HATFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

To ensure that your complaint is deal with appropriately please follow the advice below:

The Local Government Ombudsman as defines a complaint as:

'An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the council's action or lack of action or about the standard of a service, whether the action was taken or the service provided by the council itself or a person or body acting on behalf of the council.'

Some types of complaint cannot always be dealt with by the Council itself and may need to be referred elsewhere. The table below sets out where you should go to for different types of issues.

Type of conduct	Refer to
Financial irregularity	Local elector's statutory right to object to the Council's audit of accounts pursuant to the The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. On other matters the council may need to consult their auditor.
Criminal activity	The Police
Member conduct	In England a complaint relating to a member's failure to comply with the Town Council's Code of Conduct must be submitted to the standards team of the relevant principal authority, in this case the Monitoring Officer at Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council.
Employee conduct	Town Council's internal disciplinary procedure

Hatfield Town Council's complaints procedure aims to be:

- Well publicised and easy to use,
- Helpful and receptive,
- Non adversarial,
- Fair and objective,
- Based on a 'complaint'.
- Clear procedures and defined responsibilities,
- Quick, thorough, rigorous and consistent,
- Decisive and capable of putting things right where necessary,
- Sensitive to the special needs and circumstances of the complainant,
- Adequately resourced,
- Fully supported by councillors and officers; and
- Regularly analysed to spot patterns of complaint and lessons for service improvement.

HATFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Confidentiality
Hatfield Town Council endeavours to maintain confidentiality and will only disclose the identity of complainants to those who need to consider the complaint. However, please note that all correspondence may be read out at Council Meetings; therefore, should you wish to remain anonymous at meetings, please specify so in your correspondence.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE Step by step guide - what you need to do:

1. Initially, the complainant is asked to put the complaint about Hatfield Town Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Town Clerk:

   Mrs C McRoy, Town Clerk, Hatfield Town Council, Council Offices, Cuckoo Lane, Hatfield, Doncaster, DN7 6QE, Telephone: (01302) 840347 Email: office@hatfield-tc.gov.uk

2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk he or she is advised to address it to the current Town Mayor. This is currently Councillor David Fiennes-Gregory. Email: cllr.fiennesgregory@hatfield-tc.gov.uk

3. The Town Clerk or other nominated officer shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by Hatfield Town Council.

4. The complainant shall be invited to attend a meeting and to bring with them a representative if they wish.

5. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting the complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied on, and, in accordance with the principles of natural justice, Hatfield Town Council shall provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting and shall do so promptly, allowing the claimant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.

6. At the Council meeting the Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. However, any decision on a complaint will be announced in public at the Council meeting.

7. The Chair of the meeting should introduce everyone and explain the procedure.

8. The complainant (or representative) should outline the grounds for complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by (i) the Town Clerk or other nominated officer and then (ii), members.

9. The Town Clerk or other nominated officer will have an opportunity to explain the Council's position and questions may be asked by (i) the complainant and (ii), members.

10. The Town Clerk or other nominated officer and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.

11. The Town Clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be asked to leave the room while members 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.

12. The Town Clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should 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.

13. Following the meeting, the decision will be confirmed in writing within seven working days, together with details of any action to be taken.

Approved by Hatfield Town Council at the Town Council meeting held on 09/07/18