

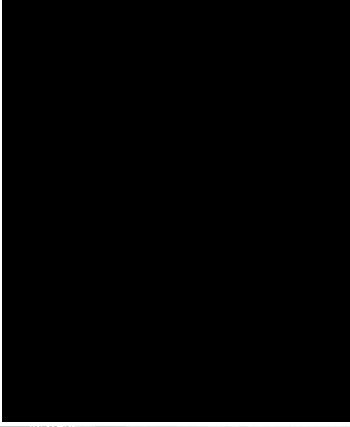


EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**COMPLAINT FORM :
CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS**

A. Your details

1. Please provide us with your name and contact details. Anonymous complaints will only be considered if there is independent evidence to substantiate the complaint.

Title:	MRS
First name:	MARIANNE
Last name:	O'NEILL
Address:	
Contact telephone:	
Email address:	
Signature:	
Date of complaint:	6 th October 2015

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

The following people may see this form:

- Monitoring Officer of the Council
- Standards Committee members
- Council's Independent Person(s)
- The subject member(s)
- the Parish Clerk (if applicable)

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If you have serious concerns about your name and a summary, or details of your complaint being released, please complete **Section C** of this Form and also discuss your reasons or concerns with the Council's Monitoring Officer.

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Please tell us which complainant type best describes you:

- A member of the public
- An elected or co-opted Member of the Council
- An independent member of a Standards Committee
- A Member of Parliament
- A Monitoring Officer
- Other council employee, contractor or agent of the Council
- Other ()

2. Equality Monitoring Form - please fill in the attached form.

B. Making your complaint

3. Please provide us with the name of the Member(s) you believe have breached the Council's Code of Conduct:

Title	First name	Last name
MRS	SELINA	BANNERMAN

4. Please explain in this section (or on separate sheet(s)) what the Member is alleged to have 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, with dates / witnesses to substantiate the alleged breach.

It is also important that you provide all the evidence you wish to have taken into account. 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 or did to insult you.
- 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 or other relevant documentary evidence to support your allegation(s).

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

On Tuesday 6th October 2015 I attended a meeting of the Much Hadham Parish Council, held at the Mission Hall, Green Tye.

My reason for attending was to support our local community and also to learn of any developments in the village.

I was alarmed at the response of Councillor Bannerman to one village resident, Mrs Alex Farmer, when she raised, what I felt was a fair question concerning the Village Pavilion Committee of which Councillor Bannerman is a member. Councillor Bannerman was rude and dismissive of Mrs Farmer's question and made an aside to the Chair of "What is she criticising now?" It is my belief that councillors should be bipartisan and there to listen to queries and concerns of residents and in this instance, I feel Councillor Bannerman was not.

As the 20 minute residents comments section continued, another village resident, Mrs Susan Wetherall, raised another pertinent question concerning the Village Pavilion. Her question related to the 'Buy-A-Brick' appeal which was to be used for the main refurbishment/building the pavilion and paying down the loan and not for running or maintenance costs. Mrs Wetherall wanted assurance from the Parish Council that this was the case. Councillor Bannerman's response to Mrs Wetherall was abrupt and she said that if Mrs Wetherall was unhappy, she could have her £50 donation back. Mrs Wetherall made it clear that she did not want her money returned, she merely wanted clarification from the Parish Council that her money was being used for the purposes that were initially advertised. I felt that this question was justified and it had been a concern of mine also.

I was outraged at what happened next. Councillor Bannerman behaved in an inappropriate manner and not in the way I would expect a representative of the Parish Council to behave. She walked to the back of the hall where Mrs Wetherall was sitting and thrust £50 in notes into her lap before walking back to her place next to the Chairman. I was sat near to Mrs Wetherall and could see the impact of Councillor Bannerman's actions, it left Mrs Wetherall quite shaken. In fact, her actions had an effect on many people present, including myself. I was appalled that anyone could behave in an insulting and intimidating manner in a public forum. I was also very surprised that there was no intervention from the Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor Baxter.

Mrs Wetherall then got up and calmly walked to the front of the hall and politely returned the money to Councillor Bannerman. Addressing the room, she said that she had been a resident of Much Hadham for over 40 years and had never been so

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publicly insulted by anyone and that Councillor Bannerman had no right to just give £50 back without the authorisation of the Parish Council.

At this point I felt I should speak up as I supported the view of Mrs Wetherall and too wanted to address my concerns over the 'Buy-A-Brick' Appeal. I stood up and addressed Councillor Bannerman by saying that I too thought the money was just for the repayment of the loan. To which I was told that I could have my money back as well.

