

UPDATE ON STANDARDS COMPLAINTS

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Wards affected: All

PROPOSED DECISION

To note this report.

Reason for Decision

To provide the Committee with an overview of complaints about Member conduct since March 2014.

Corporate Implications

1. The Localism Act 2011, Sections 26 - 37 and the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 set out the current legislative framework relating to standards of conduct for elected members and arrangements for handling member standards complaints.
2. In order to enable Standards Committee to maintain an overview of complaints and any trends emerging, reports will be presented twice yearly.

Executive Summary

This report provides Standards Committee with an overview of recent complaint cases.

Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities – Implications

None.

Background and Issues

3. In March 2014 a report was presented to Standards Committee providing a periodic update on member conduct complaints.
4. Since July 2012 there had been 25 complaints, numbered SC1 to SC25 inclusive. Since then there have been five further complaints, numbered SC26 to SC30 inclusive. SC 26 and 27 were dealt with as one, with the agreement of the parties, as the matters complained of were linked. These are outlined at Appendix A.
5. The Committee is invited to:
 - (i) Note the further complaints that have been dealt with since March 2014;
 - (ii) Note that none of them have been considered serious enough to warrant investigation;

(iii) Note that there are no current complaints being dealt with.

Options

6. None. This report is for noting only.

Conclusions

7. Given the relatively small number of complaints, it can be demonstrated that in general ethical standards are being taken seriously by both District and Town and Parish Council members. Separate reports being considered by Standards Committee are designed to further strengthen the Code of Conduct and measures for reinforcing its importance and the handling of complaints.

Next Steps

8. Further update reports will be provided to Standards Committee quarterly.

Background Papers

None.