



# EARLS COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

## HABITUAL OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINANTS POLICY

### (2026)

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### 1. Background

Earls Colne Parish Council is committed to dealing with complaints fairly while protecting Council resources from unreasonable or excessive demands.

### 2. Definitions

Habitual behaviour refers to repeated actions.

Vexatious behaviour refers to actions that are unreasonable, disruptive or distressing.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Complaints
- Freedom of Information requests
- Data protection requests

### 4. Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal warning issued by the Clerk or Chairman.

Stage 2 – Formal designation by Full Council if behaviour continues.

### 5. Criteria

Examples of behaviour that may be considered habitual or vexatious include:

- Repeated complaints after the complaints process has been exhausted
- Changing complaint details or outcomes sought
- Refusing to accept evidence or explanations
- Excessive contact with councillors or officers
- Harassment, abuse or intimidation



- Unreasonable demands on Council resources
- Repetitive complaints ignoring previous responses

## 6. Considerations

The Council will ensure complaints have been properly investigated and responded to before applying this policy.

The Council will also consider whether there may be underlying communication or accessibility issues requiring reasonable adjustment.

## 7. Actions

Where behaviour is considered habitual or vexatious, the Council may:

- Limit methods of contact
- Nominate a single point of contact
- Cease correspondence on specific matters
- Temporarily suspend contact
- Refer serious matters to the police where appropriate

## 8. Review

Any designation under this policy will be reviewed after 12 months, or earlier where behaviour improves.

This policy will be reviewed periodically.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_(Chairman)

Review Date: May 2027