

Complaints Procedure

1. Purpose

This procedure explains how a complaint about the Parish Council's services, actions, or decisions can be made and how it will be handled.

2. What is a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about:

- The standard of service provided by the Council
- The way a decision was made or action taken
- The conduct of Council staff (not including the Clerk acting as Proper Officer in a statutory role)

This procedure does not cover:

- Complaints about individual councillors' conduct (these are dealt with under the Code of Conduct by the District/Borough Council)
- Matters that are subject to a statutory appeals process
- Anonymous complaints (unless there is a clear public interest)

3. How to Make a Complaint

Complaints should be made in writing (by email or letter) to the Clerk to the Council and include:

- Your name and contact details
- A brief description of the complaint
- What outcome you are seeking

Complaints should normally be made within 6 months of the issue arising.

4. Informal Resolution (Stage 1)

Where possible, the Clerk will try to resolve the complaint informally.

- The Clerk will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days.
- A response will be provided within 10 working days.

5. Formal Complaint (Stage 2)

If the complaint is not resolved at Stage 1, it will be considered formally.

- The complaint will be reviewed by the Chairman or a nominated councillor/committee.
- You will receive a written response within 20 working days of acknowledgment.
- The response will explain the findings and any action to be taken.

6. Final Review (Stage 3)

If you remain dissatisfied, you may request a final review by the full Council (excluding anyone previously involved).

- The Council's decision at this stage is final.
- You will be notified of the outcome in writing.

7. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

All complaints will be handled sensitively and in line with data protection requirements. A record of complaints and outcomes will be kept by the Clerk.

8. Further Action

If you remain dissatisfied after completing this procedure, you may contact the relevant external body (for example, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman), where appropriate.

Contact:
Clerk to the Parish Council
[Insert address / email]

