

STANDARDS COMMITTEE



Report subject	Code of Conduct Complaints - Review
Meeting date	8 October 2024
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report provides Members with an update on complaints regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct against councillors received or concluded since the last report to the Committee in April 2024.</p> <p>The Committee is responsible for maintaining high standards of conduct by Members of BCP Council and the Town and Parish Councils, monitoring the operation of the Code of Conduct, and considering the outcome of commissioned independent investigations.</p> <p>The report also brings to the attention of Standards Committee, a number of complaints made under the Code of Conduct for Councillors as set out in Part 6 of the BCP Council Constitution. In line with the provisions of Part 6 Appendix C of the Constitution, the Chair, in consultation with the members of the Committee, the Independent Persons and the Monitoring Officer has followed an informal resolution process for each of these complaints. This has not resulted in the successful conclusion of the complaints. This report asks the Committee to consider the next steps including a potential report to Council about the role and status of Standards at BCP Council.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) the outcome of concluded complaints and the progress of those still outstanding be noted;(b) the Committee determine which of the options, referred to in this report, should be pursued in relation to the unresolved complaints identified in paragraphs 12-23 of this report.
Reason for recommendations	<p>This is an opportunity for Members of the Committee to be appraised of details of completed complaints and any outstanding complaints of alleged breaches against the Code of Conduct. This is in accordance with the functions of the Committee and its duty to discharge functions in relation to the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct within the Council and amongst Town and Parish Councils within the area.</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Not applicable
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	Janie Berry, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer Richard Jones, Head of Democratic Services
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Information

Background

1. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary and update of completed and ongoing complaints received regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct under the Localism Act 2011 against Councillors for the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area, including parish and town councils. The report also asks the Committee to consider those complaints where subject Councillors have been asked to apologise following informal resolution but have not done so.

Analysis

2. Details of allegations/complaints in relation to the Code of Conduct are outlined in the table set out in paragraph 8 to this report. Cases which were shown as closed in the previous report have been removed from this report.
3. The adopted arrangements for dealing with allegations of breach of the code of conduct for councillors now provides for an initial assessment by the Monitoring Officer, who may, if appropriate:
 - (a) reject the complaint on the grounds that it falls outside the scope of a valid Code of Conduct complaint;
 - (b) determine that there is no breach of the Code and no further action should be taken;
 - (c) where considered appropriate, enter into an early preliminary and informal dialogue with the complainant and the Councillor complained of, and agree a speedy informal resolution of the complaint; or
 - (d) refer the complaint to the Chair of Standards Committee for consideration.
4. Where complaints proceed to the Chair of the Standards Committee (in consultation with councillors of the Standards Committee, the Independent Persons and the Monitoring Officer (or their Deputy)), the Chair may decide whether:-
 - (a) there is no breach of the Code and no further action should be taken; or
 - (b) there is a potential breach of the Code and informal resolution is appropriate, to include for example mediation, training, apology, advice; or
 - (c) there is a potential breach of the Code and the Monitoring Officer should undertake or commission an investigation into the complaint with a view to a report then being considered by the Standards Committee.
6. The table contained in this report provides information about of the nature of the complaint, the assessment of the Monitoring Officer (where appropriate), the

decision of the Chair (following consultation), any informal resolutions determined by Chair (where applicable), and the status of the complaint at the date of the report.

7. Specific detailed information regarding pending complaints has not been provided as this may be prejudicial to the conduct of the ongoing complaints process. Personal details have also not been included to protect both the identity of the subject councillors and the complainant, unless specific direction to the contrary has been expressed.

8. Table 1

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-160 14/12/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint has been referred to an independent investigator to review.</p> <p>The independent investigation has been completed and is the subject of a separate report on the agenda for this meeting.</p>	Pending
BCP-169 21/02/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Failure to promote equalities • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint has been referred to an independent investigator to review.</p> <p>The independent investigation has been completed and is the subject of a separate report on the agenda for this meeting.</p>	Pending

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-170 22/02/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was partially upheld.</p> <p>Subject councillor advised of outcome and requested to apologise to complainant and attend social media training.</p> <p>The subject councillor has failed to comply with the decision of the Chair first notified on 08/04/2024. It is recommended that the committee determines the next steps for this complaint.</p>	Pending response from subject councillor
BCP-171 05/03/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassing a person • Failure to promote equalities • Improper use of information • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage 	<p>Referred to Monitoring officer for initial assessment.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint has been referred to an independent investigator to review.</p> <p>The independent investigation has been completed and is the subject of a separate report on the agenda for this meeting.</p>	Pending

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-172 22/03/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute 	<p>Referred to Monitoring officer for initial assessment.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint has been referred to an independent investigator to review.</p> <p>Independent Investigator waiting for information from the subject councillor.</p>	Pending
BCP-173 18/03/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Using or authorising the use of the Councils resources improperly for political purposes 	<p>Referred to Monitoring officer for initial assessment.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed.</p> <p>There was no evidence to demonstrate the Code had been breached.</p>	Closed 03/06/2024
BCP-174 15/04/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint submission fails to identify alleged breaches 	<p>Complainant requested to supply additional information.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed.</p> <p>There was no evidence to demonstrate the Code had been breached.</p>	Closed 02/08/2024

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-176 03/04/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute 	<p>Referred to Monitoring officer for initial assessment.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was partially upheld.</p> <p>Subject councillor advised of outcome and requested to apologise to complainant.</p> <p>The subject councillor has failed to comply with the decision of the Chair first notified on 03/06/2024. It is recommended that the committee determines the next steps for this complaint.</p>	Pending
BCP-177 04/04/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute 	<p>Referred to Monitoring officer for initial assessment.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the Chair requested the subject councillor to furnish additional information.</p> <p>The Chair is waiting for the additional information first requested on 03/06/2024. It is recommended that the committee determines the next steps for this complaint.</p>	Pending

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-178 16/04/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Preventing anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage 	<p>Complainant requested to supply additional information.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed.</p> <p>There was no evidence to demonstrate the Code had been breached.</p>	Closed 02/08/2024
BCP-179 16/04/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage • Using or authorising the use of the Councils resources improperly for political purposes 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was partially upheld.</p> <p>Subject councillor advised of outcome and requested to apologise to complainant.</p> <p>Subject councillor has provided an apology in compliance with the decision.</p>	Closed 23/09/2024

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-180 24/04/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person • Compromising the impartiality of an officer • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage • Misuse of Council resources • Intimidation of anyone involved in an investigation 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was partially upheld.</p> <p>Subject councillor advised of outcome and requested to apologise to complainant.</p> <p>Subject councillor has provided an apology in compliance with the decision.</p>	Closed 23/09/2024
BCP-181 29/04/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and additional information sought from the complainant.</p> <p>Additional information not forthcoming by 31/08/2024 and therefore closed for insufficient evidence.</p>	Closed - Incomplete 30/08/2024
BCP-182 29/04/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Failure to promote equalities • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Failure to undertake code of conduct training • Failure to co-operate with code of conduct 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and additional information sought from the complainant.</p> <p>Additional information not forthcoming by 31/08/2024 and therefore closed for insufficient evidence.</p>	Closed - Incomplete 30/08/2024

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-183 30/04/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Failure to undertake code of conduct training • Failure to co-operate with code of conduct • Intimidation of anyone involved in an investigation • Failure to comply with sanctions of the Code 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and additional information sought from the complainant.</p> <p>Additional information not forthcoming by 31/08/2024 and therefore closed for insufficient evidence.</p>	Closed - Incomplete 30/08/2024
BCP-184 03/05/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was partially upheld.</p> <p>Subject councillor advised of outcome and requested to apologise to complainant.</p> <p>Subject councillor has provided an apology in compliance with the decision.</p>	Closed 23/09/2024

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-185 07/05/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was partially upheld.</p> <p>Subject councillor advised of outcome and requested to apologise to complainant.</p> <p>Subject councillor has provided an apology in compliance with the decision.</p>	Closed 23/09/2024
BCP-186 22/05/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to promote equalities 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint has been referred to an independent investigator to review.</p>	Pending
BCP-187 23/05/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to promote equalities 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and additional information sought from the complainant.</p> <p>Additional information not forthcoming by 12/08/2024 and therefore closed for insufficient evidence.</p>	Closed - Incomplete 12/08/2024
BCP-188 29/05/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect 	<p>Complainant requested to supply additional information.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed.</p> <p>There was no evidence to demonstrate the Code had been breached.</p>	Closed 17/09/2024

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-189 10/06/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute 	<p>Complainant requested to supply additional information.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed.</p> <p>There was no evidence to demonstrate the Code had been breached.</p>	Closed 17/09/2024
BCP-190 08/07/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person • Failure to promote equalities • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was partially upheld.</p> <p>Subject councillor advised of outcome and requested to apologise to complainant.</p>	Pending
BCP-191 09/07/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage 	<p>Complainant requested to supply additional information.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed.</p> <p>There was no evidence to demonstrate the Code had been breached.</p>	Closed 17/09/2024
BCP-192 15/07/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to promote equalities 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint has been referred to an independent investigator to review.</p>	Pending

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-193 25/07/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage • Misuse of Council resources 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint has been referred to an independent investigator to review.</p>	Pending
BCP-194 20/06/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint has been referred to an independent investigator to review.</p>	Pending
BCP-195 15/08/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint has been referred to an independent investigator to review.</p>	Pending
Town and Parish Council Complaints			
TPC-013 30/04/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying or harassing a person • Failure to promote equalities • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint has been referred to an independent investigator to review.</p>	Pending

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
TPC-014 03/05/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person • Failure to promote equalities • Compromise impartiality of anyone who works for the local authority • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage • Failure to undertake code of conduct training 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint has been referred to an independent investigator to review.</p>	Pending
TPC-015 22/05/2024	Complaint withdrawn		Withdrawn
TPC-016 22/05/2024	Complaint withdrawn		Withdrawn
TPC-017 22/05/2024	Complaint withdrawn		Withdrawn
TPC-018 22/05/2024	Complaint withdrawn		Withdrawn
TPC-019 22/05/2024	Complaint withdrawn		Withdrawn
TPC-020 22/05/2024	Complaint withdrawn		Withdrawn
TPC-021 02/07/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and additional information sought from the complainant.</p> <p>Additional information not forthcoming by 31/08/2024 and therefore closed for insufficient evidence.</p>	Closed - Incomplete 31/08/2024

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
TPC-022 08/07/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint has been referred to an independent investigator to review.</p>	Pending

Non-Compliance with the request to provide an apology following informal resolution:

9. The Committee will note that there are a number of complaints referenced in the table above, complaints 170, 176 and 177, where the subject Councillors have not complied with the determination made by the Chair of standards following informal resolution.
10. In compliance with the Localism Act 2011, a procedure set out in its Constitution at Part 6, which is the process by which Code of Conduct must be considered.
11. The stages of the process provide as follows:
 - Complaint received by Monitoring Officer.
 - Upon receipt of a complaint under the Code of Conduct the Monitoring Officer (or their nominee) should undertake an initial assessment and may:-
 - (a) reject the complaint on the grounds that it falls outside the scope of a valid Code of Conduct complaint;
 - (b) determine that there is no breach of the Code and no further action should be taken;
 - (c) where considered appropriate, enter into an early preliminary and informal dialogue with the complainant and the Councillor complained of, and agree a speedy informal resolution of the complaint; or
 - (d) refer the complaint to the Chair of Standards Committee for consideration in accordance with the procedure set out below.
 - If mediation is unsuccessful, the Monitoring Officer will provide details of the complaint formally to the Councillor and seek an initial response. The Councillor will be advised of the right to speak to the Independent Person (IP).
 - The Councillor must provide an initial response to the complaint within 14 calendar days. Failure to provide a response in this timeframe is likely to be considered a failure to cooperate with the investigation required under paragraph 8.2 of the Council's Code of Conduct. Unless exceptional circumstances exist which the Monitoring Officer considers justifying an extension of time, the complaint will be referred to the Chair for determination after the 14-day period regardless of whether or not a response has been received.
 - The Chair of the Standards Committee in consultation with Councillors of the Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer will then decide whether:

- (a) There is no breach of the Code and no further action should be taken; or
- (b) There is a potential breach of the Code and informal resolution is appropriate, to include for example mediation, training, apology, advice; or
- (c) There is a potential breach of the Code and the Monitoring Officer should undertake or commission an investigation into the complaint with a view to a report then being considered by the Standards Committee.

Code of Conduct Complaint 170

12. This complaint was initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and sent to the subject Councillor for a response on 22 February 2024. A response was received from the subject Councillor on the same day, 22 February 2024. The matter was considered by the Chair in consultation at an informal meeting on the 27 March 2024 and the complaint was upheld. It was determined that the subject Councillor should make a formal apology in writing to the complainant and attend appropriate social media training. The complainant and the subject Councillor were advised of the outcome of this complaint on 8 April 2024. No response was received to the decision notice and a follow-up email was sent to the subject Councillor.
13. In response to the follow-up email, the subject Councillor advised that they did not agree with the decision and that they would not be complying. The Chair of Standards was advised of the subject Councillor's response on 7 June 2024.
14. Failure to comply with any sanctions imposed on a subject Councillor following a finding that they have breached the Code of Conduct is likely to be considered a further breach of paragraph 8.4 of the Council's Code of Conduct.

