

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS GUIDANCE NOTES ON HOW TO COMPLETE THE COMPLAINT FORM

The Complaint Form may be used where you wish to make an allegation that a Member of the Council has breached the Code of Conduct for Members.

Your allegation will be considered by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with the process sent out in Appendix E of the Council's Code of Conduct.

The points listed below will help you decide whether this is the appropriate form to use when making your complaint.

- Your complaint must be about conduct that occurred while the Member(s) complained about were in office. Conduct of an individual before they were elected, co-opted or appointed to Council, or after they have resigned or otherwise ceased to be a Member, will not be considered.
- Your complaint must be about a Member of this Council.
- Your complaint must be that the Member(s) has, or may have, breached the Code of Conduct. You may contact the Council's Monitoring Officer if you require further information:
Telephone: 01202 451172; e-mail: tanya.coulter@bournemouth.gov.uk
- Complaints about the Council's services or something the Council has done or failed to do are not dealt with through this process. Please contact the relevant service in the first instance:
<http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/A-ZServices.aspx>
- The Council also has a general complaints procedure - see our website for details:
[http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/AdviceBenefits/CustomerServices/Comments ComplimentsandComplaints.aspx](http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/AdviceBenefits/CustomerServices/CommentsComplimentsandComplaints.aspx)
or pick up a 'Comments, Compliments, Complaints' leaflet from Council reception points:
<http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/PeopleLiving/Maps/MapsHome.aspx>
- Your complaint must be in writing.
 - If for any reason you are unable to complete your complaint in writing please contact the Monitoring Officer on (01202) 451172.
 - If a disability prevents or inhibits you from making your complaint in writing you may contact Sam Johnson on (01202) 454609 for assistance.

What happens once you submit your complaint?

When you submit your complaint we will write to you to let you know we have received it. Generally we will also tell the Member that you are complaining about that we have received your complaint, who made the complaint and the relevant paragraphs of the Code of Conduct that it is alleged may have been breached. If you do not wish your identity to be disclosed to the Member you are complaining about, you should set out the reasons why in the relevant section of the complaint form. The Monitoring Officer will consider your request. Please note that this will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. If you wish to discuss this before submitting your complaint with the Monitoring Officer please contact her on 01202 451172.

The Monitoring Officer will request comments from the Member complained about. She will consider your complaint and decide whether it should be referred for investigation or whether an alternative method of dealing with the complaint is appropriate, or no further action should be taken. It is very important that you set your complaint out clearly and provide at the outset all the information you wish to be considered.

When the Monitoring Officer has made her decision we will notify you in writing whether your complaint has been referred for investigation, other action or no further action. When we write to you, we will also write to the Member(s) you have complained about.

What is meant by “alternative informal resolution”?

The Monitoring Officer may decide to deal with your complaint by alternative informal resolution instead of referring it for investigation. This is a deliberately broad term that may include options such as requiring the person you have complained about to apologise or undergo training or mediation. The Monitoring Officer will carefully consider the circumstances surrounding your complaint when deciding whether other action is appropriate. If the Monitoring Officer decides to deal with it in this way, we will explain what this involves.

How should I set out my complaint?

It is very important that you set your complaint out fully and clearly, and provide all the information at the outset. You should also provide any documents or other material that you wish the Monitoring Officer to consider, where possible.

We recommend that you use our complaint form or provide a covering note summarising what you are complaining about, especially if your complaint includes a lot of supporting documentation. In the summary, you should tell us exactly what each person you are complaining about said or did that has caused you to complain. If you are sending supporting documentation please cross-reference it against the summary of your complaint.