



# Carn Brea Parish Council

## Handling Complaints Policy

## INTRODUCTION

Carn Brea Parish Council recognises that from time to time there will be concerns expressed by members of the public over the activities of the Council or one of its members or employees. To address these issues the Council has adopted a procedure for the handling of complaints. This procedure allows people to have a form of address to the Council if they feel they have a complaint or have been unfairly treated in their dealings with the Council employees, Councillors, the Council or its Committees.

## WHAT IS 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 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.

## WHETHER THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE IS APPROPRIATE

It will not be appropriate to deal with all complaints from members of the public under the complaint's procedure. The Council will engage other procedure/bodies in respect of the following types of complaint:

Type of Conduct	Refer to
Financial irregularity	Local elector's statutory right to object Council's audit of accounts pursuant to s. 16 Audit Commission Act 1998.
Criminal activity	The police
Member conduct	A complaint relating to a member's failure to comply with a Council's code of conduct must be submitted to Cornwall Council.
Employee conduct	Internal disciplinary procedure

## **VERBAL COMPLAINTS**

1. On receipt of a complaint in person the Clerk will try to satisfy the complainant immediately or as soon as is practicable.
2. If the Clerk is unable to satisfy the complainant immediately, then full details of the complaint together with the complainant's telephone number etc. will be recorded so that a further verbal response can be made as soon as possible.
3. If the complaint is about the behaviour of an employee of the Council or the Clerk the complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk / Chairman of the Council.
4. If a verbal response is unable to satisfy, then the Clerk will ask that the complaint be put in writing in order that it can be investigated more fully.

## **WRITTEN COMPLAINTS**

5. On receiving a written complaint, the Clerk shall try to settle the matter in a timely fashion.
6. If necessary, the Clerk will send a holding letter to the complainant to allow further time to address the issues raised.
7. The Clerk shall bring any written complaint which has not been settled (excluding employee related complaints) to the next meeting of the Full Council and the Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date of the meeting. The Complainant will be offered the opportunity to explain the nature of the complaint to the meeting.
8. The Clerk shall consult with the Chairman/Vice Chairman of the Council to consider whether the written complaint (excluding employee related complaints) warrants discussion at a Full Council meeting in the absence of the press and public, and the decision on the complaint shall be announced at the Full Council meeting in public.
9. The Clerk will communicate in writing to the complainant, the decision that has been made by the Council and the nature of any action taken by the Council.

## **COMPLAINTS AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE OR OFFICER OF THE COUNCIL**

1. Any complaint against an employee ~~member~~ or officer must be submitted in writing.
2. If the complaint is against the actions of the Clerk, it should be submitted in writing to the Chairman.
3. If the complaint is made against the actions of an employee, it will be considered as an employment issue, and the Clerk will present the complaint to the Staffing Committee of the Council for consideration at a meeting held in the absence of the press or public.
4. If the complaint is made against the actions of the Clerk, it will be considered as an employment issue, and the Chairman will present the complaint to the Staffing Committee of the Council for consideration at a meeting in the absence of the press or public.
5. The complainant may be invited to attend part of the meeting to explain the nature of their complaint, in the absence of the public and press.
6. Persons mentioned in the complaint will have the opportunity to explain the nature of their actions to the meeting, in the absence of the public and press.
7. The complaint and any actions will be considered by the Staffing Committee in line with the Council's Policies and Procedures.
8. Any response to a complaint relating to an employee or the Clerk will remain confidential and no confirmation of action taken will be disclosed.

## **COMPLAINTS AGAINST A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL**

Parish and Town Councillors sign up to a Code of Conduct on taking office. The Council is unable to investigate complaints against any of its members. If you wish to submit a complaint for breach of this code, you should do so to the Monitoring Officer at Cornwall Council.

The Monitoring Officer  
Cornwall Council  
Floor 4, North Wing  
New County Hall  
Treyew Road  
Truro  
Cornwall  
TR1 3AY

Further information can be accessed from [www.cornwall.gov.uk](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk)

**Handling Complaints Policy Amendment Record:**

This policy was adopted on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2013 and previous versions of this policy will be kept for 6 years.

<b>Review date:</b>	<b>Reviewed by:</b>	<b>Minute Number:</b>	<b>Amendments:</b>	<b>Additions:</b>
13/05/2021	Full Council	21/05/AM/18	Tracking changes did not being until 2025.	
12/05/2022	Full Council	22/AGM/15		
04/05/2023	Full Council	23/05/AM/16		
09/05/2024	Full Council	24/05/AM/16		
15/05/2025	Full Council	25/05/AM/20	None	None
14/5/2026	Annual Full Council	16	Pg 3 (6), (8) and (9) Pg 4 (1) and (7)	Pg 3 (3) Pg 4 (8a) and (9)

Approved at the Annual Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2026 (Item 16)