



Swanton Morley Parish Council

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Last reviewed August 2020

Next review August 2021

Introduction

Swanton Morley Parish Council is committed to providing the best quality of service to its residents but appreciates there may be times when things go wrong.

The purpose of our complaints policy is to put things right where such situations occur and prevent further incidents from happening.

Definition of a complaint

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.

What is covered

Type of complaint	How it is governed	Who to contact
Criminal activity	Statute and case law	Police
Financial irregularity	Statute – e.g Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014	Clerk for details of the Auditor
A Councillor	Code of conduct	Monitoring Officer
Council decision or policy	Complaints procedure	Parish Clerk
Level or quality of services or facilities	Complaints procedure	Parish Clerk
Council contractor	Complaints procedure	Parish Clerk
A member of staff	Complaints procedure and staff handbook disciplinary and grievance procedure	Clerk (or, if concerning the Clerk, the Chair of the council)

Where the complaint is regarding the conduct of a member of staff, the complainant shall be responded to in accordance with this policy, and the staff member's conduct shall be addressed in accordance with the Council's disciplinary and grievance procedure.

Who is covered by this policy

This policy only covers complaints made by members of the public. Internal complaints will be addressed as follows:

Complainant	Subject	How its governed
Staff member	Other staff member or Council decision or Policy	Disciplinary & grievance procedure
	Councillor	Code of conduct
Councillor	Staff member	Disciplinary & grievance procedure
	Other Councillor	Code of conduct
	Council decision or policy	Motion for debate at a relevant Council meeting

Policy statement

- The Council will take all complaints seriously
- All parties will be treated fairly at all times.
- The council shall follow its complaints procedure in all instances where a formal complaint has been lodged using its complaints form.
- The complaints procedure will be reasonable and accessible.
- The complaints procedure will be transparent and in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and any other relevant legislation.
- The Council shall have regard for its obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and any other relevant data protection legislation to the personal information of both complainants and subjects of complaints
- The Council shall give due consideration to its various obligations as a local authority, public body, employer, service provider, and landowner, and where there is any conflict its obligations, seek appropriate legal advice
- The Council shall, at its discretion, dismiss any complaints it deems to be vexatious or unreasonable

- The Council shall not consider any anonymous complaints, but shall ensure the confidentiality of the complainant where it deems it both reasonable, and where it has been asked to do so
- This policy shall be reviewed annually by the Full Council