you**

We will deal with any comments about the Council as quickly as possible. We will make sure that your comments are directed to the right person. We may be able to give you an answer straight away, or we may need more time to investigate what you have told us. We will contact you within 15 working days of us hearing from you and either give you a full answer, or give you a progress report and explain why we need more time to investigate further. We will also tell you when you can expect a full answer.

## **Confidentiality**

We will treat your complaint in confidence. Details will only be given to those members of staff directly concerned. If you have a complaint, we hope we will be able to find out what went wrong and take steps to make sure it will not happen again.

## How to contact us

The Council's telephone number is:-

(01263) 833902

If writing, please write to:-

The Clerk  
Trunch Parish Council  
Pine Lodge  
Gimingham Road  
Trimingham  
Norfolk, NR11 8HP

Our email address is:-

[julie.chance@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:julie.chance@tiscali.co.uk)

The Council's website address is:-

[www.trunchparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.trunchparishcouncil.co.uk)

## Code of Practice for Complaints

1. If a complaint about the Parish Council is notified orally to a Councillor or the Parish Clerk and they cannot satisfy the complainant, then the complainant shall be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Parish Clerk on the form provided.
2. If a complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Parish Clerk he or she will be advised to put it to the Chairman.
3. Any written complaint will be answered within 7 days. Where it is not possible to give a full answer, an explanation of why more time is needed will be given. Where the complainant remains dissatisfied, a complaint form and copy of the code of practice will be sent within 7 days.
4. In the case of a complaint being received about a member of staff or Councillor, the person concerned will be notified and given an opportunity to comment on the matter. Complaints lodged about Council staff should be dealt with by the Chairman and only passed to the Council if the complainant remains dissatisfied.
5. The Clerk or Chairman shall report to the next meeting of the Parish Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
6. The Clerk or Chairman shall bring any written complaint which has not been settled to the next meeting of the Parish Council after the complaint has been initially investigated and the Clerk (or Chairman as appropriate) shall notify the complainant of the date by which the complaint will be considered. If necessary the Parish Council will appoint a Complaints Panel to fully investigate the complaint. If for any reason that date becomes unachievable, a letter and explanation for this will be sent to the complainant with a revised date.
7. The Complaints Panel will consist at least 3 members of the Parish Council of which one will be the Chairman.
8. The Complaints Panel should investigate all the evidence surrounding the complaint. Where a complaint is considered about a person, this will be dealt with in the absence of the press and public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
9. Complaints – Code of Conduct  
When a complaint is made relating to the Code of Conduct it should be sent direct to the Standards Board and then referred to the Monitoring Officer.
10. As soon as possible after the decision has been made, it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.

