



COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT

COMPLAINT FORM

Your details

1. Please provide us with your name and contact details

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Title: | |
| First name: | |
| Last name: | |
| Address: | |
| Daytime telephone: | |
| Evening telephone: | |
| Mobile telephone: | |
| Email address: | |

Your address and contact details will not usually be released unless necessary or to deal with your complaint.

However, we will tell the following people that you have made this complaint:

- the member(s) you are complaining about
- the monitoring officer of the authority
- the parish or town clerk (if applicable)

We will tell them your name and give them a summary of your complaint. We will give them full details of your complaint where necessary, or appropriate, to be able to deal with it. If you have serious concerns about your name and a summary, or details of your complaint being released, please complete section 6 of this form.

2. Please tell us which complainant type best describes you

- Member of the public
- An elected or co-opted member of an authority
- An independent member of the standards committee
- Member of Parliament
- Local authority monitoring officer
- Other council officer or authority employee
- Other ()

3. Equality monitoring questions

Do you have a disability as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 below.
“A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.

Yes No

Making your complaint

When your complaint is received it will be acknowledged and the subject Councillor advised of the complaint.

The assessment sub-committee will meet as soon as practicable to consider the complaint. You will be advised of the sub-committee’s decision, whether that is to take no action, or refer the matter for local investigation, or refer the complaint to the Standards Board for England. This decision should be made within 20 working days. At that stage you will be advised of the further process to be followed.

4. Please provide us with the name of the member(s) you believe have breached the Code of Conduct and the name of their authority:

| Title | First name | Last name | Council or authority name |
|-------|------------|-----------|---------------------------|
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5. Please explain in this section (or on separate sheets) what the member has done that you believe breaches the Code of Conduct. If you are complaining about more than one member you should clearly explain what each individual person has done that you believe breaches the Code of Conduct.

It is important that you provide all the information you wish to have taken into account by the assessment sub-committee when it decides whether to take any action on your complaint. For example:

- You should be specific, wherever possible, about exactly what you are alleging the member said or did. For instance, instead of writing that the member insulted you, you should state what it was they said.
- You should provide the dates of the alleged incidents wherever possible. If you cannot provide exact dates it is important to give a general timeframe.
- You should confirm whether there are any witnesses to the alleged conduct and provide their names and contact details if possible.
- You should provide any relevant background information.

Please provide us with the details of your complaint. Continue on a separate sheet if there is not enough space on this form.

Only complete this next section if you are requesting that your identify is kept confidential

In the interests of fairness and natural justice, we believe members who are complained about have a right to know who has made the complaint. We also believe they have a right to be provided with a summary of the complaint. Requests for confidentiality will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The criteria used by the assessment sub-committee to consider confidentiality are:

- There are reasonable grounds for believing that you will be at risk of physical harm if your identity is disclosed, or
- You are an officer who works closely with the subject member and there is a possibility of you losing your job or of other serious consequences to your employment if your identify is disclosed, or
- You suffer from a serious health condition and there are medical risks associated with your identify being disclosed. In such circumstances the medical evidence of your condition may be required, and in all cases
- Whether it is possible to investigate the complaint without making known your identity.

Please note that requests for confidentiality or requests for suppression of complaint details will not automatically be granted. The assessment sub-committee will consider the request alongside the substance of your complaint. We will then contact you with the decision. If your request for confidentiality is not granted, we will usually allow you the option of withdrawing your complaint.

However, it is important to understand that in certain exceptional circumstances where the matter complained about is very serious, we can proceed with an investigation or other action and disclose your name even if you have expressly asked us not to.

Please provide us with details of why you believe we should withhold your name and/or the details of your complaint:

Additional Help

6. Complaints must be submitted in writing. This includes fax and electronic submissions. However, in line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2000, we can make reasonable adjustments to assist you if you have a disability that prevents you from making your complaint in writing.

We can also help if English is not your first language.

If you need any support in completing this form, please let us know as soon as possible.

You should initially contact the Council's Monitoring Officer (whose contact details are given below) who will try to arrange appropriate assistance for you.

Signed:

Dated:

Once completed this form, along with any supporting documents should be sent to:

Gateshead Council's Standards Committee
C/O Mr M Barker
Monitoring Officer
Gateshead Council
Civic Centre
Regent Street
Gateshead
NE8 1HH

Fax No: 0191 478 2958

Tel No: 0191 433 2102

E-mail: mikebarker@gateshead.gov.uk