

New Milton Town Council

Youth and Family Services

Complaints Procedure

1. Purpose

New Milton Town Council is committed to delivering high-quality youth and family services. We value feedback and view complaints as an opportunity to improve our services.

This procedure explains how individuals can raise concerns or make complaints about the Youth and Family Services provision, and how those complaints will be handled fairly, transparently, and promptly.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to complaints relating to:

- The delivery or quality of Youth and Family Services
- The conduct of staff or volunteers
- Decisions made by the Youth and Family Services team
- Failure to provide a service

This procedure does not apply to:

- Safeguarding concerns (these must be reported immediately under the Council's Safeguarding Policy)
- Personnel matters relating to employees
- Complaints about other Town Council departments (these should follow the Council's corporate complaints procedure)



3. Who Can Make a Complaint

Complaints may be made by:

- Young people accessing services
- Parents, carers, or family members
- Partner organisations
- Members of the public

Where a complaint is made on behalf of a young person, consent may be required where appropriate.

4. Principles

All complaints will be handled in accordance with the following principles:

- Fairness and impartiality
- Confidentiality (within safeguarding and legal requirements)
- Timeliness
- Transparency
- A focus on resolution and service improvement

Young people will be supported to raise concerns in an age-appropriate and accessible manner.

5. Informal Resolution (Stage 1)

We encourage concerns to be raised informally in the first instance.

Concerns can be raised:

- In person
- By telephone
- By email
- In writing

The Youth and Family Services Manager will aim to:

- Acknowledge the concern within 3 working days



- Provide a response within 10 working days

Many issues can be resolved quickly at this stage.

6. Formal Complaint (Stage 2)

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome at Stage 1, or if the matter is sufficiently serious, a formal complaint may be submitted in writing.

Complaints should include:

- Name and contact details
- Details of the complaint
- Dates and relevant information
- The desired outcome

Formal complaints should be addressed to:

Town Clerk
New Milton Town Council
Town Hall
2 Ashley Road
New Milton
BH25 6AS

clerk@newmiltontowncouncil.gov.uk

The Council will:

- Acknowledge receipt within 5 working days
- Conduct a fair and proportionate investigation
- Provide a written response within 20 working days

If more time is required, the complainant will be informed.



7. Final Review (Stage 3)

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may request a review by the appropriate Council Committee or an independent reviewer (as determined by Council governance arrangements).

A request for review must be made within 10 working days of receiving the Stage 2 response.

The outcome of the review will be provided in writing and will be considered final under the Council's complaints process.

8. Safeguarding Concerns

If a complaint includes allegations of abuse, harm, or safeguarding risks, the matter will be referred immediately to the Council's Designated Safeguarding Lead and handled in accordance with safeguarding procedures. This may take precedence over the complaints process.

9. Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints will be considered; however, investigation may be limited if insufficient information is provided.

10. Vexatious or Repeated Complaints

The Council reserves the right to manage persistent, abusive, or vexatious complaints in line with its Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour Policy.

11. Learning and Improvement

Complaints are reviewed periodically to identify:

- Service improvements
- Training needs



- Policy updates
- Systemic issues

A summary of complaints (anonymised) may be reported to Council committees as part of governance and quality assurance.

12. Accessibility

This procedure is available:

- On the Youth website
- In printed format on request
- In alternative formats where reasonably required

Young people will be supported to make complaints in ways that are accessible and appropriate to their needs.

13. Monitoring and Review

This procedure will be reviewed annually or sooner if required by legislative or policy changes.

Adopted: October 2025

Review Date: Ongoing

