



CONSTITUTION & STANDARDS COMMITTEE

17 February 2022

SUBJECT:	SUMMARY OF STANDARDS COMPLAINTS
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW & GOVERNANCE

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of Standards complaints received under the Members' Code of Conduct and Protocol for dealing with complaints against Members between 1 November 2020 and 31 October 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

The Constitution and Standards Committee is recommended to note the summary of standards complaints set out at Appendix 1 to this report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with an opportunity to consider the handling and progress of standards complaints.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The process for the administration of standards complaints is undertaken in accordance with the Protocol for dealing with complaints against Members which was approved by the Committee in February 2019.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council is required to deal with complaints made against Members under its approved Ethical Framework.
- 3.2 In order to assist with the effective administration of standards complaints, the Committee, as part of its monitoring role, is invited to consider the nature and handling of complaints received pursuant to the Members' Code of Conduct.
- 3.3 Appendix 1 sets out a summary of the complaints received between 31 October 2020 – 31 October 2021 and their status.
- 3.4 The Ethical Framework requires complaints to be dealt with confidentiality and therefore it is not possible to provide extensive details in respect of each complaint.
- 3.5 Between 1 November 2020 and 31 October 2021 a total of 12 complaints in respect of the conduct of 9 Members have been received. The complaints were received from 11 different complainants. There were 4 complaints raised by Members against other Members. No complaints received during this period are ongoing. 2 of the complaints received were referred for a formal investigation.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report save that where an external investigator or trainer is appointed, additional costs will be incurred. Such costs will vary depending upon the nature of the complaint and the time taken to undertake and complete the investigation or undertake the training.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Under the Localism Act 2011 the Council is required to have a Code of Conduct relating to the conduct of Members and arrangements in place to deal with any complaints received in respect of Members conduct.

5.2 This report provides an opportunity for the Committee to monitor the progress of complaints.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no such issues arising from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The administration of standards complaints should be dealt with as efficiently as possible to ensure matters are concluded quickly and closure of issues secured for both complaint and the subject member(s) involved. The current Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on capacity to deal with complaints and has led to a failure to adhere to the timescales contained in the Protocol for dealing with complaints against Members.

8.0 ENAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 One of the Independent Persons is consulted every time a complaint is received.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no specific equality implications arising from this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific environmental and climate issues arising from this report.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no specific community wealth building issues arising from this report.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Summary of Standards Complaints

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Members' Code of conduct

The Protocol for dealing with complaints against Members

APPENDIX 1

Summary of complaints received 01.11.20 – 31.10.21

No	Date received	Nature of Complaint	Date concluded & outcome
1.	09/11/2020	Conduct inconsistent with standards of public life	29/04/21 No breach
2.	13/11/2020	Conduct inconsistent with standards of public life	17/12/21 Other action – conversation with Member by Monitoring Officer
3	12/04/2021	Conduct inconsistent with standards of public life	10/09/21 Referred for Investigation No breach
4.	30/04/2021	Conduct inconsistent with standards of public life	22/06/21 No breach
5.	24/05/2021	Conduct inconsistent with standards of public life	22/06/21 No breach
6	07/07/2021	Conduct inconsistent with standards of public life	05/11/21 No breach
7	09/07/2021	Conduct inconsistent with standards of public life	04/08/21 No breach
8	02/08/2021	Conduct inconsistent with standards of public life	24/11/21 Referred for Investigation No breach
9	02/08/2021	Conduct inconsistent with standards of public life	22/09/21 No breach
10	21/10/2021	Conduct inconsistent with standards of public life	17/12/21 No breach
11	21/10/2021	Conduct inconsistent with standards of public life	17/12/21 No breach
12	21/10/2021	Conduct inconsistent with standards of public life	22/12/21 Other action - Apology from Member