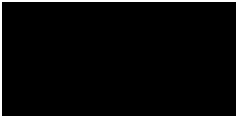
Feeling insulted and unheard, I left the Parish Council meeting alongside Mrs Wetherall who was obviously very shaken by the whole experience.

After the meeting it was brought to my attention that Councillor Bannerman publicly apologised for her behaviour and that she would personally apologise to both myself and Mrs Wetherall. Councillor Ian Hunt, who had been witness to all of this, also apologised on behalf of the committee for the behaviour by some of the councillors towards residents. I am told his actions were applauded by many of those present.

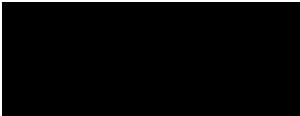
The next day I did indeed receive a message from Councillor Bannerman via Facebook both apologising for her actions and asking if she could come round to my house to apologise in person. Whilst I appreciated this, I felt her behaviour was unjustified and intimidating.

Witnesses:

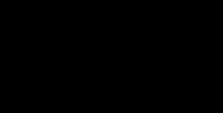
Alexandra Farmer



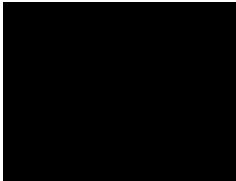
Fred Pavey



Susan Wetherall

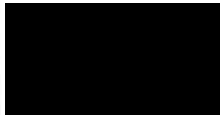


Barry Brett

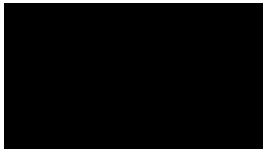


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Sally Barra



Karen Cope



Ken Howlett



(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

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C. Confidentiality of complainant and the complaint details

Only complete this next section if you are requesting that your identity is kept confidential

5. In the interests of fairness and in compliance with the rules of natural justice, we believe Members who are complained about have a right to know who has made the complaint and the substance of the allegation(s) made against him / her. We are, therefore, unlikely to withhold your personal details or the details of your complaint unless you have good reasons to believe that you have justifiable grounds, for example:
- to believe you may be victimised or harassed by the Member(s) against whom you are submitting a written complaint (or by a person associated with the same); or
 - may receive less favourable treatment from the Council because of the seniority of the Member against whom you are submitting a written complaint in terms of any existing Council service provision or any tender / contract that you may have or are about to submit to the Council.

Please note that requests for confidentiality or requests for suppression of the personal and complaint details will not automatically be granted. The Assessment Sub-Committee will consider the request alongside the substance of your complaint and the Monitoring Officer will then contact you with the decision. If your request for confidentiality is not granted, we will usually allow you the opportunity, if you so wish, of withdrawing your complaint.

However, it is important to understand that - in exceptional circumstances, where the matter complained about is very serious - we may proceed with an investigation (or other action) and may have no choice but to disclose your personal and complaint details, because of the allegation(s) made, 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:

X

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

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D. Remedy sought

7. Please indicate the remedy or remedies you are looking for or hoping to achieve by submitting this complaint.

I would like to see more transparency from both the Parish Council and the Village Pavilion Committee, on which many members of the Parish Council sit.

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

E. Additional information

8. Complaints must be submitted in writing. This includes fax and electronic submissions. Frivolous, vexatious and politically motivated tit-for-tat complaints are likely to be rejected.
9. In line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, 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.
10. If you need any support in completing this form, please contact the Monitoring Officer as soon as possible.

Monitoring Officer Contact details:

The Monitoring Officer – Simon Drinkwater
East Herts Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8EQ

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Monitoring Form – Local Assessments of Complaints Standards Committee - Assessment Sub Committee

Working towards equal opportunities

East Hertfordshire District Council is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity in both employment and service provision. We seek to ensure that no person receives less favorable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, or ethnic origins, marital status, disability, age, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, religion, trade union involvement or political belief or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

White

White British
White Irish
Any other White
background

Mixed

White and Black
Caribbean
White and Black
African
Any other mixed
background

Asian

Indian
Pakistani
Bangladeshi
Any other Asian
background

Black

Caribbean
African
Any other Black
background

Chinese or other ethnic group

Chinese
Other

*Categories used are those utilised by
the Office of Population Censuses and
Surveys

Do you have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on your ability that you wish to declare under the Disability Discrimination Act?

Yes

No