



Lowestoft Town Council -

Problem solving procedure for volunteers

Lowestoft Town Council has adopted the following problem solving procedure to help ensure that volunteers are treated fairly and not discriminated against; and to ensure that if a problem arises everyone knows what action to take.

The problem solving procedure will be followed where complaints arise, for example:

- If a volunteer makes a complaint about another volunteer, a member of staff or the organisation itself.
- If a volunteer's performance has declined, or someone has made a complaint about a volunteer's work, attitude or conduct.

The procedure has been adopted to

- ensure a consistent approach
- provide opportunities to find solutions to issues
- demonstrate LTC's commitment to good practice.

What to do if you need to make a complaint

Stage 1: Oral complaint

Initial complaints, whether concerning a member of staff, the organisation or another volunteer, should first be discussed informally. Many issues can be solved this way. Complaints should be raised with the Town Clerk or Volunteer Co-Ordinator as soon as possible:

Name	Title	Tel	Email
-------------	--------------	------------	--------------

[Add details](#)

Stage 2: Written complaint

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the oral complaint, you should make a formal complaint in writing to the **Chair** as set out below. They will designate a member of the Council to act as LTC's representative to deal with the complaint:

Name	Title	Address	Email
-------------	--------------	----------------	--------------

The Stage 2 formal complaint should be made, if possible, within 14 days of the Stage 1 oral complaint.

The LTC representative will provide a substantive response to your written complaint within 14 days.

Stage 3: Opportunity to appeal

If you are still not satisfied with the outcome, you may appeal to the **Chair** who will, if they deems it necessary, form a Complaints Appeal Panel:

You will be invited to attend a meeting of the Appeal Panel to discuss your complaint. You have the option to be accompanied to the meeting by a person of your choice. The Chair will respond with the panel's decision within 21 days, and the decision will be final.

What will happen if someone complains about you.

Stage 1: Oral discussion

The first step will be an informal discussion about the complaint with the Town Clerk or Volunteer Co-ordinator:

Name	Title	Tel	Email
-------------	--------------	------------	--------------

Add details

This is an opportunity for you to hear about the complaint and offer your side of the story. It will also provide the opportunity to identify some solutions to the problem, if required and appropriate.

The LTC will not take action on complaints made anonymously. Everyone should have the right to know what they have been accused of and by whom so that they are able to offer their side of the story.

You can choose to be accompanied to the meeting by a nominated person of your choice.

Stage 2: Written warning

If the issue is not resolved by discussion, you may be issued with a written warning outlining the reason for the complaint.

If this occurs you will be given the opportunity within 14 days of receiving the written warning to discuss the complaint formally with a representative of the LTC nominated by the Chair: **insert contact details**

Again, you may choose to be accompanied to any of these meetings by a person of your choice.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, the LTC will, where possible and appropriate, offer further training or alternative volunteer roles which may address any identified issues. However, if the organisation decides to ask you to leave, you will be given the opportunity to appeal.

Stage 3: Opportunity to appeal

If you have been asked to leave you can appeal in writing to the LTC Chair, who will, if they deems it necessary, form a Complaints Appeal Panel:

You will be given the option to be accompanied to the meeting by a person of your choice. The Chair will respond with the panel's decision within 21 days, and the decision will usually be final.

Exceptions

In some cases volunteers may be asked to stop volunteering immediately while the complaint is explored. For example, if a volunteer is accused of harassment, theft, or angry or violent behaviour.

The decision to ask a volunteer to stop volunteering will be confirmed in writing.

Further information

- All complaints will be treated confidentially and will only be discussed amongst those who are directly involved in trying to resolve the issue.
- The LTC will keep records of what happens and who is involved so that procedures remain transparent to everyone involved.
- Meetings will take place in a confidential place.
- You will be kept informed at every step of the procedure.

If you have further questions about the problem solving procedure, please contact the Town Clerk or Volunteer Co-ordinator:

Name

Title

Tel

Email

[Add details](#)