

QUARTERLY UPDATE ON STANDARDS COMPLAINTS

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Wards affected: All

PROPOSED DECISION

To note the report.

Reason for Decision

To provide the Committee with an overview of complaints about Member conduct since January 2016.

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 quarterly.

Executive Summary

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

Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications

4. None.

Background and Issues

5. Standards Committee is presented with quarterly updates on member conduct complaints.
6. Since the most recent report to committee in January 2016, three complaints have been dealt with. As reported in January, two were already ongoing at that time, and in the meantime a third has been submitted and dealt with. Two complaints related to members of Parish Councils and the third related to a member of WDC. Whilst all three complaints proceeded to Stage Two, after consultation with an Independent Person it was decided that none of them justified a full investigation being carried out. Decision notices issued to complainant and subject member in each case set out detailed reasoning for the decisions. By way of reminder, Stage 1 is the point at which the complaint is sent to the subject member for response, and Stage 2 is the point at which the subject member has responded but after seeing the response, the complainant has then indicated that they are not satisfied with the response and wish the Monitoring

Officer in consultation with an Independent Person to consider whether the matter should be referred for investigation. There are no current outstanding complaints.

Options

7. None, this report for noting only.

Conclusions

8. The continuing relatively small number of complaints suggests that ethical standards continue to be taken seriously by District, Town and Parish Councillors.

Next Steps

9. Further updates will continue to be provided quarterly.

Background Papers

None.