HUNDLEBY PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Last Review: 05/10/2026
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1. THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPLAINTS

1.1 Complaints are valuable because they provide a chance to put things right if there has been an error, and to make sure that the same mistake is not repeated.

1.2 It is essential that complaints be dealt with positively. The Council is anxious to hear residents' comments and is committed to making full use of complaints, information to contribute to continuous amenities improvement.

1.3 A complaint from a member of the public, employee or member should be addressed to the Clerk to the Council and will be dealt with promptly to maintain public confidence. Should the complaint be in regard to the Clerk to the Council it should be addressed to the Chair. A fair and courteous response will be given in all cases, and a full and proper investigation may be undertaken to establish all the pertinent facts.

1.4 The complainant's anonymity will be ensured at the outset and maintained throughout unless dictated by circumstances. Anonymity will not be removed without the consent of the complainant.

2 DEFINITION OF A COMPLAINT

2.1 A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the Council, Councillors, or its staff which affects an individual person or group.

2.2 What the complaints procedure will deal with:

The complaints procedure will deal with matters of maladministration, which is, if the Council does something the wrong way, fails to do something it should do or does something it should not do. Some examples include:

a). Neglect or unjustified delay;
b). Malice, bias, or unfair discrimination;
c). Failure to tell people their rights;

d). Failure to provide advice or information when reasonably requested;
e). Providing misleading or inaccurate advice;
f). Inefficiency, ineffectiveness, bad and unprofessional practice or conduct.

2.3 WHAT THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE WILL NOT DEAL WITH:

- Complaints for which there is a legal remedy or where legal proceedings already exist;
- Financial irregularity. Local electors have a statutory right to object to the Council's audit of accounts pursuant to section 16 of the Audit Commission Act 1998. On other matters, the Council may need to consult their appointed auditor or the Audit Commission;
- Criminal activity. Will be dealt with by the police;
- Employee conduct. Internal disciplinary procedure, complaints about employment matters-these are dealt with separately;
- Complaints about the activities of third parties, such as those relating to the District Council, County Council and any other statutory bodies. These will be forwarded directly to the body responsible for handling such complaints.

3 INFORMAL COMPLAINT

3.1 It is not appropriate for every comment to be treated as a formal complaint. Every effort should be made to deal with these problems immediately, either by providing information, instigating the appropriate action or explaining a decision. The Clerk or Chair as the case may be, will (except where the complaint is about his/her own actions) try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. Telephone, face to face or letter is preferable to email.

4 FORMAL COMPLAINT

4.1 If the complainant is not satisfied, or the complaint is more serious, the complainant will be asked to confirm the complaint in writing to the Clerk, or if the complaint is about a Council employee, it can be directed to the Chair.

4.2 If the complaint is about a decision or the general operations of the Council, or about the Council as a body, the Clerk, and independent Councillor will investigate the complaint.

4.3 If the complaint is about the actions of a Councillor, the Clerk and Chair will investigate whether the actions contravene the Council's Code of Conduct. In cases where the Code of Conduct has been contravened, or the outcome is unclear, the complaint should be referred to the Monitoring Officer for further investigation under the complaints process.

5 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

5.1 The complainant will be issued with a complaint form which should be returned to the Clerk. Complaints received by email or telephone may be transcribed onto a complaint form by the Clerk if the complainant has no objection.

5.2 Copies of all correspondence and a copy of the investigating person's notes should be filed with the complaint form.

5.3 The investigation should be completed within 21 days from receipt of the form or a progress report issued.

5.4 The Clerk or Chair will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the complaint will be considered and by whom.

5.5 If the complaint involves an elected Member then the elected member will be informed that a complaint has been received and when the complaint will be considered. They will be given the right to reply whether or not the complainant is satisfied with the investigation.

5.6 If the complainant is not satisfied with the response they receive, then they can apply to the Clerk for a review within 28 days of the reply. The Council has 14 days to reply.

5.7 If the issue remains unresolved, the complainant should be notified of his or her right to have the matter referred to a panel to consist of three councillors with no prejudicial interest. The three Councillors will be elected by the Full Council dependant on the complaint. This must be done within four weeks of the Clerk's reply.

5.8 The outcome of all formal complaints dealt with by the Complaints Panel will be reported to the Council.

HUNDLEBY COUNCIL COMPLAINTS FORM			
Complainant's Name			
Address			
Post Code		**Telephone No**	
Email Address			
Nature of Complaint			

For Office Attention Only:	
Received via:	Telephone Email In person In writing
Date Received	
Received by	

Due Date Actual Date

Complaint acknowledged in writing (5 WDs)

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Letter of explanation to complainant (20 WDs)

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