



Ombwdsmon
Ombudsman
Cymru • Wales

Communication about a Code of Conduct complaint made about you

Use of AI

We are aware that some accused members are submitting information assisted by Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI). While accused members are entitled to choose how they submit, review and respond to our correspondence, we would like to advise that AI-generated content can sometimes include false or unsupported claims.

To maintain the integrity and reliability of communications with us, we advise that any AI generated material is verified before including it in your responses. This will help to avoid any potential misinterpretations or the inclusion of incorrect information.

Our Service Standards

In line with our Service Standards we will communicate effectively with you. We will:

- Treat you politely, respectfully and with dignity.
- Communicate with you through your preferred option (email or post) where possible.
- Explain our role to you.
- Let you know what we can and cannot do.
- Explain our process for handling complaints.

- Let you know regularly what is happening with your complaint.
- Give you contact details for the member of staff dealing with your complaint.
- Give you accurate information, in plain and clear language.
- Look at how we can support you to use our service, as long as what you need is reasonable and proportionate. Further information about this can be found here: [How we can help you to use our service | Public Services Ombudsman Wales.](#)

What you can expect from us

We will assess the complaint based on the information given to us when it was received.

You are welcome to provide to us any information that you consider relevant to our assessment of the complaint made about you.

We will examine the complaint and any supporting information, and any information received from you, against a two stage test.

At the first stage, we consider whether the evidence suggests that a breach of the Code of Conduct may have taken place.

At the second stage, we think whether, if proven, the alleged breach of the Code is serious enough and in the public interest for us to investigate it.

For example, we will consider if:

- a councillor has deliberately sought a personal gain at the public expense for themselves or others
- a councillor has misused a position of trust
- the conduct complained about was motivated by any form of discrimination
- our investigation is needed to maintain public confidence in local councillors
- it would be proportionate for us to investigate.

We will let you know if we decide to investigate the complaint.

If we investigate the complaint:

- we will give you an opportunity to discuss the complaint with us. We will do this to make sure that you have a fair opportunity to be heard. This gives you

the chance to tell us about the events complained about.

- we will keep you updated on the progress of our investigation. We will give you a realistic estimate of the likely timeframes on our investigation and when you are likely to hear from us.

We aim to deliver a high-quality complaints handling service, which looks at and decides complaints thoroughly but proportionately, and we will tell you about our decision on the complaint clearly. At that point our file is closed.

We will reply to any initial follow up queries you may have about our decision. However, we will not reply to repeat calls or emails/contact from you.

What we ask of you

Please treat our staff politely and with respect and dignity. Each of our caseworkers deal with many cases at a time and will not be able to reply to you immediately. As our staff work flexibly, they may contact you outside normal working hours of 9am to 5pm. As our resources are limited and so that we deliver a fair and equal service to all complainants:

- When you contact to us, please set out your comments clearly and briefly. If your comments are long, detailed and cover many issues or events, we may ask you to summarise it for us so we can be sure we are clear that they are relevant to the matters being investigated.
- In particular, if using AI to help with your comments, please check that what it writes for you is correct before sending it to us.
- When you call us or email us, we will regularly acknowledge we have received contact from you. If we need to respond, we will do so within 10 working days.
- We will not reply to or acknowledge emails which are not addressed directly to us which we are copied into.
- We will explain the reasons for any decision we have taken on the complaint. However, we will not be able to have repeat telephone discussions with you, return repeated calls from you or respond to repeat emails or written contact from you about this.

Personal abuse or harassment directed at our staff over the phone, in person, in writing or via social media will not be tolerated.