

AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

16 January 2019

Title: Complaints Against Members Update	
Report of the Monitoring Officer	
Open Report	For Information
Wards Affected: None	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Dr. Paul Feild Senior Governance Lawyer	Contact Details: Tel: 0208 227 2638 E-mail: paul.feild@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Divisional Director:	Fiona Taylor, Monitoring Officer and Director of Law and Governance
Accountable Director:	Chris Naylor, Chief Executive
Summary: <p>This report is to provide the Audit and Standards Committee with an update of complaints against Members of the Council, their current status, outcome and actions taken.</p> <p>On 1 July 2012 the Assembly adopted, as required by the Localism Act 2011, a new local Code of Conduct and Complaint Procedure. As the Code approached a year in existence, the Standards Committee reviewed the structure and drafting of it so as to make improvements in composition and simplify it where possible.</p> <p>The re-drafted Code was adopted by Assembly on 17th July 2013.</p> <p>In accordance with the Code, the Monitoring Officer conducts an initial assessment of complaints about Members of the Council against approved criteria and may consult with the Independent Person and try to resolve matters informally if possible or appropriate. If the complaint requires further investigation or referral to the Audit and Standards Committee there may still be a hearing of a complaint before its Sub-Committee.</p> <p>Since reporting to the July 2018 Audit and Standards Committee, there have been 2 Complaints received by the Monitoring Officer. Both were dismissed at the first stage by the Monitoring Officer by reason of no evidence of a breach.</p>	
Recommendation(s)	
The Audit and Standards Committee is recommended to note the report.	

Reason(s)

For continued good governance and to ensure that the Audit and Standards Committee is aware of complaints against Members of the Council.

1. Options Appraisal

1.1 This report is for information only.

2. Consultation

2.1 This report is for information only.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

4. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Dr. Paul Field, Senior Governance Lawyer

4.1 It is a legal requirement that the Council promotes and maintains high standards of conduct by Members and Co-opted Members of the authority. The Audit and Standards Committee contributes to this duty by receiving reports from the Monitoring Officer and assessing the operation and effectiveness of the Code of Conduct for Members. Additionally, the Committee advises on training of Members on matters relating to the Code as well as receiving referrals from the Monitoring Officer into allegations of misconduct in accordance with the authority's assessment criteria.

4.2 This report furthers those objectives by providing timely updates to the Standards Committee with regard to the operation of the Code of Conduct.

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- Council Constitution

List of appendices: Appendix A