

HOLME-NEXT-THE-SEA PARISH COUNCIL COMPLAINTS POLICY

Introduction

If you have a complaint about the Parish Council, we would like to hear from you. This notice tells you how to complain, and what happens to your complaint on receipt. It also tells you who deals with the complaint, how you can be represented, when a decision is made and how you will be notified of this.

Feedback from our residents, whom we aim to serve efficiently and effectively, helps us improve our services.

Scope

Other bodies have responsibility for some types of complaint and in these circumstances our complaints procedure is not appropriate. These are summarised below:

Type of Conduct	Refer to
Alleged financial irregularity	Local electors have a statutory right to object to a Council's audit of accounts pursuant to s.16 Audit Commission Act 1998. Complaints of this nature should be reported to the External Auditor.
Alleged criminal activity	Allegations of criminal activity should be reported to the Police.
Members' conduct alleged to breach the code of conduct adopted by the Parish Council	If the complaint relates to an alleged failure to comply with the code of conduct, this should be submitted to the Standards Committee of the relevant principal authority (King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council).

Related procedures

Below are examples of complaints which will require special consideration and where we may engage other procedures or bodies. If this is the case, then we will advise you of this. Examples of the most common reasons for this are summarised below:

Nature of Complaint	Related procedures/statutory requirements
Allegations of employee misconduct	Internal disciplinary procedures
Allegations of Data Protection Breach	Information Commissioners Office

Guiding principles

We aim:

- to make it easy for anyone to make a complaint
- to solve problems as quickly as is practical
- to prevent problems from happening again, and
- to encourage good practice.

How to contact us with your complaint

Please contact the Clerk by telephone, by post, or via email:

Telephone: 01485 525819

E-mail: parishclerk@holmentspc.org

Post: Dave Watkins, Village Hall, 24 Kirkgate, Holme-next-the-Sea, Norfolk, PE36 6LH

What we will do when we hear from you

Efforts will first be made by the Clerk (or the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson if the complaint relates to the Clerk) to resolve complaints to the satisfaction of the complainant by less formal measures or explanations provided before resorting to the formal complaints process.

We will deal with any comments about the Parish Council as quickly as is practical. We will investigate the complaint fully. We may be able to give you an answer straight away, or we may need more time to investigate what you have told us.

If your complaint cannot be resolved informally, we will ask you to complete the form included with this leaflet and send it back to us.

This policy explains the process which will then be followed once your complaint form has been received.

We will aim to acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 10 working days.

Your complaint will be investigated by the Clerk or, if the complaint relates to the Clerk, the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson.

We aim to complete our investigation and report back to you, in writing, with our findings within 12 weeks.

Persistent complaints

We will do our best to answer your complaint within the terms detailed in this policy. In the unfortunate circumstance where we answer a complaint fully, but further correspondence is received on that matter one acknowledgement only will be issued.

Confidentiality

Details of your complaint may be shared with other Councillors as necessary. Details of your complaint will not be shared outside of the Parish Council, relevant statutory bodies and its contractors/sub-contractors, other than as required by law, without your consent.

How to contact us with your complaint

Step 1

Contact the Clerk by telephone, post, or e-mail:

Telephone: 01485 525819

E-mail: parishclerk@holmentspc.org

Post: Dave Watkins, Village Hall, 24 Kirkgate, Holme-next-the-Sea, Norfolk, PE36 6LH

The Clerk will contact you by telephone to discuss your issue. Briefly discuss the complaint with the Clerk as they may be able to resolve your issue informally or they may need to redirect you to another authority, such as the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk or Norfolk County Council, if they have responsibility for your area of concern.

If your complaint cannot be resolved informally, the Clerk will send you a complaints form. This can be sent to you by post or electronically via e-mail. We will need your postal address or e-mail address to do this.

Step 2

When you receive the form, complete it, sign it, and return it to the Clerk by post or electronically via e-mail. Please give us as much detail as possible about the concerns that you have.

The Clerk will aim to acknowledge receipt of your complaint form within 10 working days. If the Clerk is on leave, they will acknowledge receipt of your form within 10 working days of their return to work.

Step 3

We will aim to get back to you, in writing, with the results of our investigation within 12 weeks.

HOLME-NEXT-THE-SEA PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS FORM

Holme-next-the-Sea Parish Council

C/O Dave Watkins
Village Hall, 24 Kirkgate,
Holme-next-the-Sea,
Norfolk,
PE36 6LH

Date	
Name	
Address	
Post Code	
Contact telephone number	
E-mail address	

Please advise us of the nature of your complaint i.e., your reason for complaining. If you are complaining about a Parish Council member or Parish Council officer, please also give their name. Please also give the date when your complaint arose and any background information leading up to your complaint. You might also like to tell us what you consider should be done to resolve the matter. If you have any evidence concerning your complaint, then please include this too.

Please sign and date this form. Once completed please send a signed copy by post to the address at the top of the form or a scanned signed copy by email to parishclerk@holmentspc.org

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Signature

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Date