



STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Report Title	STATISTICS – CODE OF CONDUCT ARRANGEMENTS COMPLAINTS
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Committee Meeting Date:	3 December 2018
Policy Document:	No
Directorate:	Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the Report is to provide the Committee with information by reporting on the statistics regarding the number of complaints received and dealt with under the “*Arrangements for dealing with allegations of breaches of the Northampton Borough Council Members’ Code of Conduct and of Codes of Conduct adopted by Parish Councils*”.
- 1.2 At its meeting of 18 December 2017, the Standards Committee requested that statistical information be presented to each meeting of the Committee; with updates on the live complaints, new complaints and complaints that have been actioned and closed since the last meeting.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the statistics in relation to the number of complaints received, and dealt with, under the Code of Conduct Arrangements.
- 2.2 That statistical data in relation to the number of complaints received and dealt with, in respect of the Code of Conduct Arrangements is presented to each meeting of the Committee.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background and Issues

- 3.1.1 It was resolved at the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 17 July 2017 that information regarding the number of complaints received and dealt with under the Code of Conduct Arrangements would be presented to the

Committee at its next meeting in October. This information was presented to the Committee in October.

3.1.2 The Committee requested that the data presented to it was elaborated upon to include further statistics regarding the complaints, such as the time taken to resolve the complaints and the outcomes of each complaint.

3.1.3 Further information was provided to the Standards Committee at its meetings in December 2017, March 2018, June 2018 and September 2018.

3.1.4 The data in paragraph 3.1.5 below relates to all Code of Conduct complaints that are still live, have been closed since the September 2018 Committee meeting or have been received since the September 2018 Committee papers were published.

3.1.5

a) Complaints against a Parish Councillor

1) Complaint received on 29 May 2018

This file is open.

An initial assessment made by the Solicitor, on behalf of the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Independent Person, was held on 24 July 2018. The determination of the initial assessment of the complaint was that the complaint would be referred to an investigation. An Investigator has been appointed and the investigation is underway

2) Complaint received on 22 September 2018

The file is now closed.

An initial assessment made by the Solicitor, on behalf of the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Independent Person, was held on 8 November 2018. The initial assessment could not be held until this date due to the availability of the Independent Persons.

The outcome of the initial assessment was, that there is to be an alternative action of resolution. The subject Member has been asked to provide a written apology to the complainant and to attend a Charing Skills course for Councillors.

b) Complaint against a Borough Councillor

1) Complaint received on 25 March 2017

As reported to the December, March and June 2018 meetings of the Standards Committee, this file is still open.

The determination of the initial assessment of the complaint was that the complaint would be held in abeyance pending the outcome of a separate investigation.

2) Two complaints received on 14 May 2018

This file is still open.

Two complaints about the same Councillor were received on 14 May 2018 and the initial assessments of the complaints took place on 5 June 2018. The outcome of the initial assessment was provided to the Committee at its June meeting, which was, that there is to be an alternative form of resolution.

The meeting between the subject Member and complainant has been scheduled.

3) Complaint received on 28 August 2018

This file is open.

A complaint about a Borough Councillor was received on 28 August 2018. Pre-assessment determined that as the Councillor had provided a response to the complainant the file was closed.

The file was closed on 14 September 2018.

3.2 Choices

3.2.1 Members are asked to note the information provided.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 This report does not have any direct policy implications.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 This report does not have any direct resource implications.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 Complaints received are dealt with in accordance with the *Arrangements for dealing with allegations of breaches of the Northampton Borough Council Members' Code of Conduct and of Codes of Conduct adopted by Parish Councils* which were adopted pursuant to the Localism Act 2011.

4.4 Equality

4.4.1 There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.5.1 Not applicable.

4.6 Other Implications

4.6.1 None.

5. Background Papers

5.1 Complaints received in respect of the Arrangements for dealing with allegations of breaches of the Northampton Borough Council Members' Code of Conduct and of Codes of Conduct adopted by Parish Councils.

Francis Fernandes
Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer