


<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p>Standards Advisory Committee</p> <p>18 September 2024</p>	
<p>Report of: Linda Walker, Interim Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer</p>	<p>Classification: Open (Unrestricted)</p>
<p>Standards Advisory Committee - report on Code of Conduct matters for the year 2024-25</p>	

Originating Officer(s)	Jill Bayley, Head of Safeguarding and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Wards affected	(All Wards)

Executive Summary

This report updates the Standards Advisory Committee on the monitoring information for complaints and investigations relating to alleged breaches of the Council’s Code of Conduct for Members from 1 May 2024 to 16 August 2024.

Recommendations:

The Standards Advisory Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the contents of this report and the information contained in Appendix 1.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Council’s ‘Arrangements for dealing with complaints of breach of the Code of Conduct for Members’ (paragraph 11), set out at Appendix C of the

Code of Conduct for Members, provide for the Monitoring Officer to report every six months to the Standards Advisory Committee on the number and nature of complaints received and action taken as a result.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

2.1 No applicable.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The provision of six-monthly reports relating to the number and nature of complaints assists the Advisory Committee in exercising its oversight role in terms of promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct. The information in this report is up to date as at 16 August 2024.
- 3.2 The Advisory Committee last considered a monitoring report at its meeting on 26 June 2024. Since that report there have been no new complaints of alleged breach of the Code of Conduct.
- 3.3 At the time of the previous monitoring report, five complaints remained open – three from the previous municipal year and two from the current municipal year. Both the complaints from the current municipal year have been closed after an initial investigation concluded and consultation with the Independent Person concluded that they did not warrant further investigation.
- 3.4 Of the complaints made during the previous municipal year, two have been closed and one remains open.
- 3.5 One of the matters which has been closed went to full investigation. A report made findings against the councillor, but the Monitoring Officer decided that no further action should be taken. The other matter has been closed after an initial investigation and consultation with the Independent Person concluded that it did not warrant further investigation.
- 3.6 The matter which remains open dates from the municipal year 2023-24. A meeting with the Independent Person is being arranged, in order to discuss it with a view to closure.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no specific equalities implications arising from this report.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the noting of the complaints report.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 The principal statutory provisions relating to standards of conduct are contained in the Localism Act 2011. Section 27(1) of the 2011 Act provides that the Council must promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and Co-opted Members of the authority.

7.2 Sections 27 and 28 of the Localism Act require the Council to adopt a Code of Conduct consistent with the Nolan principles of good governance and to appoint at least one Independent Person whose views must be sought and taken into account before the Council makes any decision about an alleged breach of the Code that has been investigated.

7.3 The matters in this report demonstrate the Local Authority's compliance with the above legislation.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

NONE

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Details of all complaints live during the municipal year 2024-25.

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report

NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A