

Policy Aim

Droxford Parish Council aims to fulfill its statutory objectives in an efficient, cost effective and civil manner, and to seek to influence other statutory bodies and agencies for the benefit of parishioners in relation to those services which fall outside the Parish Council's remit. This policy outlines how a complaint may be made in the event that the Parish Council is deemed to have failed to meet its obligations. The procedure outlined below will enable corrective action to be taken with regard to the specific complaint and where appropriate, the Parish Council may act to prevent future recurrence.

What constitutes a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the Parish Council's action or lack of action or about the standard of a service delivered by the Council.

The complaint may relate to an action taken or a service provided by the Council itself or a person or body acting on behalf of the council.

How to complain

- Verbal complaint – representation should be made to the Clerk of the Council and can be either as a simple phone call or in person. A verbal complaint would be appropriate for reporting a minor matter or highlighting the need for repair to property owned or operated by the Council. A verbal complaint will normally be dealt with directly by the Clerk without any need for a formal response. A written record of the complaint will be made, noting the name and contact details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint. If the complainant is not satisfied with the Clerk's response, the complaint should then be restated as a written complaint (see following paragraph). The complaint may be made to the Chair or any other Councillor but under the legislation governing parish councils a Councillor has no authority to act as an individual and must refer the matter to the Clerk.
- Written complaint – to register a written complaint it is necessary to complete a copy of the Parish Council's Complaint Form. Other supporting information may also be submitted. This should be addressed to the Clerk unless the complaint concerns the Clerk. If the complaint concerns the Clerk, it must be sealed and addressed to the Chair of the Council and clearly marked "Council Chair - Private and Confidential". As written complaints will inevitably be of a serious nature, they will always be reported to the Parish Council even if they are resolved before the Council meets. The Clerk or the Chair, as relevant, will bring any written complaint which cannot be settled to the next meeting of the Council and will notify the complainant of the date of the meeting on which the complaint will be considered.

If the complaint concerns the Clerk, the Council may decide to instigate disciplinary proceedings in accordance with the contractual arrangements with the Clerk and the outcome of those proceedings will be reported to the Parish Council.

The Council's final decision on a complaint will be announced at the Council meeting in public and will be recorded in the Council's minutes. However certain types of Human Resource or other sensitive issues may be exempt from publication for legislative reasons.

Nature of a complaint

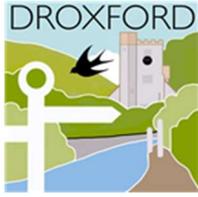
Before making a complaint it is important to contact the Clerk to ensure Droxford Parish Council is the responsible body to handle the complaint.

The way in which a complaint will be handled is dependent on the nature of the complaint; different types of complaint will be handled in different ways.

The following table summarises the process for dealing with various types of complaint:

Nature of the complaint	How to complain	Who to complain to	Who will deal with your complaint
<p>Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • processes • procedures • services 	<p>The Clerk will provide the complainant with a Complaint Form.</p> <p>The completed form and any other relevant evidence to support the complaint must be submitted.</p>	<p>The Clerk.</p>	<p>You will receive a written reply from the Clerk.</p> <p>The matter will be reported to the Council and may be debated by the council at a Council meeting. If so, the Clerk's response will be based on the decision of the Council.</p>
<p>Financial irregularity</p>	<p>The Clerk will provide the complainant with a Complaint Form.</p> <p>The completed form and any other relevant evidence to support the complaint must be submitted.</p>	<p>The Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer of the Council.</p>	<p>The matter will be reported to the Council and the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer Council will endeavour to provide an explanation.</p> <p>If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, it may be reported to the External Auditor.</p>
<p>Conduct of the Clerk</p>	<p>In writing sent to the Chair, it should be sealed and marked "Private & Confidential"</p>	<p>Chair</p>	<p>The complaint may be resolved or escalated and be treated as an internal disciplinary matter to be dealt with under the Council's employee disciplinary procedure.</p>

			In the event that the matter escalates the Council will provide a copy of the disciplinary procedure on request.
Criminal activity	In writing, including any relevant evidence to support the concern.	The police.	The police. Depending on severity, the matter may go to court.
Conduct of a Councillor	This type of complaint needs to be referred in writing to the Monitoring Officer at Winchester City Council, as Droxford Parish Council has no power to investigate the conduct of one of its own elected Members.	The Monitoring Officer at Winchester City Council.	The Monitoring Officer. Matters may be lengthy if an investigation is undertaken. The matter may be referred for consideration by the Local Standards Committee.



COMPLAINTS FORM

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer: Mrs Rosemary Hoile

Address: West House Cottage, South Hill, Droxford, Southampton SO32 3PB

Email: clerk.droxfordpc@gmail.com

Date	
Your Name	
Address	
	Postcode:
Tel No / Mobile	
Nature of complaint:	
1. What you wish to complain about to the Parish Council	
2. When & where the situation took place, including date, time & location	
3. Names of others involved (& contact details if possible)	
4. In your opinion, what action or decision would resolve the matter	

To register a complaint please complete & return this form with any other information you wish to provide to support your complaint to the Clerk at the above address.
Please continue your comments on a separate sheet if necessary.