



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

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

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Jeremy Woodward
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Our Ref:3692880

Date:**26 March 2018**

Dear Mr Woodward,

Thank you for your email of 4 March to the Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP concerning East Devon District Council. I am responding to your email because I work in the team at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government that deals with the conduct of councils and councillors.

It is important for me to set out that local authorities act independently of central Government. Ministers 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 ultimately accountable for their actions to their electorate.

Councils must, of course, comply with the legislation that governs them, including their decision-making process, as well as complying with their own standing orders and constitution. Where a member of the public has a concern about a decision, action or service of a local authority, our advice is that first and foremost they make a formal complaint using the local authority's formal complaints system.

If you remain unhappy after having been through the council's complaints process, you may wish to approach the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. The independent Ombudsman is charged by Parliament with investigating complaints from members of the public who have suffered personal injustice arising from maladministration by local authorities. Further information on the Local Government Ombudsman can be found at: <http://www.lgo.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely

Mr Bhardwaj
Local Government Stewardship Division