

Northleach with Eastington Town Council

Policy on Unreasonably Persistent Complaints and Unreasonable Behaviour

1. The Council recognises that residents have a right to complain about aspects of the Council's actions and policies. The Council is acutely aware that it is accountable for the proper use of public money and must ensure that it achieves value for the public. The Council also has a duty to ensure the welfare of its members and staff.
2. The Council is committed to dealing with all enquiries and complaints fairly and impartially and to providing a high quality service to the public. As part of this service it does not normally limit the contact the public have with its members and office.
3. There might be a small number of complainants who, because of the frequency of their contact with the Council, might hinder our consideration of their requests, and those of others, and so the effective working of the Council. The Council might refer to any such complainants as "unreasonably persistent" and might take action to limit their contact with Council members and staff.
4. The Council does not expect its members or staff to tolerate behaviour by anyone which might be unacceptable, for example, abusive, unreasonable, or threatening behaviour. The Council would consider action to protect members and staff from such behaviour and control the contact which such a person could make with the Council.
5. Any decision to restrict access to Council's members and staff would be taken by the Clerk or Chairman or, if time allowed, by a Council decision. It would normally follow a prior warning to the complainant. Any restrictions imposed would be appropriate and proportionate, such as:-
 - requesting contact in writing;
 - requiring contact only with a named person;
 - restricting contact to specified days and times;
 - requiring mutually agreed appointments for contacts;
 - limiting the time for contacts;
6. If the Council did decide to treat someone as acting unreasonably, it would write to the person to explain why it believed his or her behaviour fell into that category and what action the Council was taking. The Council would also tell any such person how they could challenge any decision.
7. In the unlikely case of a person's behaviour becoming so extreme that it threatened the immediate welfare of a member or of staff, then other options would be considered, such as a complaint to police or other legal action. In such cases, there might be no prior warning of the action taken.
8. The Council will treat all persons and interactions on their own merits.

Version control: This document was reviewed and re-adopted on 15 May 2022.