

## UPLYME PARISH COUNCIL – Complaints

1. This complaints procedure is intended to ensure that complaints by members of the public about the Council's actions or lack of action or standard of service are dealt with promptly and effectively. The object of the procedure is to put things right when they have gone wrong and ensure that mistakes do not recur in the future.  
Councillors are required to abide by the provisions of the Code of Conduct, copies of which may be downloaded from the Council's web site.
2. This procedure does not apply to:
  - complaints about the substance of policy decisions made by the Council (although members of the public may make comments or ask questions during the open forum during every Council and committee meeting);
  - complaints by an employee of the Council about the Council's actions as an employer, which should be dealt with under the Council's grievance procedure.
3. Complaints should be made in writing (by post or email) to the Clerk, and will be dealt with initially by the Clerk. If the complainant is unwilling to approach the Clerk a complaint may be made to the Chairman of the Council. Anonymous complaints will not be investigated.
4. Complaints will initially be read and responded to by the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and/or individual councillors, as appropriate. For simple matters, all that may be necessary is an apology, explanation, or a change in procedures.
5. For complex matters that require more detailed consideration (for example, they allege a breach of the Code of Conduct), or if any apology is not accepted, the matter will be referred to the Personnel and Estates Committee and a written response will be provided explaining the decision of the Committee and any action that is being taken as a result. If appropriate, the complainant will be invited to the meeting, in which case, he/she will be asked to provide any documents or other evidence at least 7 days in advance of the meeting, and will in turn be supplied with any Council material relating to the matter.
6. Complaints should be dealt with promptly. In general they will be acknowledged within 5 days and dealt with within 20 working days of receipt, although this time limit may be extended with the agreement of the complainant, or where the Clerk feels it necessary to take legal or other advice.
7. Committee decisions on a complaint will normally be announced in public. The complainant will be notified of the decision in writing, and also notified of what action will be taken.
8. When a complaint is upheld, the Clerk should report to Council what action has been taken to ensure that any mistake does not recur.