

COLLINGHAM *Parish Council*

Complaints Procedure

Adopted: September 2025

Next Review: September 2026

Contents

1. What is a Complaint?
2. Notification to the Council of a Complaint
3. Before the Meeting
4. At the Meeting
5. After the Meeting
6. Appeals
7. Confidentiality and Data Protection
8. Contact Details

1. What is a Complaint?

A complaint is defined as: “an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the council’s action or lack of action, or about the standard of service, whether the action was taken or the service provided by the council itself or a person or body acting on behalf of the council.”

This procedure does not cover:

- Financial irregularity (refer to external auditor)
- Criminal activity (refer to the police)
- Councillor conduct (refer to the Monitoring Officer at Newark and Sherwood District Council)

If no previous correspondence has been received on a potential complaint, the Council will attempt to resolve the matter amicably before proceeding with the formal process.

2. Notification to the Council of a Complaint

2.1 The complainant should put the complaint in writing (letter or email) to the Clerk.

2.2 If the complaint concerns the Clerk, it should be addressed to the Chairman of the Council.

2.3 The Clerk (or Chairman, where appropriate) shall acknowledge receipt within five working days and advise when the matter will be considered. The complainant will be told whether it will be treated confidentially or as an agenda item at a Parish Council meeting.

3. Before the Meeting

3.1 The complainant will be invited to attend the meeting and may bring a representative.

3.2 At least five working days prior, the complainant must provide the Council with any documents to be relied upon. The Council will also provide any documents it intends to rely upon in good time.

4. At the Meeting

4.1 The Council shall consider whether the public and press should be excluded. Decisions must be announced publicly.

4.2 The Chairman will introduce all parties and explain the procedure.

4.3 The complainant (or representative) will outline the grounds of complaint, followed by questions from the Clerk and councillors.

4.4 The Clerk will explain the Council's position, with questions from the complainant and councillors.

4.5 Both sides will be offered the chance to summarise their case.

4.6 The Clerk and complainant will withdraw while councillors deliberate. If clarification is needed, both may be invited back.

4.7 The Clerk and complainant will be informed when a decision is likely and when it will be communicated.

5. After the Meeting

5.1 The Clerk will write to the complainant within 10 working days, confirming the decision and any actions to be taken.

6. Appeals

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they may request that the matter be reviewed by the Chair. If still dissatisfied, they may refer the matter to the Newark and Sherwood District Council Monitoring Officer or the Local Government Ombudsman, if applicable.

7. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Complaints will be handled sensitively and confidentially where appropriate. Personal data will be processed in line with the Council's Data Protection Policy and the UK

GDPR. Records of complaints will be stored securely and only retained as long as necessary.

8. Contact Details

Parish Clerk

71 High Street

Collingham

NG23 7LB

Email: parishclerk@collingham-pc.gov.uk