

North Leigh Parish Council

Complaints Procedure

1. North Leigh Parish Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or are visitors to the locality. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from this council, or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by this council, this Complaints Procedure sets out how you may complain to the council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.
2. This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.
3. This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:
 - 3.1. complaints by one council employee against another council employee, or between a council employee and the council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.
 - 3.2. complaints against councillors. Complaints against councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council on 14th July 2022 and, if a complaint against a councillor is received by the council, it will be referred to West Oxfordshire District Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer of West Oxfordshire District Council.
4. The appropriate time for influencing Council decision-making is by raising your concerns before the Council debates and votes on a matter. You may do this by writing to the Council by the Friday before the meeting at which the item is to be discussed. There is also the opportunity to raise your concerns in the public participation section of Council meetings. If you are unhappy with a Council decision, you may raise your concerns with the Council, but Standing Orders prevent the Council from re-opening issues for six months from the date of the decision, unless there are exceptional grounds to consider this necessary and the special process set out in the Standing Orders is followed.
5. You may make your complaint about the council's procedures or administration to the Clerk. You may do this by phone or by writing to or emailing the Clerk. The addresses and numbers are set out below.
6. Wherever possible, the Clerk will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, the Clerk will normally try to acknowledge your complaint within five working days.
7. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Chairman of the Council who will report your complaint to the Council.

8. The Clerk or the Chairman of the Council (as appropriate) will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the Council.

9. The Clerk or the Chairman of the Council will notify you within 20 working days of the outcome of your complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take as a result of your complaint. (In exceptional cases the twenty working days timescale may have to be extended. If it is, you will be kept informed.)

10. If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the full Council for review and (usually within eight weeks) you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint.

11. There may be circumstances when a complainant persists in wishing to proceed when there is no reasonable basis, or when the Council has already taken reasonable action in response, or where some other process, whether through the courts or some other recognised procedure should or has been taken. This will be treated as an unreasonable or vexatious complaint. The Clerk will submit a summary of the issues to the Council together with the attempts made to resolve the complaint. In such circumstances the Council may decide that no further action can usefully be taken in response to the complainant and will inform the complainant accordingly, making it clear that only new and substantive issues will merit a response.

This Policy was adopted at the Council meeting on 11th May 2023 to be reviewed at the next Annual Parish Council Meeting or sooner if legislation dictates.

Contacts:

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