

CODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL'S COMPLAINTS POLICY

1.1 The Council recognises that it is not subject to the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman but has adopted this policy to ensure that complaints are properly and fully considered.

1.2 The Council does not consider formal complaints against councillors. These are dealt with in accordance with the Council's adopted Code of Conduct and the Monitoring Officer at Newark and Sherwood District Council.

1.3 All other complaints should be addressed to the Parish Clerk and will be dealt with promptly to maintain public confidence.

1.4 Should the complaint be in regard to the Clerk, it should be addressed to the Chair of the Council.

1.5 A fair and courteous response will be given in all cases, and a full and proper investigation may be undertaken to establish all the pertinent facts.

Informal Complaints

2.1 The Council will seek to resolve all complaints informally prior to a formal complaint being lodged.

2.2 An informal complaint is made to the Clerk who will liaise with the complainant and relevant members/officers to seek resolution.

2.3 Should it not be possible to resolve a complaint informally the complainant may escalate the complaint to a formal complaint.

2.4 Should, in the opinion of the Clerk or Chair of Council, the complaint be of a serious nature, the complaint shall be escalated to a formal complaint.

2.5 The Clerk shall maintain logs of informal complaints about staff and the council.

2.6 There is no defined process for an informal complaint; but full records must be kept of any communications and attempts at resolution.

Formal Complaints

Formal Complaints about the Council or Decisions

3.1 Where possible, the Council would wish to solve any complaint informally prior to a formal complaint being lodged.

3.2 All formal complaints shall be acknowledged within two weeks. Complainants shall be provided with routine updates on the progress of investigating ongoing complaints.

3.3 Complaints about the activity or decisions of the Council should be made to the Clerk in writing, providing any additional information that will enable the complaint to be investigated.

3.4 The Council will only consider complaints about its formal decisions where the complainant puts forward missing information or evidence to suggest that the Council has erred in its decision making.

3.5 The complaint shall first be considered by the Clerk and Chair of the Council who shall seek to resolve the issue or explain the background to the decision. They may escalate the complaint to Full Council should they consider they are unable to resolve it.

3.6 Should the complainant be dissatisfied with the response from the Clerk and Chair, they may refer the complaint to Full Council where the complainant will be invited to address the meeting.

3.7 Records shall be kept detailing all complaints, actions undertaken and the outcome.

Formal Complaints about Councillors

4.1 The Council does not consider formal complaints about its councillors.

4.2 Councillors are required to comply with the adopted Code of Conduct.

4.3 A formal complaint about a councillor should be addressed to the Monitoring Officer at Newark and Sherwood District Council who will arrange the investigation of the complaint. The District Council has its own policies for dealing with such complaints.

4.4 The contact details for the Monitoring Officer are:

The Monitoring Officer
Newark and Sherwood District Council
Castle House
Great North Road
Newark
NG24 1BY
Tel. 01636 650000

Formal Complaints about Officers/Employees

5.1 Formal complaints about an employee of the Council must be made in writing to the Clerk (or Chair of the Council where the complaint relates to the Clerk) setting out the reasons for the complaint and providing any supplementary information that will assist an investigation.

5.2 Complaints will be referred to the Council and be processed in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary policy and Grievance policy.

5.3 The complainant will be informed that the complaint will be progressed under the Council's Disciplinary policy and Grievance policy, and that at the end of that process they will receive a response to the complaint.

Vexatious Complaints

6.1 A vexatious complainant is one who persists unreasonably with their complaints or makes complaints in order to inconvenience the Council rather than genuinely resolve an issue. This may include making serial complaints about different issues or continuing to raise the same or similar matters repeatedly.

6.2 If such complaints affect the Council's ability to undertake its work and provide its services to others, it may alter the way it deals with complaints by not acknowledging or responding to vexatious complaints. Complaints will still be read in case they contain new information.

6.3 If a complainant is to be classified as vexatious, they shall be informed so and given a timescale of how long this will remain the case.

6.4 Should a vexatious complainant make a new complaint about new issues these will be treated on their merits.

Anonymous Complaints

Coddington Parish Council will not respond to or investigate anonymous complaints under any circumstances. In order for a complaint to be considered, the complainant must provide their full name and contact details.

Date of policy: 5th March 2026

Approved at Coddington Parish Council meeting of : 5th March 2026

Minute Reference: 26-18b.

Date for next review: March 2027