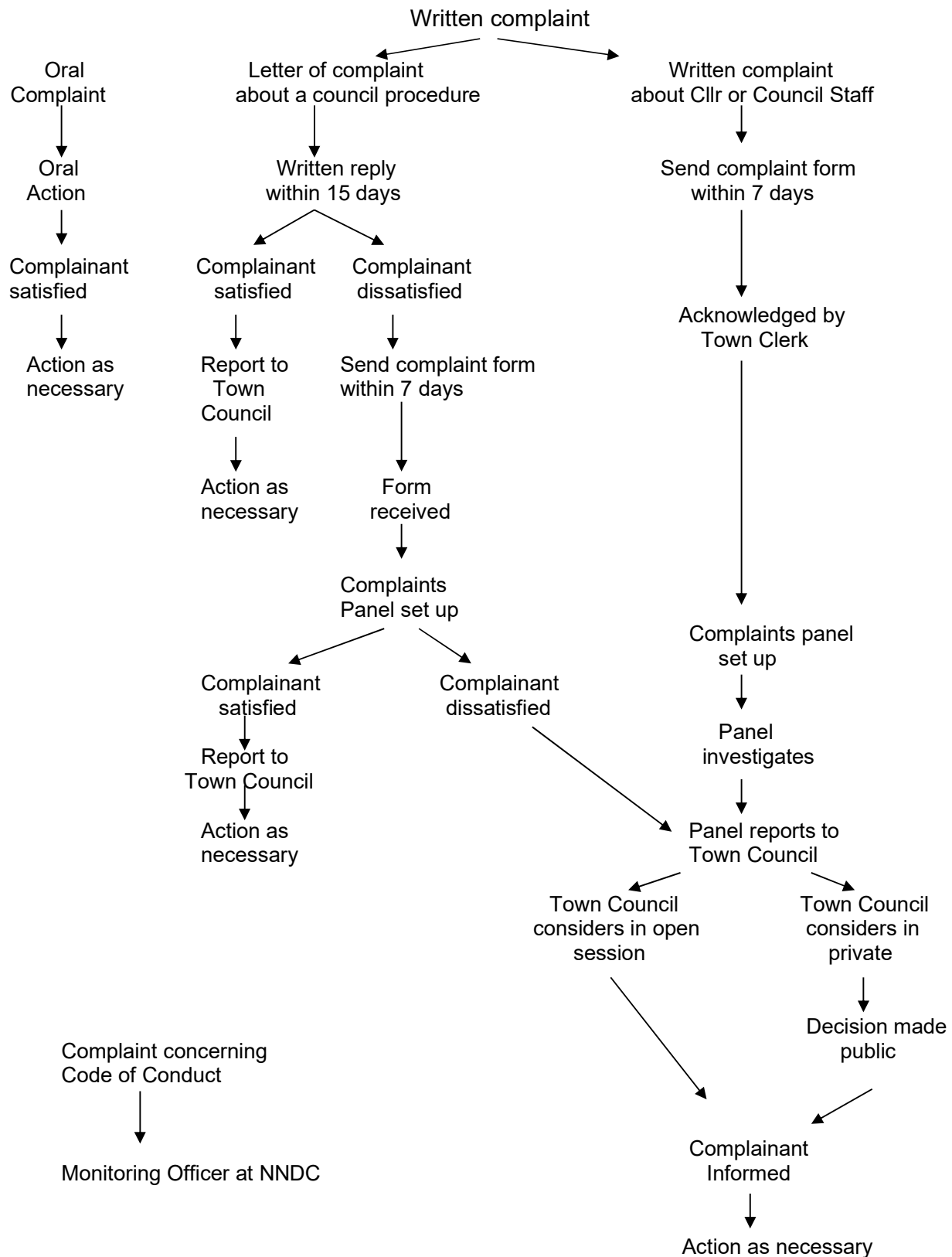
11. The Council shall defer investigating any written complaint *only* if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which legal advice is necessary. The complaint shall be considered at the next appropriate meeting after the advice has been received.

12. Complaints – Incident Book

A complaints incident book will be kept in the Council Offices. Staff involved in an incident or disagreement whether giving rise to complaint or not with a member of the public or councillor, must enter the details of it in this book within twenty-four hours of the incident taking place. An incident is considered as a situation where voices are raised, strong language used or threatening or violent behaviour is experienced. All complaints received in writing will be entered in this book.

# CODE OF PRACTICE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS

## Sequence of Events



## **Complaint Procedure**

### **Guidance to the Complaint Panel**

When enquiring into a complaint the Panel must consider the following:

- that the person(s) subject of the complaint must be given the opportunity of responding in answer to the complaint verbally or in writing or both. The person(s) subject to the complaint is given the right to have a friend present at any hearing if they choose to do so.
- Where the complaint concerns a member of staff, then the Grievance & Disciplinary Panel Procedure should be followed.
- Any person(s) who may be able to provide information to substantiate the complaint or otherwise should be spoken to and asked for their recollection. Such information may be verbal or in writing.
- The Panel may wish to illicit further information from the complainant and may offer the complainant the opportunity of further discussing the content of the complaint.
- The members of the Panel must record the time and date when the complainant, the person(s) complained of or witnesses were asked to comment.

