



Complaint Policy and Procedure 2026

Adopted by Exelby Leeming and Londonderry Parish Council on 16/2/26

Signed C S Capel (Vice Chair)

Review Date for policy within Three Years of policy being adopted.

PARISH COUNCIL COMPLAINT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

COMPLAINT POLICY

1. A complaint must be made in writing and must clearly show that it is a formal complaint to be dealt with under this policy, who the complaint is made by and who the sender is.
2. The complaint should be raised with the relevant member of staff as soon as possible in order that appropriate action may be taken. The member of staff will immediately inform the Chief Officer that a complaint has been received.
3. All formal complaints received will be notified to the Chair of the Board.
4. If the complaint concerns the Chief Officer, the complainant will direct their complaint to the Chair of the Joint Executive Board.
5. The person receiving the complaint shall acknowledge receipt of it as soon as possible. E-mail is an acceptable form of receipt.
6. The Chief Officer and Chairman will investigate the circumstances and shall communicate the results of the enquiry and action taken to the instigator of the complaints within twenty working days. Where the complaint concerns the Chief Officer, the investigation will be carried out by the Chair of the Board and Chair of the Personnel Committee.
7. If the complainer is dissatisfied with the result, they have the right to have the matter referred to an Appeal Panel as appointed by the Board. The Appeal Panel will make a final decision.
8. The Executive Board shall be informed of the number and nature of all complaints referred to the Associations.
9. All complaints will be dealt with in confidence.
10. YLCA also welcomes positive comments and commendations about its work and staff. A copy of all written unsolicited positive comments and commendations will be passed to the Chief Officer for recording and may be used in YLCA publications. In such cases the instigator of the commendation shall not be identified except where their explicit permission has been given.
11. This policy will be reviewed every two years.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

1. Aim of the Complaints Procedure

- 1.1 The Council aims to learn from complaints and, where they are found to be justified, to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to improve services.
- 1.2 The Council will:
 - ensure that anyone who wishes to make a complaint knows how to go about it.
 - respond to a complaint efficiently and within a reasonable time.
 - ensure that service users are satisfied that the complaint has been taken seriously and, where possible, reasonable measures have been taken to improve services.
- 1.3 All complaints will be dealt with in confidence, and the name of the complainant will not be revealed by the Town Council, except where it is the wish of the complainant.

2. What is a Complaint

- 2.1 The Town Council will investigate a complaint from a person, or their nominated representative, if it is one of the following:
 - An expression of dissatisfaction about the failure of the Council to provide or meet the expected standard of a service.
 - Neglect or delay in responding to a contact with the Council.
 - Failure of the Council to observe its own policies or procedures.
 - Discourteous or dishonest conduct by a member of staff.
 - Harassment, bias or discrimination by a member of staff.
- 2.2 **The Complaints Procedure does not cover:**
 - Complaints about the conduct of Councillors. Perceived breaches of the Council's adopted Code of Conduct should be reported to the Monitoring Officer at [Name of principal authority] Council.
 - Where a person wishes to disagree with a Council decision or policy or makes a request under the Freedom of Information Act, whereby there are alternative processes for representation in place.
 - Anonymous complaints.

3. To make a Complaint

- 3.1 A formal written letter of complaint must be sent to the Clerk. If the complaint involves the Clerk, the letter should be sent to the Chair of the Council

4. Complaint handling

- 4.1 Within three working days of receipt of the complaint, the Clerk or Chair will give written acknowledgement of it, provide a copy of this complaints procedure and ascertain whether the complainant wishes the matter to be treated confidentially.
- 4.2 The formal complaint will be considered at the next suitable meeting of the Council. If more than twenty-one days is to lapse between receipt of the complaint and the next meeting of the Council, the Chair will convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council to receive and hear the complaint.
- 4.3 At the meeting the Council may resolve to exclude members of the public and press to ensure confidentiality. (Depending on whether the complainant wishes the matter to be dealt with in this way).
- 4.4 At the meeting, the Council will consider the complaint and will also include on the agenda the appointment of three members to a committee with delegated power to continue handling the complaint (if no conclusion is reached by the Council). The committee will have full delegated power to bring the complaint to a conclusion. The Council will also resolve which member will be the Chair of the Committee.
- 4.5 The Council (and/or Committee with delegated power) may appoint an independent person to the committee if it resolves to do so, as an independent impartial arbitrator.
- 4.6 After the meeting, the Clerk or Chair will write to the complainant explaining the outcome of the Council's consideration of the complaint and explaining how to take matters further if they believe this is necessary.
- 4.7 If the complainant wishes to pursue the matter, they must notify the Council in writing with their reasons for wanting to do so and a meeting of the committee will be convened for the purpose of investigating the complaint further.
- 4.8 Notice of the committee meeting will be advertised in the usual way to members of the committee, ie a summons and with three clear days' notice. A public notice will also be displayed in the usual way, ie posted in a conspicuous place in the parish and giving three clear days' notice.
- 4.9 Complainants will be asked by formal letter to attend the committee meeting and will be informed that they may be accompanied by another person.
- 4.10 At the commencement of the meeting, the Committee Chair will explain how the meeting will proceed.
- 4.11 Complainants will be asked to provide any new information or supporting evidence to the committee and will be invited to make a verbal representation to the meeting.
- 4.12 Members of the committee will be invited by the Chair to ask questions of the complainant.
- 4.13 The Chair of the Complaints Committee and then the complainant will summarise their respective positions.
- 4.14 The complainant will then leave the meeting, and the committee will consider the further findings.
- 4.15 The complainant will be informed by formal letter of the conclusions of the process within five working days of the committee meeting.

- 4.16 The committee Chair will report the outcome of the process to the next meeting of the Council.
- 4.17 Minutes of the committee meeting will be kept and will be available to all parties involved in the complaint.
- 4.18 Following this process the matter will be closed and there will be no further opportunity for appeal.