

Public Feedback and Complaints Policy

The Public Feedback and Complaints Policy was adopted by Full Council at its Meeting held on 20 September 2016 (CPC16-142)

Clipstone Parish Council want to provide the best service we can and recognise a good Council always listens to the views, comments and suggestions of its residents.

We want to make it easy for you to give us your feedback, particularly if we have made a mistake which has affected you or if you have not had a positive experience when dealing with us.

We would also be delighted to hear from you when you have been particularly happy with a service you have received from us, or if you have any ideas or suggestions about how we can improve our service to you.

You can contact us by letter, telephone or e-mail to:

Clipstone Parish Office
Village Hall, Church Road
Clipstone
NG21 9DF
Tel: 01623 626857
Email: clipstoneparishcouncil@btconnect.com

If you need help giving us your feedback, the Parish Clerk will be happy to assist – or you can ask a family member or friend to talk to us on your behalf.

We record and monitor feedback to make sure we learn from your comments.

Complaints Procedure

We have a straightforward but formal procedure for dealing with complaints. The procedure follows Local Government Ombudsman guidelines. The Ombudsman does not, however, have any jurisdiction over parish or town councils.

If you are dissatisfied with a service we have provided, please contact the Parish Clerk to discuss your concerns. This is because we would like to put things right as quickly as possible and may be able to do so if you simply explain your concerns to us. Sometimes, we are unable to do what our customers want, perhaps because of the law, but if you contact us at least we can explain the reason(s) for this to you.

If you have already contacted us about an issue and we have not resolved it, you may wish to make a formal complaint.

A complaint is **not** an enquiry or request for us to do a task or service. A complaint tells us things that have gone wrong, or that you are unhappy with the service you have received and why you are unhappy. The Local Government Ombudsman says that: "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."

A complaint could relate, for example, to -

- The standard of service provided.
- Whether the service met your needs.
- The time taken to provide the service.
- Not receiving the requested or expected service
- The way you were treated.
- Equality of opportunity.
- Discrimination.

Our complaints procedure should **not** be used to ask us to do something, such as reporting graffiti or litter. This should be done by simply contacting us and letting us know of the problem.

Our complaints procedure can also **not** be used to request information, because you disagree with the law or for matters outside the remit of the Council such financial irregularity. There are also different arrangements for investigating complaints about the conduct of councillors.

Our **formal complaint procedure** has two steps:

Step One is a complaint to Parish Clerk (or if the matter is about the service provided by the Clerk, to the Chair of the Parish Council). The complaint should be in writing but help can be offered if this is difficult. On receipt, we will send you an acknowledgement letter and investigate the complaint. We aim to reply in full within 15 working days. If we cannot reply within 15 working days, we will let you know why investigations are taking longer and keep you informed on the progress of your complaint.

If you are not satisfied with our response, you can progress the matter to **Step Two** by writing to Chair of the Parish Council. S/he will acknowledge your complaint and let you know the date of the Parish Council meeting at which your complaint will be considered. You will be invited to attend the meeting to explain your complaint. You may bring a representative to assist or support you.

Information about the format of the meeting and how your complaint will be heard will be explained beforehand.

You will normally be notified, in writing, of the decision of the Parish Council together with details of any action to be taken.