Code of Conduct Complaint 176

15. This complaint was initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and sent to the subject Councillor for a response on 4 April 2024. A response was received from the subject Councillor on 14 April 2024. The matter was considered by the Chair in consultation at an informal meeting on the 22 May 2024 and the complaint was upheld. It was determined that the subject Councillor should make a formal apology in writing to the complainant. The complainant and the subject Councillor were advised of the outcome of this complaint on 3 June 2024.
16. In response to the decision notice the subject Councillor advised that they did not agree with the decision and that they would not be complying. The Chair of Standards was advised of the subject Councillor's response on 7 June 2024.
17. Failure to comply with any sanctions imposed on a subject Councillor following a finding that they have breached the Code of Conduct is likely to be considered a further breach of paragraph 8.4 of the Council's Code of Conduct.

Code of Conduct Complaint 177

18. This complaint was initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and sent to the subject Councillor for a response on 4 April 2024. A response was received from the subject Councillor on 19 April 2024. The matter was considered by the Chair in consultation at an informal meeting on the 22 May 2024. The Chair determined that a decision was not possible at that time a requested additional information from the subject councillor.

19. A holding email was sent to the complainant to advise that a final decision could not be made at that time and the subject councillor was requested to provide the requested information. These communications were sent on 3 June 2024.
20. There have been a number of email exchanges between the office of the Monitoring Officer and the subject councillor but at the time of writing this report, the information requested has not been forthcoming.
21. The failure to supply information requested by the Chair of the Standards Committee is likely to be considered a breach of paragraph 8.2 of the Council's Code of Conduct which requires councillors to cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.

Options

22. Despite there being a robust Code and process for considering complaints that are brought under it, a small number of complaints have remained unresolved as a result of Councillors not accepting a determination made at the informal resolution stage. This undermines the role and standing of the Standards Committee.
23. The Committee must determine what course of action should now be taken to conclude the matters set out above. It is of note that there is no provision within the Constitution for an appeal against a determination made at the informal resolution stage of a complaint. The principles of natural justice require however that if new evidence is presented, it may well be just, reasonable and proportionate to review the determination made or to consider progressing the matter to formal investigation.

Options Appraisal

Option 1: Do Nothing

Option 2: Continue to try and resolve the complaints

Option 3: Review the determination made at the informal stage on the basis of any fresh evidence

Option 4: Proceed to independent external investigation in relation to those unresolved complaints

Option 5: Report the position of non-compliance to full Council

Recommendation

24. The committee is asked to consider which of the options above to proceed with regarding those complaints referred to at paragraphs 12-23 in this report.
25. Doing nothing is not recommended as this will serve to further undermine the role and position of the Standards Committee.
26. In view of the efforts to date, it seems unlikely that any further attempts to seek agreement with the Councillors concerned would be successful and therefore referral to an independent external investigation, is not considered to be proportionate or cost effective.
27. Presenting a report to full Council from the Chair of Standards Committee at the earliest opportunity, setting out the position regarding these unresolved complaints, would clearly highlight the position of non-compliance and would also allow these complaints to be drawn to a close.

Summary of financial implications

28. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Summary of legal implications

29. The Council has a legal duty to respond to complaints made against councillors of allegations of a breach of the Code of Conduct. The Council has adopted procedures for handling complaints.

Summary of human resources implications

30. There are no direct manpower implications arising from this report, however, the Committee will be aware that the handling and processing of complaints is resource intensive. A high volume of complaints could require the need for additional resources. It is therefore critical that the committee continuously seeks to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by all councillors to help limit the number of complaints.

Summary of sustainability impact

31. There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

Summary of public health implications

32. There are no public health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

Summary of equality implications

33. This report is reporting on the outcome of complaints made against councillors for alleged breaches of the Councillor's Code of Conduct and consequently there are no direct equalities implications arising from this report. The Code of Conduct includes a duty upon all councillors to promote equalities and to not discriminate unlawfully against any person. Equality implications are considered as an integral part of the complaints process.

Summary of risk assessment

34. There are no direct risks associated with this report.

Background papers

Records of complaints received by the Council under the references referred to in Table 1. These records contain exempt information (Categories 1 (Information relating to any individual) and 2 (Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual)).

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.