

LANGTOFT PARISH COUNCIL

CODE OF PRACTICE IN HANDLING COMPLAINTS

(in accordance with Standing Order no 2.xii)

**Approved and adopted 11.06.2025 reviewed and updated
16.02.2026**

PREFACE

From time-to-time members of the public may have complaints about the administration or procedures of Langtoft Parish Council. Complaints against policy decisions made by the Council shall be referred back to the Council (note section 7 of Council's Standing Orders covering six months period).

Local Councils are not subject to the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman. The Code of Practice set out below is based on a recommended model, as a way of ensuring that complainants can feel satisfied that at the very least their complaint has been properly and fully considered.

Langtoft Parish Council will bear in mind the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 as well as the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in dealing with complaints.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the council's action or lack of action or about the standard of a 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.

A complaint may arise for the reasons above. It may also be triggered by an allegation of administrative fault, such as not following procedures or standing orders, inadequate service, no service, delay or making a mistake.

The following would not be considered under this policy:-

- Complaints about the clerk. These would be considered under the council's internal employment procedures.
- Alleged financial irregularity. Such complaints need to be referred to the Council's external auditor PKF Littljohn.
- Criminal activity – this should be referred to the police.

- Complaints against Councillors, which fall under the Code of Conduct. Such complaints must be referred to the Monitoring Officer at East Riding of Yorkshire Council.

CODE OF PRACTICE IN HANDLING COMPLAINTS

1. If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk and it is not possible to satisfy the complainant in full immediately, the complainant shall be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk at clerk@langtoft-pc.gov.uk. via the form at appendix 1 of this policy.

Send your complaint to the Clerk, at clerk@langtoft-oc.gov.uk or The Grange, Main Street, Thwing, YO25 3DY, or to the Chairman, mike.rowland@langtoft-pc.gov.uk 2 The Dell, Front Street, Langtoft, YO25 3TA, if the complaint is about the Clerk.

The Clerk shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council, and whether the matter will be treated as confidential

2. On receipt of a written complaint, the Clerk or the Chairman, as the case may be, shall (except where the complaint is about his/her own actions) try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant within the existing policy of the Council. Please note that complaints about council decisions can only be considered if the complainant provides the missing information or evidence setting out how the council made a mistake
3. The Clerk or the Chairman shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
4. The Clerk or the Chairman shall bring any written complaint which has not been settled to the next meeting of the Council, and the Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered. And the complainant shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally

Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied on. The Council shall provide the complainant with copies of documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting and shall do so promptly, allowing the complainant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.

5. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public, but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.

The complainant (or representative) should outline the grounds for the complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by (i) the clerk or other nominated officer and then (ii) members.

The clerk or other nominated officer will have the opportunity to explain the Council's position and questions may be asked by (i) the complainant and (ii) members

The clerk or other nominated officer and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.

The Clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be asked to leave the room while members decide whether or not grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties shall be invited back.

The Clerk or other nominated officer and the complainant should be given the opportunity to wait for the decision, but if the decision is unlikely to be finalised on that day they should be advised when the decision is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them.

7. As soon as may be after the decision has been made, it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
8. The Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of opinion that issues of law or practice are concerned on which advice is necessary. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.
9. In the event of serial facetious, vexatious or malicious complaints from a member of the public, the Council should consider taking legal advice before writing any letters to the complainant. A complaint may be considered vexatious if it:
 - Is repeated without new evidence
 - Is intended to disrupt rather than resolve issues
 - Unreasonably affects Council services
10. Langtoft Parish Council will not consider any anonymous communication.

Appeals

An appeal must be made in writing within 10 working days of receiving the decision. The appeal will then be considered by a meeting of councillors who were not involved in the original decision.

A final decision will be sent to the complainant in writing.

There will be no further opportunities for appeal.

This Complaints Procedure was adopted by Langtoft Parish Council on 11.06.2025

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Appendix 1: Complaints Form

About you

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

I agree to be contacted by (At least one must be ticked so that we can contact you about the complaint): Email Post Telephone

Complaints will be processed under data protection legislation and only shared with relevant staff and council members to progress the complaint.

Please refer to the council's privacy notice for more information on how your data will be processed.

The complaint

Details of complaint. Include relevant facts: dates, people involved, what happened, and any evidence. You can use another sheet if required.

What outcome are you seeking?

Are all the supporting documents and information attached: Yes No

Signed: _____ Name (Print): _____

Date: _____