

# **Stonesfield Parish Council**

## **Complaints Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

Stonesfield Parish Council (“the Council”) is committed to dealing with complaints in a fair, open and transparent manner. This policy sets out the procedure for handling complaints about the Council’s administration or actions.

### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to complaints about the Council’s administration, procedures or services. It does not apply to complaints about individual councillors, which are dealt with under the Code of Conduct.

### **3. What is a Complaint**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about the Council’s actions, decisions, or failure to provide a service.

### **4. What is Not a Complaint**

This policy does not cover:

- Complaints about councillors’ behaviour (Code of Conduct matters)
- Requests for information or services
- Matters already subject to legal proceedings

### **5. Informal Resolution**

The Council encourages complaints to be resolved informally wherever possible. Complaints should initially be raised with the Parish Clerk, who will attempt to resolve the matter promptly.

### **6. Formal Complaints Procedure**

Formal complaints must be made in writing to the Parish Clerk. The Clerk will acknowledge receipt within five working days and investigate the complaint. A written response will normally be provided within 20 working days.

### **7. Escalation**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, the matter may be reviewed by the Council or an appropriate committee, excluding any members involved in the complaint.

### **8. Confidentiality**

All complaints will be handled sensitively and confidentially, in line with data protection legislation.

## **9. Review**

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains effective and compliant with best practice.

**Adopted:** 6 May 2026

**Reviewed:**