



LLANNON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

CONCERNS & COMPLAINTS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC POLICY & PROCEDURE

ADOPTED: 16th November 2022

REVIEWED: 21st June 2023

REVIEW DATE: Annual Council Meeting, May 2024

Llannon Community Council
Concerns and Complaints by Members of the Public Policy & Procedure

Llannon Community Council is committed to dealing effectively with any concerns or complaints you may have about its service. The Council aims to discuss issues and to correct any mistakes that may have been made. If the Council has failed to provide a service which you are entitled, it will do its best to rectify that. If possible, it will put things right. The Council aims to learn from mistakes and to use the experience to improve its services.

When to use this policy:

When you express your concerns or complain to us, we will usually respond in the way we explain below. Sometimes you may have a statutory right of appeal so rather than investigate your concern; we will explain to you how you can appeal. There may also be occasions where you might be concerned about matters that are not decided by us e.g. Carmarthenshire County Council and we will then advise you about how to make your concerns known.

This policy does not apply if the matter relates to a Freedom of Information or Data Protection issue. Please see our Freedom of Information Publication Scheme.

Have you asked us yet?

If you are approaching us for a service for the first time, (e.g. reporting a faulty street-light, requesting an appointment etc) then this policy doesn't apply. You should at first, give us a chance to respond to your request. If you make a request for a service and are not happy with our response, you will be able to make your concern known, as we describe below.

Informal resolution:

If possible, we believe it's best to deal with things straight away rather than try to sort them out later. If you have a concern, raise it with the person you are dealing with. He or she will try to resolve it for you there and then. If there are any lessons to learn from addressing your concern, the member of staff will draw them to our attention. If the member of staff cannot help, they will explain why, and you can then ask for a formal investigation.

How to express your concern or complain formally:

You can express your concern in any of the ways below:

- You can ask for a copy of our Complaints and Concerns Form, from the person with whom you are already in contact. Please make them aware you want us to deal with your concern formally.

- You can get in touch with our central complaint contact point on 01269 841213 if you want to make your complaint over the phone.
- You can e-mail us at: concernslcc@outlook.com
- You can complete the attached Concerns and Complaints Form and return it to: Llannon Community Council, Tumble Hall, Heol-Y-Neuadd, Tumble, SA14 6HR.

We aim to have copies of this policy and the complaint form available in Welsh and as audio, large print etc.

Dealing with your concerns:

- We will formally acknowledge your concern within 5 working days and let you know how we intend to deal with it.
- We will ask you to tell us how you would like us to communicate with you.
- We will also need to establish, whether you have any additional requirements, for example, if you have a disability.
- We will deal with your concern in an open and honest way.
- We will make sure your dealings with us in the future do not suffer because you have expressed a concern or made a complaint.

Normally, we will only be able to look at your concerns if you tell us about them within six months. This is because it is better to investigate your concerns while the issues are still fresh in everyone's mind

We may exceptionally be able to look at concerns which are brought to our attention later than this. However, you will have to give us strong reasons why you have not been able to bring it to our attention earlier. We will need sufficient information about the issue to allow us to consider it properly. (In any event, regardless of the circumstances, we will not consider any concerns about matters that took place more than three years ago).

If you are expressing a concern on behalf of somebody else, we will need their agreement to you acting on their behalf.

What if there is more than one body involved?

If your complaint covers more than one body e.g. Carmarthenshire County Council, we will usually work with them to decide who should take a lead in dealing with your concerns. You will be given the name of the person responsible for communicating with you while we consider your complaint. If the complaint is about a body working on our behalf e.g. repair contractors, you may wish to raise the matter informally with them first. However, if you want to express your concern or complaint formally, we will investigate this ourselves and respond to you.

Investigation

We will tell you who we have asked to investigate your concern or complaint. If your concern is straightforward, we will usually ask somebody from Llannon Community Council to investigate and provide you with a response.

If it is more serious, we may use someone from elsewhere e.g. Carmarthenshire County Council, or in certain cases we may appoint an independent investigator. We will set out to you our understanding of your concerns and ask you to confirm that we have got it right.

We will also ask you to tell us what outcome you are hoping for. The person looking at your complaint will usually need to see the files we hold relevant to your complaint. If you don't want this to happen, it's important that you tell us. If there is a simple solution to your problem, we may ask you if you are happy to accept this. For example, where you asked for a service and we see straight away that you should have had it; we will offer to provide the service rather than investigate and produce a report.

We will aim to resolve concerns as quickly as possible and expect to deal with the vast majority within 20 working days. If your complaint is more complex, we will:

- Let you know within this time why we think it may take longer to investigate
- Tell you how long we expect it to take.
- Give you regular updates, including telling you whether any developments might change our original estimate.

