

STANDARDS COMMITTEE



Report subject	Code of Conduct Complaints - Update
Meeting date	7 July 2026
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report provides Members of the Standards Committee (the Committee) 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 March 2026. 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.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that: the outcome of concluded complaints and the progress of those still outstanding be noted.
Reason for recommendations	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.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Not applicable
Corporate Director	Aidan Dunn, Chief Executive
Report Authors	Robin Watson, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer Richard Jones, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer
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.

Analysis

2. Details of allegations/complaints in relation to the Code of Conduct are outlined in the table set out in paragraph 7 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.
5. 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 the Chair (where applicable), and the status of the complaint at the date of the report. Where a councillor is found to have potential breached the Code, the table includes reference to those categories which were upheld.
6. 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.

7. Table 1

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-222 13/08/2025	• Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying a person • Harassing a person • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person involved in investigation or proceedings	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Currently in progress and discussion with Independent Persons.	Pending
BCP-229 15/09/2025	• Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying a person • Failure to promote equalities and to not discriminate • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Currently in progress and discussion with Independent Persons.	Pending
BCP-230 10/10/2025	• Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying a person • Harass a person • Compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone • Improper use of knowledge • 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 • Failure to cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Insufficient evidence provided with complaint. Evidence requested but none forthcoming within two-month period.	Closed – Incomplete 17/12/2025

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
	determination Intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person involved in investigation or proceedings		
BCP-231 10/10/2025	- Failure to treat others with respect - Bullying a person - Harass a person - Failure to promote equalities - Compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone - Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute - Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Insufficient evidence provided with complaint. Evidence requested but none forthcoming within two-month period.	Closed – Incomplete 17/12/2025
BCP-232 10/10/2025	- Failure to treat others with respect - Bullying a person - Harass a person - 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	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Insufficient evidence provided with complaint. Evidence requested but none forthcoming within two-month period.	Closed – Incomplete 17/12/2025
BCP-233 16/10/2025	- Failure to treat others with respect - Harassing a person - Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute - Failure to undertake Code of Conduct training	Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and subject councillor requested to respond to complaint. Complaint assessed at Chair's consultation meeting. Determination – No Breach	Closed 28/05/2026

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-234 13/10/2025	• Failure to treat others with respect • Harassing a person • Disclosing confidential information • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using position as a Councillor improperly as an advantage • Failure to undertake Code of Conduct training	Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and subject councillor requested to respond to complaint. Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint has been referred to an independent investigator to review.	Pending
BCP-237 20/10/2025	• Harassing or bully a person • Discriminate unlawfully against any person • Compromising impartiality • Disclosing confidential information • Improperly using my knowledge gained as a result of Councillor for personal advancement • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using position as a Councillor improperly as an advantage • Use of local authority resources and facilities • Failure to disclose personal interests	Initial assessment to be completed by the consultation panel to consider anonymity of the complainant.	Pending
BCP-238 21/10/2025	• Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying a person • Harass a person • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Insufficient evidence provided with complaint. Evidence requested but none forthcoming. Complaint withdrawn.	Closed – Incomplete and withdrawn 04/11/2025

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-239 28/11/2025	• Failure to treat others with respect • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Determined to be out of scope as the issues raised did not relate to potential breaches of the Code of Conduct.	Closed – Out of scope 19/12/2026
BCP-240 05/11/2025	• No specific breaches referenced	Initial assessment of emailed complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Additional information required but no additional information was received within two-month period.	Closed – Incomplete 07/01/2026
BCP-241 to BCP-249	Reference numbers not used		
BCP-250 19/12/2025	• Failure to treat others with respect (Upheld) • Harassing a person (Dismissed) • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute (upheld)	Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee. Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was partially upheld. Subject councillor advised of outcome and requested appropriate apologies – 13/02/2026 To be referred to consultation panel	Pending (pending full compliance)

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-252 19/12/2025	• Failure to treat others with respect • Harassing or bully a person • Discriminate unlawfully against any person • Compromising impartiality	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in progress & pending information from the complainant. Additional information required but no additional information was received within two-month period. Held in abeyance for 2 months from 16/01/2026	Closed 16/03/2026
BCP-253 19/12/2025	• Failure to treat others with respect • Harassing or bully a person • Discriminate unlawfully against any person • Compromising impartiality • Disclosing confidential information • Improperly using my knowledge gained as a result of Councillor for personal advancement	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in progress & pending information from the complainant. Held in abeyance for 2 months from 16/01/2026	Closed 16/03/2026

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-254 19/12/2025	• Failure to treat others with respect • Harassing or bully a person • Discriminate unlawfully against any person • Compromising impartiality • Improperly using my knowledge gained as a result of Councillor for personal advancement • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Use of position improperly • Misuse of Council resources • Failure to undertake Code of Conduct training • Failure to disclose personal interests	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in progress & pending information from the complainant regarding anonymity.	Pending
BCP-258 19/12/2025	• Failure to treat others with respect (Upheld) • Harassing or bully a person (Dismissed) • Discriminate unlawfully against any person (Dismissed) • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute (Upheld) • Use of position improperly (Dismissed)	Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee. Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was partially upheld. Subject councillor advised of outcome and requested appropriate apologies – 13/02/2026 To be referred to consultation panel	Pending (pending full compliance)

