EDENHAM, GRIMSTHORPE, ELSTHORPE & SCOTTLETHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

This procedure is based on a framework suggested by Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC). Its purpose is to guide Parishioners, Parish Councillors and Parish Clerk's in the management of complaints against Councillors, the Clerk, actions or non-actions of the Parish Council, or third parties working for or representing the Parish Council.

Please note that

- The Parish Council will not, under any circumstances, acknowledge or consider complaints that are submitted anonymously. All complaints received will be logged by the Parish Council Clerk.
- Individual Councillors are not authorised to resolve complaints so please do not address complaints to them, unless the Parish Council Clerk is personally involved in the complaint.
- Complaints cannot be submitted through Facebook or other social media platforms.

Complaint Meetings

Complaints can only be processed by the Parish Council at a properly convened meeting of either the full Council or of a committee tasked with investigating the matter.

Any complaint that involves one of the Parish Council's employees will be dealt with in the first instance via this complaint's procedure, and if any further action is required, then in accordance with the Parish Council's internal employment processes.

Please be aware that there are other bodies with responsibility for certain types of complaint:

Individual member's conduct alleged to breach the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council	The relevant principal authority Monitoring Officer should be contacted – the District Council has responsibility for such matters
Alleged financial irregularity	Local electors have a statutory right to object to a Council's audit of accounts (Audit Commission Act 1998 s.16)
Alleged criminal activity	The Police

Before the meeting

1. Any complaint about the Council's procedures or administration should be made in writing to the Clerk to the Council at 14 Scottlethorpe Road, Edenham, Bourne, Lincs PE10 0LN
2. If a complaint involves the Parish Council Clerk personally it should be addressed to the current Chairman of Parish Council who will then consult with another Councillor. Contact details can be found on the Parish Council website.

3. The Clerk to the Parish Council/Chairman will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise when the matter will be considered by either the Council or a nominated Committee working on behalf of the Council.

4. Please be aware that any complaint will be treated as confidential, and that the Parish Council is obliged to always comply with its duties under the Data Protection Act 1998 to safeguard against the unlawful disclosure of personal data.

5. The complainant will be invited to attend the meeting at which the complaint will be considered and be offered the opportunity to be accompanied by a representative, if required.

6. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant is required to provide the Parish Council with copies of any documentation or other items on which the complaint is based.

7. The Parish Council will provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which it wishes to rely at the meeting and shall do so promptly, allowing the opportunity to read all material in good time for the meeting.

At the meeting

1. The Parish Council shall exclude the public and press whilst discussion of the matter takes place. Any decision on a complaint shall subsequently be announced at a meeting in public, whilst considering any duties to safeguard personal data as under (4) above.

2. The Chairman or one of the Councillors will introduce everyone at the meeting and explain the process to be followed.

3. The complainant will be asked to outline the grounds for the complaint, and thereafter, questions may be asked by (i) the Parish Council Clerk and (ii) members of the Parish Council.

4. The Councillors (or the Clerk, if that is appropriate) will explain the Council's position after which the Complainant may ask questions.

5. The complainant will be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.

6. The Chairman (or Clerk if appropriate) will be offered the opportunity to summarise the position on behalf of the Parish Council.

7. The Complainant and (their support person if applicable) will then be asked to leave the room while the Councillors decide whether or not the complaint is upheld and, if so, how it could be resolved. If further clarification is needed, the Complainant can be invited back into the room. If a point of clarification is necessary, the complainant shall be invited back.

8. Ideally, the complaint should be resolved on the day and the Complainant invited to wait for a decision. If a delay is expected, the Chairman or the Parish Council Clerk (if applicable) will inform the Complainant and tell them of the likely timescale for a

decision. Even though the decision will be confirmed in writing, it is important that the Complainant is informed in person and given the opportunity to express their feelings.

After the meeting

1. The decision should be confirmed in writing to the complainant within seven working days, together with details of any action to be taken.

2. The Parish Council's decision on the matter will be final, and no further appeal process will be offered.

This Complaints Procedure was adopted/reviewed by the Council at its Meeting held on Tuesday 8th September 2026 Agenda Item 3/14/4