

Subject:	Standards Update		
Date of Meeting:	15th November 2016		
Report of:	Head of Law and Monitoring Officer		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Abraham Ghebre-Ghiorghis	Tel: 29-1500
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

1.1 This report updates Members on Standards-related matters since the last report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Members note the report.

3. MEMBER-RELATED COMPLAINTS

3.1 Since the last report to the Committee, the outstanding complaint referred to in that report has been resolved. There have been two new standards complaints.

4. STANDARDS COMPLAINTS**4.1 Complaint 1**

4.2 **The allegation:** A complaint referred to in the last report as 'Complaint 3' concerned a complaint made about a Member's comments about another person on social media.

4.3 **The outcome:** Having discussed the complaint with both parties and consulted with the Independent Person, the Monitoring Officer took the view that this matter was best resolved by informal resolution at preliminary assessment stage as it was not in the public interest to refer the matter for formal investigation.

4.4 Complaint 2

4.5 **The allegation:** A complaint was received in mid-September 2016, again regarding a comment made by a councillor on social media. It was considered that this might potentially amount to a failure to behave in a way which a reasonable person would regard as respectful and/or to amount to conduct which might reasonably be regarded as bringing the member's office or authority into disrepute.

4.6 Following consultation with one of the Independent Persons, a decision was made at preliminary assessment stage to progress the matter to formal

investigation. That investigation is underway, and will be the subject of a future report to this committee.

4.7 **Complaint 3**

4.8 A further member complaint was received from a member of the public in mid-October 2016. This alleged a failure by each of three ward members to respond to an email communication from the complainant. It was considered that this might potentially amount to a failure to behave in a way which a reasonable person would regard as respectful and/or to amount to conduct which might reasonably be regarded as bringing their office or authority into disrepute.

4.9 This matter is at time of writing the subject of preliminary assessment by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Independent Person. It will be the subject of a future report to this committee.

5. **OTHER MATTERS**

5.1 **Review of the Code of Conduct & Member Training**

5.2 The above topics are the subject of a separate report to this committee.

6. **ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

6.1 The Council is obliged under the Localism Act to make arrangements for maintaining high standards of conduct among members and to make arrangements for the investigation of complaints. The current arrangements and the proposals in this report reflect this and no alternative proposals are suggested.

7. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

7.1 This report focuses mainly on internal rules and procedures and as a result no need to consult with the local community has been identified.

8. **CONCLUSION**

8.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this Report, which aims to assist the Committee in discharging its responsibilities for overseeing that high standards of conduct which are compliant with local requirements are maintained.

9. **FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

Financial Implications:

10.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report

Legal Implications:

10.2 These are covered in the body of the report

Equalities Implications:

10.3 There are no equalities implications arising from this report

Sustainability Implications:

10.4 There are no sustainability implications arising from this report

Any Other Significant Implications:

10.5 None

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

None

Documents in Members' Rooms:

None

Background Documents:

None

