

COUNCILLOR CONDUCT - COMPLAINT FORM

This form is for use if anyone believes that an Ipswich Borough Councillor has breached any general obligations under the Suffolk Local Code of Conduct (the Code) adopted by the Council in July 2012.

This form should not be used for a complaint that a councillor has failed to register or declare a pecuniary interest. These complaints may be notified to the Monitoring Officer, but are dealt with by the Police under the Localism Act 2011.

Contact details

1. Please provide us with your name and contact details

TITLE:	
FIRST NAME:	
LAST NAME:	
ADDRESS:	
EMAIL ADDRESS:	
DAYTIME TELEPHONE:	
EVENING TELEPHONE:	
MOBILE TELEPHONE:	

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

However, normally we will provide a full copy of your complaint to:

- the councillor complained about
- the Monitoring Officer of the authority
- the Independent Person appointed to review the complaint

If you have serious concerns about your contact details or any part of the complaint being released, please complete section 3 of this form.

Details of Complaint

2. Please provide the name of the councillor(s) you believe may have breached the Code

TITLE	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	

Please explain in the next section (or on separate sheets) what the councillor has done that may be a breach of the Code. If the complaint is about more than one councillor, an explanation of what each individual person has done that may be a breach of the Code should be included.

It is important that all relevant information is provided, for example, where possible:

- be specific about exactly what the councillor complained about said or did.
- provide dates of the alleged incident(s).
- confirm whether there were any witnesses to the alleged conduct and provide their names and contact details.
- any relevant background information.

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

Please also specify below what outcome you are expecting from your complaint. Continue on a separate sheet if there is not enough space on this form.

Request for Anonymity

3. In the interests of fairness and natural justice, councillors who are complained about have a right to know who has made the complaint against them. Normally, they receive a copy of the complaint. The Council is unlikely to withhold the complainant's identity or the details of the complaint unless there is good reason to do so, for example, if:

- (1) there are reasonable grounds for believing that the complainant will be at risk of physical harm if their identity is disclosed;
- (2) the complainant is an officer who works closely with the councillor complained about and has reasonable grounds for being afraid of suffering a disadvantage to their employment or of losing their job if their identity was disclosed;
- (3) the complainant suffers from a serious health condition and there are medical risks associated with their identity being disclosed (in such circumstances, the complainant may be requested to provide medical evidence of their condition).

Please note that requests for confidentiality or requests for suppression of complaint details will not automatically be granted. The Monitoring Officer will consider the request alongside the substance of the complaint in consultation with an 'independent person' appointed by the Council. The complainant will be advised of the decision. If the request for confidentiality is not granted, the Council will usually allow the complainant the option of withdrawing their 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 a complainant's name even if they have expressly asked the Council not to.

DO YOU WISH TO HAVE THE COMPLAINT DEALT WITH ANONYMOUSLY?	(TICK IF YES)
IF ANONYMITY IS NOT GRANTED, DO YOU STILL WISH TO PROCEED?	(TICK IF YES)

Please provide details below of why you believe that your name and/or the details of your complaint should be withheld:

Next Steps

4. Your complaint will be dealt with by the Council's Monitoring Officer who will consult with an 'independent person' appointed by the Council before determining how the complaint should be handled.

The councillor complained about will be asked to provide his/her response to the complaint before it is considered.

The Monitoring Officer may decide that:

- no action be taken on the complaint;
- the complaint be referred to the Leader of the political group (if applicable) which the councillor complained about belongs to, for action;
- the complaint be dealt with by local resolution e.g. an apology from the councillor, training, mediation or other action;
- the complaint be investigated.

An investigation will only be undertaken in more serious cases or where other forms of action have been unsuccessful. The Council's Audit and Governance Committee (the Committee) will determine those complaints which have been investigated and where the 'independent person' has made a finding of breach of the Code. The Committee may censure a councillor found to have breached the Code or recommend training or other action. The Committee does not have power to suspend disqualify or impose any other form of sanction on a councillor.

Additional Help

5. Complaints must be submitted in writing. This includes fax and electronic submissions. However, in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, reasonable adjustments can be made to assist if a complainant has a disability that prevents them from making their complaint in writing.

Assistance can also be offered for those whose first language is not English.

If support is needed to complete this form, please contact the Council as soon as possible.

Signature: Date:

Please note that if this form is submitted by e-mail, the sender will be contacted at a later stage and requested to confirm submission of the complaint.

Signed and Completed forms should be sent to

**The Monitoring Officer
Ipswich Borough Council
Grafton House
15-17 Russell Road
Ipswich
IP1 2DE**