

Doddington Parish Council

Complaint Policy

Date reviewed: 12th November 2025

Next review date: Nov 2027

Complaints Policy

The Parish Council provides many services to the community. We try to get our service delivery right every time, but there are occasions when users of our services maybe dissatisfied with our performance, for any number of reasons. This policy sets out how to raise a complaint with the Parish Council.

The Council will not acknowledge or consider, under any circumstances, informal or formal complaints that are submitted anonymously. Nor will it conduct discussion of any issue via any social media platform.

Informal Complaints

It is hoped that most complaints can be resolved quickly and amicably through this route. Informal complaints can be made by telephone, email or by post. In most cases the complaint will be handled by the Parish Clerk or the Chairman of the Parish Council if the Clerk is unavailable.

Complaints should always be directed through the Parish Clerk, not through individual Councillors. A complainant may advise a Councillor of the details of a complaint, but individual Councillors are not in a position to resolve complaints.

It is expected that most complaints can be resolved through this informal route. However, the Council appreciates that on occasions an informal approach may not resolve the complaint, or that the initial complaint is so serious, then the formal complaint process should be followed.

Formal Complaint

The Parish Clerk is responsible for managing the formal complaint process. The only variance to this is if a formal complaint is being raised against the Parish Clerk, then the process as detailed will be followed by the Chairman of the Council.

In the first instance please call the Parish Clerk on 01354 680892. If the Parish Clerk is on leave etc., then please call the Chairman of the Parish Council on 01354 740323 to advise them of the formal complaint.

The formal complaint then must be submitted in writing using the complaint form which can be found on the Parish Council website <http://www.Doddingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk> attached to this document or a copy can be obtained from Parish Clerk. The complaint should be addressed to the Parish Clerk or the Chairman of the council where applicable (full address is on the complaint form). The Council encourages contact by email and telephone; however a formal complaint is a serious matter and can only be accepted in writing using the official complaint form.

The complaint should cover as much detail as possible and enclose any relevant supporting documentation or photographs. The Parish Clerk will acknowledge receipt of the complaint form within five working days.

The Parish Clerk will carry out an initial investigation into the complaint and will within ten working days provide the complainant with an update on progress, or a suggested resolution. If the complainant is satisfied with the resolution, the complaint is closed. The Parish Clerk will report to the Council, through the Clerk's report, summary details of the complaint and a brief summary of its resolution. This summary report will exclude the names of the complainant. If the Parish Clerk is unable to resolve the complaint, or the

complainant is not satisfied with the proposed resolution then the matter will be referred to a subcommittee consisting of three council members.

The subcommittee has delegated authority from the Parish Council to review and decide on complaints.

The subcommittee is subject to all of the normal meeting notification, agenda and minute requirements, as laid down in the Parish Council's Standing Orders. Arrangements for minute taking will be reviewed when a Subcommittee meeting is called.

It is expected that the subcommittee will be able to meet within seven working days of being notified by the Clerk.

Prior to the meeting, five clear working days before the subcommittee meeting, the complainant will provide the Parish Clerk with copies of all documentation, or other evidence (such as photographs) that they intend to introduce to the Subcommittee meeting. The Parish Clerk will provide the same to the complainant if applicable.

At the Meeting

1. The subcommittee will consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. As far as possible the Parish Council carries out its business in public, matters that involve individual identified members of staff, may require the exclusion of the press and public.
2. The Chairman of the subcommittee shall introduce everyone and explain the procedure to be used in order to consider the complaint made. The meeting should be as informal and friendly as possible.
3. The complainant (or representative) shall be invited to outline the grounds for complaint and Subcommittee members given the opportunity to ask any question of the complainant.
4. If relevant, the Parish Clerk will explain the Council's position and Subcommittee members shall ask any questions.
5. The complainant is to be offered the opportunity of a last word as a means of summing up their position.
6. The Clerk is to be offered the opportunity of a last word as a means of summing up their position.
7. The Subcommittee will then withdraw and decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made, after their deliberation, the subcommittee will return to the meeting and announce their decision, or to advised when the decision will be made.
8. The announcement of any decision will be made in public, at the next Council meeting.

Timings & correspondence

The Parish Council will try to adhere to the timings outlined in this policy, but in the case of a complex complaint, or the absence of a member of staff who is involved in the complaint, may mean that the timings have to vary. Should this occur then the complainant will be kept advised of the revised timescales.

Employment rights

The Council will not under any circumstances enter into any correspondence, or discussion, with any complainant about any action taken, formally or informally against any member of staff. This is expressly to protect the employment rights to which all employees of the Council are entitled.

Taking your complaint further

If you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint at the end of our procedure, you may wish to contact the Local Government Ombudsman; the exception to this is if your complaint is regarding a Parish Councillor(s) then you should contact the Standards Committee at Fenland District Council.

Address:

Local Government Ombudsman,
PO Box 4771, Coventry, CV4 0EH
Telephone: 0300 061 0614
Website: www.lgo.org.uk

Address:

The Standards Committee
Fenland District Council
Fenland Hall, County Road,
March, Cambs, PE15 8NQ.
info@fenland.gov.uk

Complaint Form

Please submit your complaint with the following information:-

Title	
First name	
Surname	
Tel:	
Email:	
Home Address:	

Address:

The Parish Clerk
Mr. Roger Wilkin
24b, School Lane,
Manea PE15 0JN
Telephone 01354 680892

E-mail: Clerk@doddingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk

E-mail: Chair.ruthhufton@doddingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Address:

Chairman of the Parish Council
Ms Ruth Hufton
Millfield Lodge, High Street
Doddington, PE15 0TH
Telephone 01354 740323

Details of your complaint, (continue on additional pages if necessary)

(include supporting documents, copy correspondence and photographs if necessary)

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