



## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### Complaints against the Police Authority

1. Initially, the complaint is referred to the appropriate department/officer to investigate and reply.
2. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response received from the department/officer, they can ask the Chief Executive of the Authority to look again at their complaint.
3. If the complainant is not happy with the way their complaint is being handled or they wish to take the matter further following the Chief Executive's reply, they can refer their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

### Complaints against Members of the Authority

1. Allegations that Members have failed to comply with the Authority's Code of Conduct are initially considered by the Standards Board for England. An Ethical Standards Officer is then appointed to investigate the complaint. If proven, penalties imposed can range from censure to prevention from being a member of a Police Authority or Council for up to five years.
2. The Ethical Standards Officer could also refer the allegation to the Authority's Monitoring Officer for investigation. The Monitoring officer would then report his/her findings to the Standards committee who then decide whether or not to accept the Monitoring officer's findings.
3. If the Standards Committee accept the finding of no failure the matter is concluded subject to notice of finding being published in a local newspaper unless the Member concerned asks for it not to be published,
4. If there is a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct or the Standards committee do not accept the Monitoring Officer's findings then a hearing is held in accordance with the agreed procedures. If a failure to comply is found he Standards Committee has a number of penalties it can impose ranging from censure of the Member to suspension from membership of the Authority for up to three months.



### Complaints against Northumbria Police

1. Complaints received in relation to local policing issues are referred to the relevant Area Command to reply direct.
2. Complaints received against individual Police Officers or Police Staff are the responsibility of the Chief Constable and are referred to him to reply. The Chief Executive can, if the need arises, ask the Chief Constable for his comments on the issues raised and an explanation of how it was dealt with to ensure that the complaint had been fully investigated.
3. If the complainant is not happy with the way their complaint is being handled or they wish to take the matter further following the Chief Constable's reply, they can refer their complaint to the Independent Police Complaints Commission.
4. The Complaints Committee, on behalf of the Authority, is kept informed by the Chief Constable of the working of the complaints and discipline procedure and has oversight and scrutiny of force performance in handling complaints of direction and control.

For more information about Complaints contact NPA Democratic Services Team