



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

**Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local
Government**

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London, SW1E 5DF

I Tug

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www.gov.uk/mhclg

Our Ref:4004186
Your Ref:

Date:**24 January 2019**

Dear Mr I Tug,

Thank you for your email of 29 December to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government asking that where a local council fails in its 'general duty' under the Local Government Act 1999, how is a complaint raised and to whom is it sent. I am responding to your email because I work in the team here at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government that deals with the conduct of councils and councillors.

It may help if I begin by explaining a little about the role of the Department in considering complaints about a local authority, and the extent of our powers. Local authorities act independently of central Government. Ministers, even the Prime Minister, have no remit to intervene in the day to day affairs of local authorities, except where specific provision has been made in an Act of Parliament. Local authorities are accountable for their actions to their electorate and must act within their statutory powers.

If you have a complaint about the council, in the first instance you should direct your complaint towards the local authority involved. The council should have a complaints department that you can contact. Using the official complaints system can be the quickest way to get effective redress and can also flag up with a council a problem with their services that they were not aware of. The details of the council's formal complaint system should be on the council's web-site.

If after going through the Council's formal complaint's procedure you remain unsatisfied or the council has not responded you may wish to contact the Local Government Ombudsman. The Local Government Ombudsman is independent of central and local government and is the final stage for complaints about local councils. The Ombudsman's role is to investigate complaints by individual citizens who have suffered injustice arising from maladministration by local authorities. The types of faults the Ombudsman can consider are set out on the Ombudsman's website at www.lgo.org.uk

Yours sincerely,

Stuart Young