



## **Customer Service Standards**

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### **1. Purpose**

This document aims to outline ways that residents can contact us and what they can expect in terms of a response.

### **2. Principles**

- We strive to provide a high-quality service at all times and operate in accordance with legislative requirements.
- Policy matters are decided by Council at meetings open to the public. There are opportunities for members of the public to address meetings of the Council formally in addition to other informal opportunities to make their views known to Councillors.
- Council officers are responsible for advising the Council and taking action on the decisions of the Council. Officers have no part in the decision-making process.
- The Council acts in an open and transparent manner. Independent external and internal auditors report publicly on the Council's Finances. Information is also available as set out in law including the Freedom of Information Act.
- The Council has a formal complaints procedure. Vexatious complaints and attempts to misuse the Council's complaints procedure to pursue a personal agenda will not be tolerated.
- The Council welcomes constructive contributions or feedback from members of the public concerning policy issues and matters of concern to the Town. Complaints and criticism concerning Town Council policies and action should relate only to the policy issues and actions themselves. Attempts to undermine the local democratic process by the publication of allegations and information which may be selective and inaccurate concerning the personal and private lives of Councillors and Officers is wholly condemned.
- Council officers are employees of the Council and have not chosen to enter public life. The Council takes seriously its duty of care towards them as an employer. The Council recognises that unwarranted criticism and intrusion into their private lives through any media may be considered bullying and will not be tolerated.

### **3. Enquiries, Comments and Compliments**

Residents can make enquiries, comments and compliments by:

- Email
- telephone
- letter
- face to face
- social media
- website



Full details of these methods and the way we will respond to each is outlined below.

	<b>Email</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Post</b>	<b>Face to face</b>	<b>Social media</b>	<b>Website</b>
Contact details						
Hours of business	9am - 4pm Monday - Friday	9am - 4pm Monday - Friday	9am - 4pm Monday - Friday	By appointment only within 9am- 4pm Monday - Friday	9am - 4pm Monday - Friday	24 hours
Response times	Emails will be acknowledged within five working days of receipt and a full response provided within 20 working days.	If a question can be answered on the telephone, we will do so. If not, we will log the call and respond within 20 working days.	We will log the letter on receipt and respond within 20 working days.	Arrange private meetings for individuals within 20 working days of receipt of request.	Direct enquiries to website as far as possible. Queries requiring detailed responses will be provided by email.	Emails via the website will be treated as per other email communications.
Customer service standard	We will give you the name of the individual handling the enquiry.	We will give you the name of the person you spoke to.	We will respond by email if possible. We will give you the name of the individual handling the enquiry.	A meeting will be arranged within 20 working days.	If a question can be answered on the channel we will do so. If not, we will ask residents to email us with full details of their enquiry.	The website will be kept up to date so residents can easily find the information they are looking for.



#### **4. Process for handling enquiries, comments and compliments**

- 4.1. We will acknowledge receipt of all correspondence within five working days. If an enquiry is a complaint we will respond to the correspondent outlining the complaints process.
- 4.2. We will log an enquiry including name and address of the resident and nature of enquiry.
- 4.3. We will investigate the answer.
- 4.4. We will provide a full response within twenty working days.
- 4.5. If we cannot answer correspondence fully within twenty working days, we will contact the enquirer and explain why and when a full response will be sent.

#### **5. Complaints process**

We encourage residents to raise complaints informally, using the methods outlined above. If it is not possible to close the matter informally, residents should put the complaint in writing to the Town Clerk, either by letter or email. However, a complaint is submitted, residents must supply their name, address and either a contact telephone or e-mail address.

#### **6. Complaints about a Council policy**

- 6.1. We will acknowledge receipt of a written complaint within five working days, outlining who (from the Council) is dealing with the complaint.
- 6.2. We will respond to a written complaint within twenty working days. This may be an interim response while further information is obtained.
- 6.3. If you are not satisfied with the response from the Town Clerk, you can ask for your complaint to be reviewed by the Mayor who may appoint a Panel of up to three Councillors to assist if appropriate.

#### **7. Complaints about members of staff**

- 7.1. Receipt of a written complaint will be acknowledged and recorded within five working days with details of who (from the Council) is dealing with the complaint.
- 7.2. A response to a written complaint will be given within twenty working days. This may be an interim response while further information is obtained.

#### **8. Complaints about Councillors**

- 8.1. Members of Stamford Town Council are required to comply with the Members Code of Conduct.
- 8.2. if you think a Councillor has breached the Code of Conduct, please contact the Monitoring Officer of South Kesteven District Council [legal@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:legal@southkesteven.gov.uk)