The person who is investigating your concerns will firstly aim to establish the facts. The extent of this investigation will depend on how complex and how serious the issues you have raised are. In complex cases, we will draw up an investigation plan. In some instances, we may ask to meet you to discuss your concerns. Occasionally, we might suggest mediation or another method to try to resolve disputes. We will look at relevant evidence. This could include files, notes of conversations, letters, emails or whatever may be relevant to your concern. If necessary, we will talk to the staff or others involved and look at our policies and any legal entitlement and guidance.

Outcome

If we formally investigate your complaint, we will let you know what we have found in keeping with your preferred form of communication. If necessary, we will produce a full report. We will explain how and why we came to our conclusions.

If we find that we got it wrong, we will tell you what and why it happened. We will show how the mistake affected you.

If we find there is a fault in our systems or the way we do things, we will tell you what it is and how we plan to change things to stop it happening again. If we got it wrong, we will always apologise.

Putting Things Right

If we did not provide a service which we should have done, we will aim to provide it now if that is possible. If we did not do something well, we will aim to put it right. If you have lost out as a result of a mistake on our part, we will try to put you back in the position you would have been in if we had got it right.

Ombudsman

If we are unable to resolve your complaint, you may complain to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. The Ombudsman is independent of all government bodies and can investigate your complaint if you believe that you personally, or the person on whose behalf you are complaining:

- Have been treated unfairly or received a bad service through some failure on the part of the body providing it
- Have been disadvantaged personally by a service failure or have been treated unfairly.

The Ombudsman expects you to bring your concerns to our attention first and to give us a chance to put things right. You can contact the Ombudsman by:

- Phone: 0845 601 0987
- E-mail: ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk
- The website: www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk
- Writing to: Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, 1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed, CF35 5LJ.

There are also other organisations that consider complaints. For example, the Welsh Language Board about services in Welsh. We can advise you about such organisations.

Learning lessons

We take your concerns and complaints extremely seriously and try to learn from any mistakes we have made. Where there is a need for change, we will develop an action plan setting out what we will do, who will do it and when we plan to do it by. We will let you know when changes we have promised, have been implemented.

What we expect from you

In times of trouble or distress, some people may act out of character. There may have been upsetting or distressing circumstances leading up to a concern or a complaint. We do not view behaviour as unacceptable just because someone is forceful or determined. We believe that all complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected.

However, we also consider that our staff have the same rights. We, therefore, expect you to be polite and courteous in your dealings with us. We will not tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour, unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence. We have a separate policy to manage situations where we find that someone's actions are unacceptable.



Llannon Community Council
Concerns and Complaint Form

A: Your details

SURNAME:	<u>FORENAMES:</u>	TITLE: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/if other please state:
ADDRESS & POST CODE:		
EMAIL:		
DAYTIME CONTACT NUMBER:		
MOBILE NUMBER:		

Please state which methods you would prefer us to contact you:

POST/E-MAIL/TELEPHONE

Your requirements: If our usual way of dealing with complaints makes it difficult for you to use our service, for example if English or Welsh is not your first language or you need to engage with us in a particular way, please tell us so that we can discuss how we might help you. The person who experienced the problem should normally fill in this form. If you are completing this form on behalf of someone else, please fill in section B. Please note that before taking forward the complaint we will need to satisfy ourselves that you have the authority to act on behalf of the person concerned.

B: Making a complaint on behalf of someone else: Their details

THEIR NAME IN FULL:	
THEIR ADDRESS & POSTCODE	
WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THEM?	
WHY ARE YOU MAKING THE COMPLAINT ON THEIR BEHALF?	

C: About your concern/complaint

(Please continue your answers to the following questions on a separate sheet(s) if necessary)

C.1) Name of the department/section/service/person you are complaining about:

C.2) What do you think they did wrong, or failed to do?

C.3) Describe how you personally have suffered or have been affected.

C.4) What do you think should be done to put things right?

C.5) When did you first become aware of the problem?

C.6) Have you already put your concern to the frontline staff responsible for delivering the service? If so, please provide brief details of how and when you did so.

C.7) If it is more than 6 months since you became first aware of the problem, please provide the reason why you have not complained before now.

If you have any documents to support your concern/complaint, please attach them with this form.

Signature:

Date:

When you have completed this form, please post it to:

**Llannon Community Council
Tumble Hall
Heol-Y-Neuadd
Tumble
Llanelli
Carmarthenshire
SA14 6HR**

Or email to: concernslcc@outlook.com