

Complaints, Comments, & Compliments

Corporate Complaints Procedure



This leaflet tells you what to do if you wish to make a comment or complaint about services provided by the council.

I want to make a formal complaint. What should I do?

The council has a two-stage corporate complaints procedure which is free to use.

You can make your complaint known to us by contacting our Standards & Complaints team in the following ways:

- Visit: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/complaints
- e-mail: complaints@brighton-hove.gov.uk
- By phone:
 - Freephone: **0500 291229**
 - Minicom: **01273 291070**
- Use the **Complaints, Comments & Compliments** form
- Or write to us at:
 - Brighton & Hove City Council,**
 - Standards & Complaints,**
 - FREEPOST SEA 2560,
 - Brighton BN1 1ZW
 - (no stamp is needed)

Office opening hours:
9am-5pm, Monday-Friday

This will start **Stage One – the problem solving stage** where our aim is to put things right as quickly as possible.

Stage One The problem solving

Standards & Complaints will acknowledge your initial complaint within two working days and we will give you the name of the manager responsible for the service you have complained about.

- The manager will aim to reply to you within 10 working days.
- If there is likely to be a delay in replying, the manager will tell you the reason for the delay and when you can expect a full answer.

What if I'm still not satisfied?

Please e-mail or write to Standards & Complaints telling us why you are not happy and what you would like the council to do to put things right. This will start **Stage Two – Formal Investigation** of the procedure.

Stage Two Formal Investigation

A complaints officer will look into the issues you have raised with a view to carrying out a formal investigation into your complaint.

- Your continuing complaint will be acknowledged within two working days and we'll give you the name of the Standards & Complaints investigating officer.
- Standards & Complaints aim to complete their investigation within 20 working days and if further time is required we will explain why.

What will happen as a result of my complaint?

If the council has been at fault, of course the very least we should do is apologise.

In general we will follow the Local Government Ombudsman's guidance which states that:

“As far as possible the complainant should be put in the position he or she would have been in had things not gone wrong”.

The sort of things you might reasonably expect are an apology, an explanation, an assurance that action will be taken to prevent a re-occurrence or that we take specific action.

If it is agreed compensation is due to you, any payments will be in line with guidance issued by the Local Government Ombudsman and are subject to the council's financial regulations.

If I am still not happy, is there anyone else I can complain to?

If you're still dissatisfied, you can raise your complaint with the Local Government Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will try to resolve any differences between you and the council.

The Ombudsman is impartial and is independent of the government and local authorities.

Details of how to contact the Local Government Ombudsman are given in the 'Useful Contacts' section in this leaflet.

A leaflet describing the work of the Local Government Ombudsman is available from the Standards & Complaints team.

Issues that cannot be dealt with under the council's formal complaints procedure

The Standards & Complaints team cannot deal with the issues listed below, but may be able to offer advice about what you can do.

- where the complainant or another person has started, or intends to start, legal proceedings against the council
- where the council has started, or intends to start, legal proceedings against the complainant or another person relating to the complaint
- complaints involving an insurance claim against the council
- complaints where an alternative right or appeal exists eg a school admissions appeal, or an appeal against a housing benefits/council tax benefit decision.
- allegations of fraud or corruption that would more appropriately be dealt with by the council's anti-fraud and corruption policy or whistle-blowing procedure.
- complaints about school management issues
- complaints about contractual matters made by commercial suppliers to the council
- matters that the complainant knew about more than 12 months before the complaint was made – unless there are good reasons for the delay

Complaints about the Standards & Complaints Team

The Standards & Complaints team are always looking to improve their service. If you have any comments or concerns about the way that the team has handled your complaint, please contact the Standards & Complaints Manager who will investigate the matter and respond to you within 10 working days.

If you remain dissatisfied you can ask for a further review.

How can I complain about a local councillor?

All local councillors agree to carry out their work within a code of conduct, details of which are available from the Standards & Complaints Manager.

The Standards Board for England – an independent organisation – will investigate alleged breaches of this code of conduct.

Brighton & Hove City Council has a Standards Committee made up of councillors and members of the public. This committee deals with issues of conduct and looks into complaints referred by the Standards Board.

If you are concerned about the way a councillor has behaved, you should contact the Standards Board for England. The Monitoring Officer or the Standards & Complaints Manager (see the 'Useful Contacts' section).

Useful Contacts:

Complaints about Children's Social Care:

Brighton & Hove City Council,

Standards & Complaints,

FREEPOST SEA2560,

Brighton BN1 1ZW

Freephone 0500 291229

Minicom 01273 291070

Visit: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/complaints

e-mail: complaints@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Complaints about Adult Social Care:

Adult Social Care Complaints Unit,

Kings House, Grand Avenue, Hove, BN3 2SS

Phone 01273 296466

e-mail: ASC@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Local Government Ombudsman

Phone: 0845 602 1983

Visit: www.lgo.org.uk

The Monitoring Officer

Brighton & Hove City Council,

King's House, Grand Avenue,

Hove, BN3 2SR

The Standards Board for England

1st Floor, Cottons Centre,

Cottons Lane, London, SE1 2QL

Phone: 0800 107 2001

Visit: www.standardsboard.co.uk

We want to know what you think about the service you receive so that we can build on our successes and make improvements where they are most needed.

Your comments and complaints will be treated in the strictest confidence. If you do make a complaint your right to receive a good quality service will not be affected.

Translation? Tick this box and take to any council office.

Perkthim? Zgjidhni kete kuti dhe cojeni ne cilendo zyre keshilli. Albanian

ترجمة؟ ضع علامة في المربع وخذها إلى مكتب البلدية. Arabic

অনুবাদ? বক্সে টিক চিহ্ন দিয়ে কাউন্সিল অফিসে নিয়ে যান। Bengali

需要翻译? 请勾选此框并送至任何理事会的办公室。 Chinese

Farsi ترجمه؟ چهار گوشه را نشانه گذاری کرده و به یکی از انجمن های مشاوره رجوع کنید.

Traduction? Veuillez cocher la case et apporter au Council. French

Tradução? Coloque um visto na quadricula e leve a uma qualquer repartição de poder local (Council Office). Portuguese

Tercümesi için kareyi işaretleyiniz ve bir semt belediye bürosuna veriniz Turkish

other (please state)

This can also be made available in large print, Braille or on audio tape