

Oakthorpe, Donisthorpe & Acresford Parish Council



Complaints Procedure

Oakthorpe, Donisthorpe and Acresford Parish Council (the council) is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or who are visitors to the locality. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by the council this complaints procedure sets out how you may complain and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.

This complaints procedure applies to complaints about the council's administration and procedures and may include complaints about how Parish Council employees have dealt with your concerns.

A complaint can be made when you believe:

- a council service has let you down.
- when the council has not done something, it has said it will do.
- when the council has done something wrong.
- when the service the council has provided is unfair.

This procedure cannot be used if you have a complaint against an employee of the council or a Parish Councillor.

If you have a complaint about an employee this will be dealt with as an employment matter. The complainant can be assured that the matter will be dealt with internally as such and appropriate action taken as required. Complaints must be made in writing to the Clerk, or in the case of the complaint being against the Clerk, the Chairman of the Council.

If your complaint is about a Parish Councillor these fall within the jurisdiction of the NWLDC Standards Committee. Complainants are be advised to contact the Monitoring Officer of the District Council at The Council Offices, Council Offices, Whitwick Road, Coalville, Leicestershire, LE67 3FJ.

This procedure is therefore specifically aimed at situations where a complaint is made about the administration of the council or about its procedures and which has not been satisfactorily resolved with less formal measures or explanations provided to the complainant.

If you have a complaint about the Council's administration or procedures the process is:

- you will be asked to send the details of your complaint either in writing or by e mail (clerk@odapc.com) to the Clerk or the Chairman of the council. The council will not accept anonymous complaints.

- Your complaint will be acknowledged and advice will be given as to how and when your complaint will be dealt with.
- Your complaint will be answered within 14 days of its receipt. If for any reason a response cannot be given within that timescale you will be given an explanation as to why that deadline cannot be met and given a further date by which a response will be given.
- If your complaint needs to be considered at a meeting of the parish council you will be invited to attend that meeting and bring with you representation as you wish.
- Seven (7) clear working days before the meeting you will provide the council with copies of any documentation or other evidence you may wish to refer to at the meeting. The council will similarly provide you with copies of any documentation it intends to rely on at that meeting.

If your complaint is to be considered at a meeting of the council:

- The council will decide whether the circumstances of the complaint warrant the exclusion of the press and public during consideration of the complaint. If this is the case it will be heard at the end of the agenda and the complainant will have the right to remain in the meeting during discussion on this item
- When the item is called the Chairman will introduce all parties concerned and explain the procedure.
- The complainant will outline their complaint after which members may ask questions.
- If relevant the clerk or other proper officer will explain the council's position after which members may ask further questions.
- The clerk or other proper officer and complainant will be offered the opportunity to give a brief summary.
- The clerk or other proper officer and complainant will be asked to leave the room while Members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint are right or reasonable. If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties will be invited back into the meeting.
- The clerk or other proper officer and complainant will return to the meeting to hear the decision or to be advised when a decision will be made.

The Clerk or the Chairman of the council will notify you within 20 working days of the outcome of your complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take as a result of your complaint. In exceptional cases the twenty working days timescale may have to be extended. If it is, you will be kept informed.

What to do if you are still not satisfied

The decision of the Parish Council is final with no appeal process as the Local Government Ombudsman does not consider complaints in respect of Parish Councils.

Unreasonable and Vexatious Complaints

There will be circumstances when a complainant persists in wishing to pursue a complaint when it clearly has no reasonable basis, or when the Council has already taken reasonable action in response, or where some other process, whether through the courts or some other recognised procedure, should, or has been taken. These matters will be referred to the Parish Council by the Clerk with a summary of the issues and of the attempts made to resolve the complaint. The Parish Council may, in such circumstances, decide that no further action can usefully be taken in response to the complainant and inform the complainant so, making it clear that only new and substantive issues will merit a response.

Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.

