

Preston Patrick Parish Council

Complaints Procedure (2026 Edition)

Based on NALC guidance and tailored for a micro council with minimal staffing and no committees.

1. Introduction

This procedure sets out how Preston Patrick Parish Council will handle complaints about its administration, decisions or service standards. It ensures fairness, transparency and compliance with good governance practice.

This Complaints Procedure shall be reviewed annually at the Annual Meeting of the Council.

2. Scope of the Procedure

This procedure applies to complaints about the Council's administration, the Council's decisions, and the standard of service provided.

This procedure does not apply to:

Complaints about individual councillors (these must be referred to the Monitoring Officer at Westmorland & Furness Council).

Employment matters.

Freedom of Information requests.

3. Informal Complaints

Complainants are encouraged to contact the Clerk in the first instance.

The Clerk will attempt to resolve the matter promptly and informally.

4. Formal Complaints

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, it should be submitted in writing to the Clerk. If the complaint concerns the Clerk, it should be addressed to the Chairman.

A written complaint should include the complainant's name and contact details, details of the complaint, relevant dates and supporting information, and the desired outcome.

5. Acknowledgement

The Council will acknowledge the complaint within seven working days and will inform the complainant of the next steps.

6. Investigation

The Clerk or Chairman will investigate the complaint. This may include reviewing documents and speaking with relevant parties. Further information may be requested from the complainant.

7. Consideration by the Council

If the complaint cannot be resolved by the Clerk or Chairman, it will be referred to a meeting of the Council. The complainant may attend and speak if they wish. The Council may exclude the public if confidential matters are discussed.

8. Decision

The Council will notify the complainant of its decision in writing within ten working days of the meeting.

9. Confidentiality

All complaints will be handled sensitively. Personal information will be processed in accordance with data protection legislation.

10. Unreasonable or Vexatious Complaints

The Council may decline to respond to complaints that are persistent, abusive or clearly unreasonable. Any such decision will be recorded.

11. Review

This Complaints Procedure shall be reviewed annually in May.

Date: _____

Signed (Chairman): _____

Signed (Clerk): _____