



REPORT OF:	The Monitoring Officer
TO:	Standards Committee
DATE:	28 October 2020

SUBJECT: Complaints Update to the Standards Committee

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To update Members on complaints received regarding Members conduct under the Arrangements for dealing with complaints about the Code of Conduct for Members up to 19th October 2020.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to note the update report on complaints during July 2020 to mid-October 2020.

3. BACKGROUND

The Committee has a role in considering any complaints received relating to the conduct of Members of the Borough Council, co-opted Members and Parish Councils in its area. Members will be aware that not all complaints are proceeded with for various reasons (unsubstantiated complaints, vexatious complaints etc.) however it is important that members are aware of receipt of these and legitimate complaints that are being processed and progressed.

Members of the Committee are to be kept up to date on receipt of all complaints and progress at meetings of the Standards Committee where appropriate subject to any relevant provisions relating to confidentiality.

In July 2020 through to mid October 2020 there have been 3 initial complaints received by the Monitoring Officer in respect of three different Councillors.

The first related to an allegation of non-compliance with Covid-19 guidance and an apology offered in this regard. The second complainant when sent details of how to register formally their complaint to allow for investigation and consideration has not yet proceeded with their complaints. The third was identified as being substantially the same as a previous complaint, which had already been considered and responded to earlier in the year in accordance with the approved procedure.

Up to 19th October 2020 there were no further complaints received under the Members Complaints Procedures.

The Monitoring Officer has prepared this report for consideration by the Standards Committee.

4. RATIONALE

The Localism Act requires Councils to put in place mechanisms for reporting and investigation of complaints. This report provides information for the Standards Committee in a clear and transparent way to ensure that all members of the committee are aware of complaints received, progress and outcomes.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has adopted the Code of Conduct and the arrangements for dealing with member complaints in the Council's Constitution (set out in the Appendix attached), which it must follow when a formal complaint is received.

The Monitoring Officer must ensure the Council acts lawfully and the Monitoring Officer must act in accordance with the Arrangements for dealing with complaints about the Code of Conduct for members and act impartially and objectively in consultation with Independent Person in handling complaints.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

A governance framework in local authorities is necessary to promote and maintain high ethical standards, and to ensure public confidence.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None contained in this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

The Council's arrangements for promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct have been discussed by the Standards Committee and the arrangements for dealing with complaints about the Code of Conduct for Members are the subject of this report, to ensure openness and transparency to Members of the Committee on complaints received and progress.

Chief Officer/Member

Contact Officer: David Fairclough

Date: 19 October 2020

Background Papers: The Localism Act 2011