



## Quality & Service Standards

### **Quality and continuous Improvement**

It is important that you know that Councillors and Staff are committed to providing good quality of service.

### **Service Standards**

Within our approach to quality, we have set Service Standards. These are designed to give you a service that is consistent, fair and efficient. We will strive to meet our targets and by working with you in a spirit of cooperation we will do our best and will explain where and why we have shortcomings.

### **Our Councillor and Staff will:**

- Be welcoming, courteous, fair and respectful
- Provide information that is accurate, timely and relevant
- Communicate current information via our website and notice boards
- Maintain confidentiality, or let you know of circumstances where this might not apply
- Signpost you to other more suitable services if appropriate
- Endeavour to help if you have additional needs for example disability, sensory impairment or language difficulties (this may involve us working with another agency to assist you, and
- Supply if you request information regarding Council policies that are in the public domain.

### **We ask you:**

- To be courteous, fair and respectful
- To let us know your compliments, suggestions or complaints.

### **When you contact our office:**

- If your telephone call is unanswered, you will be invited to leave a message. All telephone messages will receive a response within 2 working days
- Your email message will be treated as postal correspondence for a full response and will receive acknowledgement within 3 working days, except where an automated reply shows that the person contact is absent for the period stated
- If you wish for a n appointment to speak to a member of staff this will occur within 5 working days of your request.

- You will receive a full response to written (including email) correspondence within a period of 10 working days. If more detailed information is required, or third parties are required to provide additional detail, you will be advised in writing
- If you have a query that needs consideration by the Town Council or one of its Committees you will be advised of the outcome within 7 working days of the decision.

Please note that the Town Council only employs 3 full-time members of staff who are office based. While the Town Council office is normally staffed between 9.00am and 4.00pm external commitments may mean that the office is unattended during these periods.

### **Where and how to make contact:**

#### **Postal Address:**

Ashington Town Council  
Town Hall  
65 Station Road  
Ashington  
Northumberland  
NE63 8RX

**Telephone:** 01670 624520

**Email – Staff details at:** [www.ashingtontowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.ashingtontowncouncil.gov.uk)

#### **Councillors, the Council and its Committees:**

- Names and contact details of all Town Council members are available on the Town Council website and Newsletters – details can be made available in other written format on request
- All scheduled Town Council meetings will be published on our website and notice boards
- The agenda for meetings will be displayed at least 3 working days beforehand
- Requests for minutes of public meetings will be met within 3 working days
- We encourage you to attend our meetings and make contact on matters of interest.

#### **If you make a complaint, we will:**

- Attempt to resolve the issue as quickly as possible, apologising if this is appropriate and in clear breach of the service standards
- Commence an investigation and formal proceedings if applicable
- Assist you to make the complaint
- Keep you informed of progress
- Advise you of the outcome
- Use lessons learned from complaints to improve our services

- Annually provide a statistical analysis of complaints

### **Performance Targets**

Targets in relation to our Standards Cover the following areas and our achievement against these will be published each year:

- 95% of telephone messages to receive a response before the end of the next working day
- 98% of requests for an appointment to be met within 5 working days of request
- 95% of written correspondence to be acknowledged within 3 working days of receipt
- 95% of individual public queries needing consideration by the Town Council to be advised of the outcome within 7 working days of the decision
- 100% compliance where requests under the Freedom of Information legislation are received
- 100% of agendas of public meetings to be met within 3 working days
- 95% of complaints received to be handled within prescribed time limits.