

Complaints about the Conduct of Councillors in Milton Keynes

ANNEX C

1. Please provide us with your name and contact details

Your details

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|---------------------------------|----------|
| Title | Other |
| If other, please specify | Cllr |
| First name | Mohammed |
| Surname | Khan |

Address

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Address Line 1 | 9 Goathland Croft |
| Address Line 2 | Emerson Valley |
| Town | Milton Keynes |
| County | Bucks |
| Post code | MK4 2EN |
| Daytime telephone | 07942866799 |
| Evening telephone | 07942866799 |
| Mobile telephone | 07942866799 |
| Email Address | mohammedkhan99@hotmail.co.uk |
| Date of Complaint | 10/06/2020 |

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 Councillor(s) you are complaining about
- The monitoring officer of the authority
- The parish or town clerk (if applicable)

We will tell them your name and a copy of your complaint. If you have serious concerns about your name and a summary, or details of your complaint being released, please complete section 4 of this form.

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

Please choose one of the options :-

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| | A Councillor |
| If other, please state | |

3. Making your complaint

Please explain in this section what the Councillor has done that you believe breaches the Code of Conduct. If you are complaining about more than one Councillor 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 of the information you wish to have taken into account.

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For example:

- You should be specific, wherever possible, about exactly what you are alleging that the Councillor said or did. For instance, instead of writing that a Councillor insulted you, you should state what it was they said.
- 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 name of the Councillor(s) you believe have breached the Code of Conduct and the name of their authority: - First Entry

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|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Title | Other |
| If other, please specify | Cllr |
| First name | Terry |
| Last name | Baines |
| Council or Authority name | Milton Keynes Council |

Please provide us with details of your complaint. - First Entry

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| | <p>I am writing to make a formal complaint against Councillor Terry Baines further to his Facebook comment made on Ben Everitt MP's Facebook Page on 18 May 2020.</p> <p>Cllr Baines made the following comment:</p> <p>“Thank you Ben. It is time to stop the invasion of Migrants and time to send a lot back.”</p> <p>It has not only caused deep offence and distress to me and everyone I have spoken to in my community, I believe it also breached the MK Council Members Code of Conduct in the following ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide leadership to the authority and communities within its area, by personal example; <p>The comments do not provide leadership to communities, they are divisive and inflammatory. Cllr Baines was Armed Forces Champion when the remarks were made and making such a statement in a position of leadership, validating racist and discriminatory views is unacceptable. While Cllr Baines apologised for making the remarks, he did not apologise for the content or for the distress they caused. He also failed to resign as Armed Forces Champion which did not show leadership that the remarks were of a serious nature.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Respect others and not bully any person; <p>The use of the word “invasion” in relation to immigrants lacks respect and is likely to cause fear and distress, inferring that immigrants are in Milton Keynes illegally or to cause harm. The definition of “bully” is to undertake behaviour which is likely to, or lead to, harassment, insult, or threaten, particularly in relation to a weaker, vulnerable or minority groups. Cllr Baines' comment stating “time to send a lot back,” has caused significant upset that a person in authority would seek, or believes, that those of a migrant background, like myself, should be deported, and this is bullying</p> |
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| | <p>behaviour.</p> <p>3. Not do anything which may cause the Authority to breach its equality duties;</p> <p>Milton Keynes Council, under its equalities duties, must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate unlawful discrimination; • Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't; • Foster and encourage good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't; <p>Cllr Baines' use of the word 'invasion,' in relation to migrants is discriminatory as it applies to people with protected characteristics. Reporting of the indecent comment in local media enabled and emboldened numerous members of the public to make comments that attacked immigrants and immigrant communities. It did not foster or encourage good relations between communities. It should be noted that Cllr Baines immediately deleted his Twitter social media account preventing any evidence of previous comments of a similar nature from being brought forward to this complaint.</p> <p>The use of the phrase 'time to send a lot back,' is racist and discriminatory. As Armed Forces Champion, expressing such views may mean that fewer people from migrant backgrounds seek help. As someone in a position of authority as a council member and leading member of a parish council with a high number of people from the BME community, it may, reduce the number of people seeking help and support, as well as increasing acts from others of a discriminatory nature. Threatening to send people from migrant communities 'back' by definition draws a distinction between communities, proscribes an alien nature to immigrants and undermines equality of opportunity and damages relationships between communities.</p> <p>6. Not conduct themselves in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing their office or the Authority into disrepute.</p> <p>It can reasonably be regarded that the use of the phrase 'Thank you Ben. It is time to stop the invasion of Migrants and time to send a lot back,' brings the office and authority into disrepute as it is racist, discriminatory, aggressive, bullying, rude, prejudiced, and inciteful. It has caused distress and hurt personally to me and to everyone I have spoken to in my community. As Armed Forces Champion it can be reasonably regarded that he brought that office into disrepute and adds a higher value to an already serious complaint.</p> <p>In summary Cllr Baines has acted in a manner than any reasonable person would conclude is not of the required standard in normal day to day life, let alone expected from someone who holds elected office. Cllr Baines represents people from migrant backgrounds, and it makes me and others from migrant communities feel that he does not value or respect us. Worse, you could reasonably conclude that Cllr Baines does not wish us to be part of his community as he wishes to remove us. As a Councillor and Armed Forces Champion Cllr Baines is expected to uphold the dignity of his office and by making racist comments he has not only offended Milton Keynes' migrant communities, as he seems to believe with his apology, he has caused pain and hurt to me, my family and friends and individuals from migrant backgrounds all across Milton Keynes. He has fostered division and allowed others to make other racist comments. Actions such as those from Cllr Baines undermine the need for community relationships and seed division. A minor penalty for such an offence because Cllr Baines has done other positive work does not address the main point that the comment was racist, hurtful and wrong, and would be complicit in encouraging such behaviour in the future.</p> |
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4. Informal Resolution

It is often preferable to resolve complaints without recourse to formal investigation and hearing and it is very important that all such options are explored prior to formal determination, such as mediation, explanation or an apology.

What steps you would feel could bring about that resolution of your complaint?

Please note that if no attempt is made at informal resolution the Sub-Committee may take this into account when determining your complaint.

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Please provide us with details of what remedy you are seeking/what action you think might provide a satisfactory resolution to your complaint:

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| | Terry Baines resigning as Councillor |
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5. Request for Confidentiality

Do you wish for your confidentiality to be protected ?

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| | No |
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