OSGODBY PARISH COUNCIL COMPLAINTS POLICY

Osgodby Parish Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live and work in its area, or are visitors to the locality. This procedure is for use in complaints against the Council and has been produced in line with the NALC Legal Topic Note 9E – June 2014.

It will not be appropriate to deal with all complaints from members of the public under a complaints procedure. Osgodby Parish Council will consider engaging other procedures/bodies in respect of the following types of complaint:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of conduct</th>
<th>Refer to</th>
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<tr>
<td>Financial irregularity</td>
<td>Local elector’s statutory right to object Council's audit of accounts pursuant to s.16 Audit Commission Act 1998. On other matters, councils may need to consult their auditor / Audit Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Criminal activity</td>
<td>The Police</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member conduct</td>
<td>In England a complaint relating to a member’s failure to comply with the Code of Conduct must be submitted to the standards committee of the relevant principal authority.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employee conduct</td>
<td>Internal disciplinary procedure</td>
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Definition of a complaint
A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public 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.

The complaints procedure is not an appeal system to question council decisions. All complaints are initially dealt with by the parish clerk and you can contact her on 074282 19138 or by email osgodbyparishcouncil@gmail.com, details of your complaint.

Stage 1: Informal complaint
Osgodby Parish Council will first try to deal with your complaint informally. As this is an informal stage you will not be required to put your complaint in writing and we may either respond via e-mail or will ring you back to let you know how your informal complaint has been dealt with. We will aim to get back to you within 7 working days with either a resolution or an update.

Stage 2: Formal complaint (Investigation)
Formal written complaints should be addressed to the Parish Clerk as follows:

Osgodby Parish Clerk
Yon End
Main Street
Osgodby
Lincolnshire
LN8 3TA
osgodbyparishcouncil@gmail.com

Osgodby Parish Council will acknowledge your written complaint within 7 working days and will send you a written response within a further 10 working days, following an investigation by the parish clerk. You will be asked if you wish for the complaint to be treated confidentially, even if you waive your confidentiality rights, the council will still comply with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 to safeguard against the unlawful disclosure of personal data.

Stage 3: Formal complaint (Review)
If you remain dissatisfied with the result of your complaint, you can request that the Parish Council reviews the complaint at the next full council meeting.

Before the Meeting

1. The complainant shall be asked to put the complaint about the council’s procedures or administration in writing to the parish clerk.
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the clerk, he or she should be advised to address it to the chairman of the council.

3. The clerk shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the council. The complainant will be advised that the council will consider the complaint in closed session, unless the complainant has waived this right.

4. The complainant shall be invited to attend a meeting and to bring with them a representative if they wish.

5. 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 any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting and shall do so promptly, allowing the claimant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.

At the Meeting

6. The council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the council meeting in public.

7. The chairman should introduce everyone and explain the procedure.

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

9. The parish clerk will have an opportunity to explain the council’s position and questions may be asked by (i) the complainant and (ii), members.

10. The parish clerk and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.

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

12. The parish clerk 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.

After the Meeting

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

If you are still not happy, you can take your complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). You can contact the LGO on 0300 061 0614 or www.lgo.org.uk to complete the online form.

Agreed & Approved by Osgodby Parish Council

Date: 10th June 2019
Signed on behalf of Council: Yvonne Knibbs Chair
Name & Title: Yvonne Knibbs Chair
Date to Be Reviewed: June 2021