

CREATON PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Timescale for Review: Annually at Annual Meeting of Parish Council or Clerk request

Reviewed and approved: May 2025

Next Review Due May 2026

The procedure is designed for those complaints that cannot be satisfied by less formal measures or explanations provided to the complainant by the Clerk or other proper officer or Chairman.

It may be that the Clerk or other proper officer at the meeting represents the position of the Council. If the Clerk or other proper officer is putting forward the justification for the action or procedure complained of, he or she should not advise the Council or committee.

At all times, the rules of natural justice will apply. In other words, all parties should be treated fairly and the process should be reasonable, accessible and transparent.

Before the Meeting

1. The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the clerk or other nominated officer.
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the clerk or other nominated officer, he or she should be advised to address it to the chairman of the council.
3. The clerk or other nominated officer shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the council or by the committee established for the purposes of hearing complaints. The complainant should also be advised whether the complaint will be treated as confidential or whether, for example, notice of it will be given in the usual way (if, for example, the complaint is to be heard by a committee).
4. The complainant shall be invited to attend a meeting and to bring with them a representative if they wish.
5. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied on. The council shall provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting and shall do so promptly, allowing the claimant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.

At the Meeting

6. The council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the council meeting in public.
7. The Chairman to introduce everyone
8. The Chairman to explain the procedure.
9. The complainant (or representative) to outline the grounds for complaint Members to ask any questions of the complainant.
10. If relevant, The Clerk or other nominated officer explains the council's position
11. Members to ask any questions of the Clerk or other proper officer.
12. Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order)
13. Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be asked to leave room while Members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. (If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties to be invited back).
14. The clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be asked to leave the room while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, *both* parties shall be invited back.
15. The clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be given the opportunity to wait for the decision but if the decision is unlikely to be finalised on that day they should be advised when the decision is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them.

After the Meeting

16. The decision should be confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken.
17. Should the complainant be dissatisfied with the result, a formal complaint can be made to the Local Government Ombudsman for Parish Councils at w: www.lgo.org.uk or t: 0300 061 0614