



## COMPLAINT FORM

For complaints against Members of East Sussex Fire Authority

### Your details

1. Please provide us with your name and contact details

<b>Title:</b>	
<b>First name:</b>	
<b>Last name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Daytime telephone:</b>	
<b>Evening telephone:</b>	
<b>Mobile telephone:</b>	
<b>Email address:</b>	

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

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 5 of this form.

2. Please tell us which complainant type best describes you:

- Member of the public
- An elected member of an authority
- Member of Parliament
- Local authority monitoring officer
- Other authority officer or employee
- Other (please specify)

**Making your complaint**

When you submit your complaint we will write to you to let you know we have received it. We will also normally 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.

The Monitoring Officer will review your complaint and, after consultation with an Independent Person, take a decision as to whether it merits formal investigation. This decision will normally be taken within 14 days of receipt of your complaint.

In appropriate cases, the Monitoring Officer may seek to resolve the complaint informally, without the need for a formal investigation. Such informal resolution may involve the Member accepting that his/her conduct was unacceptable and offering an apology, or other remedial action by the Authority. Where the Member or the Authority makes a reasonable offer of local resolution, but you are not willing to accept that offer, the Monitoring Officer will take account of this in deciding whether the complaint merits formal investigation.

If the Monitoring Officer decides that a complaint merits formal investigation, he will appoint an Investigating Officer, who may be another senior officer of the Authority, an officer of another authority or an external investigator. The Investigating Officer will decide whether they need to meet or speak to you to understand the nature of your complaint and so that you can explain your understanding of events and suggest what documents the Investigating Officer needs to see, and who the Investigating Officer needs to interview.

3. 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

4. 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 Monitoring Officer and Independent Person when they decide 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.
- Where possible, you should identify which elements of the Code of Conduct you believe may have been breached.
- 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.

**5. Only complete this next section if you are requesting that your identity 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. We are unlikely to withhold your identity or the details of your complaint unless you have good reason to believe that:

- You will be at risk of physical harm if your identity is disclosed;
- You are an officer who works closely with the subject Member and you are afraid of the consequences to your employment or of losing your job if your identity is disclosed;
- You suffer from a serious health condition and there are medical risks associated with your identity being disclosed. In such circumstances, the Assessment Panel may wish to request medical evidence of your 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 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 electronic submissions. However, in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, 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, or with any other issue which you consider would make it easier to assist you.

If you need any support in completing this form, please contact Democratic Services via 0303 999 1000 or [democraticservices@esfrs.org](mailto:democraticservices@esfrs.org)

## **Submitting Your Complaint**

- 7.** Once completed, please return this form to:

Democratic Services  
East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service  
Church Lane  
Lewes  
East Sussex  
BN7 2DZ

Alternatively, you may wish to e-mail this form to [democraticservices@esfrs.org](mailto:democraticservices@esfrs.org)