

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Code of Conduct Complaints – Update

Meeting/Date: Corporate Governance Committee – 25 September 2024

Executive Portfolio: Councillor J Harvey, Executive Councillor for Governance and Democratic Services

Report by: Elections and Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

This report provides Members with an annual update on complaints cases regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct. The Committee is responsible for maintaining high standards of conduct by Members of the District and Town and Parish Councils, for monitoring operation of the Code of Conduct and for considering the outcome of investigations in the event of breaches of the Code.

Recommendation:

The Committee is

RECOMMENDED

to note the progress of any outstanding Code of Conduct complaints and the conclusion of cases resolved to date.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a summary and update of completed or ongoing complaints received regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct under the Localism Act 2011 since the start of the year.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In accordance with the functions of the Committee, this report seeks to provide a summary of the current position in relation to the Code of Conduct complaints since the last meeting.
- 2.2 The Committee has the responsibility for promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct within the Council, including monitoring operation of the Code of Conduct which also includes Town and Parish Councils.

3. ANALYSIS

- 3.1 Details of allegations/complaints in relation to the Code of Conduct have been outlined in the table below. Specific detailed information regarding the complaint has not been provided as this may be prejudicial to the conduct of the ongoing complaints process and to protect the identity of councillors who may not have breached the Code of Conduct.

Case Number	District/ Town/Parish Councillor	Allegation/complaint	Outcome
24/62	District Councillor	Complaint made against a District Councillor alleging they breached standard 1 (respect)	Further request for information from complainant not forthcoming. In consultation with Independent person, determined no breach of the Code of Conduct and not in the public interest to investigate the complaint. Complaint dismissed
24/63	Town Councillor	Complaint made against Town Councillor alleging they breached standards 1 (respect), 4 (confidentiality), 5 (disrepute) and 8 (compliance)	Clarification sought from Town Councillor but no response received. Matter concluded following resignation of subject member before any formal investigation.
24/64	Town Councillor	Complaint made against Town Councillor alleging they	Matter investigated and, in consultation with the Independent

Case Number	District/ Town/Parish Councillor	Allegation/complaint	Outcome
		breached standard 2 (bullying and harassment)	Person, determined no breach of the Code of Conduct and not in the public interest to investigate the complaint. Complaint dismissed.
24/65	District Councillor	Complaint made against a District Councillor alleging they breached standard 2 (discrimination)	Matter investigated and, in consultation with the Independent Person, determined no breach of the Code of Conduct and not in the public interest to investigate the complaint. Complaint dismissed.

- 3.2 The process for dealing with conduct complaints is set out in the Monitoring Officer Protocol but once referred to the Monitoring Officer investigation stage, they are required to consult with the Independent Person following an initial assessment and before any decisions are taken as to what, if any, further action is considered appropriate.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no significant implications to report.

5. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 5.1 This is an opportunity for Members of the Committee to be appraised of details of completed complaints and any outstanding complaints alleged 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 District.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Constitution – Members’ Code of Conduct
The Localism Act 2011

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