

NELSON TOWN COUNCIL
COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This is a two stage procedure.

STAGE 1

1. A complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Town Clerk.
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Town Clerk, he or she should be advised to address it to the Chairman of the Town Council.
3. The Town Clerk shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and inform the complainant that they will respond in full within ten working days. (Working days do not include weekends, bank holidays or days when the Town Clerk is on leave).
4. If the complainant is not satisfied with the Town Clerk's response, he may within fourteen days of that response, ask that the complaint be considered by the Town Council. At this stage, the complainant should also be advised whether the complaint will be treated as confidential or whether, for example, notice of it will be given in the usual way.

STAGE 2

5. The complainant shall then be invited to attend a meeting of the Town Council and be advised of the right to bring a representative if he or she wishes.
6. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Town Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied upon. The Town Council shall then provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which it wishes to rely at the meeting and shall do so promptly, allowing the complainant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.
7. At the meeting, the Town Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and press. Any decision on a complaint shall, however, be announced at the Town Council meeting in public.
8. The Chairman shall introduce everybody and explain the procedure.
9. The complainant (or representative) should outline the grounds for complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by (i) the Town Clerk and (ii) Members of the Town Council.

1.

10. The Town Clerk will have an opportunity to explain the Town Council's position and questions may be asked (i) by the complainant or the complainant's representative and (ii) Members of the Town Council.
11. The Town Clerk and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.
12. The Town Clerk, the complainant and the complainant's representative should be asked to leave the room while Members of the Town Council decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties shall be invited back.
13. The Town Clerk and the complainant shall be given the opportunity to wait for the decision but if the decision is unlikely to be finalised on that day, they should be advised when the decision is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them.
14. The decision should be confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action taken.

2.