

GREAT MOULTON PARISH COUNCIL
VEXATIOUS COMPLAINANT POLICY

Adopted on 12/7/2026

1. Purpose of this Policy

Great Moulton Parish Council is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and with respect. However, in a small number of cases, individuals may pursue complaints in a way that is unreasonable or vexatious. This policy sets out how the Council will identify and manage such behaviour, while continuing to ensure access to services and the right to raise concerns.

2. What is a Vexatious Complainant?

A vexatious complainant is someone who, because of the nature or frequency of their contact with the Council, hinders our ability to deal with their complaint or with other people's complaints.

A person may be considered vexatious if they:

- Repeatedly make the same complaint with no new evidence.
- Make complaints to multiple people or bodies at the same time about the same issue.
- Refuse to accept an outcome even after a proper investigation has been carried out.
- Make unreasonable demands, such as excessive contact or unrealistic deadlines.
- Use threatening, abusive, or offensive language or behaviour.
- Seek to cause disruption, harass council members or staff, or undermine council business through persistent complaints or correspondence.

This list is not exhaustive, and each case will be considered individually.

3. How the Council Will Respond

If a person's behaviour is considered vexatious, the Clerk or Chair of the Council will write to them to explain why their behaviour is causing concern, and what needs to change. They will be given an opportunity to adjust their behaviour.

If the behaviour continues, the Council may take one or more of the following actions:

- Limit or restrict contact (e.g. only allowing written communication or one named point of contact).
- Refuse to consider further complaints on the same matter unless new evidence is provided.
- Place a time limit on how long their complaint will be considered.
- In extreme cases, stop responding altogether.
- The council will keep details of the complaint and the time and costs spent to answer continued complaints from the vexatious complainer

All decisions to apply restrictions will be recorded, reviewed periodically, and reported to the Council.

4. Review and Right of Appeal

Anyone who has been classified as a vexatious complainant will be informed in writing of the decision, the reason for it, and how long the restriction will apply. They have the right to appeal this decision in writing within 28 days.

The appeal will be reviewed by a panel of councillors not previously involved in the decision, and a response will be issued within 21 days of receipt.

5. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if required. All decisions made under this policy will be kept under review and restrictions may be lifted if a complainant's behaviour improves.

6. Policy Statement

Great Moulton Parish Council is committed to providing a fair and consistent service. This policy helps to protect staff, councillors, and members of the public from unacceptable behaviour while ensuring that genuine complaints are heard and addressed properly.