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-260 04/12/2025	• Predetermination & general allegations of breach of Nolan Principles.	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in progress. Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed.	Closed 28/05/2026
BCP-261 22/01/2026	• Failure to treat others with respect • Harassing or bully a person • Disclosing confidential information • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Improper use of Council resources • Failure to undertake Code of Conduct training • Not cooperating with any code of conduct investigation • Not complying with sanctions	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Supporting evidence requested from complainant. Held in abeyance for 2 months from 21/04/2026	Pending
BCP-262 06/09/2025	• Failure to treat others with respect • Disclosing confidential information • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Use of position improperly	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed.	Closed 28/05/2026

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-263 19/05/2026	• Failure to treat others with respect • Harassing or bully a person • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Awaiting supporting evidence from complainant. Held in abeyance for further 2 months commencing 20/05/2026.	Pending
BCP-264 19/05/2026	• Failure to treat others with respect • Harassing or bully a person • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Response received and awaiting consultation meeting.	Pending
BCP-265 09/03/2026	• Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying a person • Improperly using my knowledge gained as a result of Councillor for personal advancement • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Use of position improperly • Misuse of Council resources	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Response received and awaiting consultation meeting.	Pending
BCP-266	Not allocated		

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-267	• Failure to treat others with respect • Harassing or bully a person • Disclosing confidential information • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Not cooperating with any code of conduct investigation • Intimidate those involved with investigations or proceedings • Not complying with sanctions	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Held in abeyance awaiting agreement to consider anonymity. To be referred to panel for anonymity request	Pending
BCP-268 20/03/2026	• Failure to treat others with respect • Harassing or bully a person • Discriminate unlawfully against any person • Compromising impartiality • Improperly using my knowledge gained as a result of Councillor for personal advancement • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Use of position improperly	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Determined to be out of scope as the issues raised did not relate to potential breaches of the Code of Conduct.	Closed – Out of scope 06/05/2026
BCP-269 27/04/2026	• Use of position improperly • Misuse of Council resources	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Additional supporting evidence requested. Additional evidence currently being assessed.	Pending

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-270 30/04/2026	• Failure to treat others with respect • Harassing or bully a person • Discriminate unlawfully against any person • Compromising impartiality • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in progress. Additional supporting evidence requested from complainant. Complaint subsequently withdrawn.	Withdrawn 11/06/2026
BCP-271 20/04/2026	• Failure to treat others with respect • Compromising impartiality • Disclosing confidential information • Improperly using my knowledge gained as a result of Councillor for personal advancement • Preventing access to information • Use of position improperly • Misuse of Council resources • Failure to undertake Code of Conduct training • Failure to disclose personal interests	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in progress. Awaiting supporting evidence from complainant. Held in abeyance for further 2 months commencing 10/06/2026.	Pending

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-272 22/05/2026	• Failure to treat others with respect • Harassing or bully a person • Discriminate unlawfully against any person • Disclosing confidential information • Improperly using my knowledge gained as a result of Councillor for personal advancement • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Use of position improperly • Misuse of Council resources • Not complying with sanctions • Receipt of gifts or hospitality	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in progress. Awaiting supporting evidence from complainant. To refer to Panel for anonymity consideration	Pending
BCP-273 30/04/2026	• Failure to treat others with respect • Preventing access to information • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Use of position improperly	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in progress. Awaiting information from subject councillor	Pending
BCP-274 15/06/2026	• Failure to treat others with respect • Harassing or bully a person • Discriminate unlawfully against any person	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in progress. Awaiting information from subject councillor	Pending

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-275 15/06/2026	• Failure to treat others with respect • Harassing or bully a person • Discriminate unlawfully against any person	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in progress. Awaiting supporting evidence from complainant. Held in abeyance for 2 months from 17/06/2026	Pending
BCP-276 11/06/2026	• Failure to treat others with respect	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in progress.	Pending
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TPC-025 21/07/2025	• Not complying with sanctions	Formal form not completed, however, initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and additional information sought. Before information was provided, subject councillor provided response. No breach.	Closed 15/09/2025
TPC-026 03/06/2026	• No specific breaches identified	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in progress. Awaiting completion of form – Held in abeyance for 2 month from 03/06/2026	Pending

Reference (Received)	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
TPC-027 03/03/2026	• Failure to treat others with respect • Harassing or bully a person • Use of position improperly • Intimidate those involved with investigations or proceedings	Initial assessment of complaint by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. Response received and awaiting consultation meeting.	Pending

Summary of financial implications

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

Summary of legal implications

9. 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

10. 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

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

Summary of public health implications

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

Summary of equality implications

13. 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

14. 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.