

<b>Subject:</b>		<b>Standards Update</b>	
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>		<b>24<sup>th</sup> July 2018</b>	
<b>Report of:</b>		<b>Monitoring Officer</b>	
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Abraham Ghebre-Ghiorghis</b>	<b>Tel: 29-1500</b>
	<b>Email:</b>	<b>Abraham.ghebre-ghiorghis@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>		<b>All</b>	

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

- 1.1 This report seeks to update Members on a range of Standards-related matters.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That this Committee note the information provided in the Report on member complaints and on standards-related matters.

**3. MEMBER-RELATED COMPLAINTS****Complaints resolved since last Report**

- 3.1 Two complaints received in since the last Update Report have been determined by the Monitoring Officer as outlined below. One alleged a failure to treat with respect and the other alleged a failure to notify the Monitoring Officer of a registrable interest.
- 3.2 Following consultation with the Independent Person, a decision was made to resolve the first complaint by taking no further action. The decision was reached on the basis that if proven, the allegations would not amount to a breach of the Code and that in any case it was not in the public interest to refer the complaint for formal investigation.
- 3.3 In the second complaint, small scale enquiries were undertaken in order to ascertain whether there had indeed been a failure to register an interest contrary to the Code of Conduct. At issue was the question of whether the member concerned was in a position of management or control of a body. Ultimately it was considered that if such a breach had occurred then it was of a technical as opposed to a substantive nature. Noting that the member had in any event decided to notify their interest, the Monitoring Officer took the view that the public interest was not served by referring the matter for formal investigation, this following consultation with the Independent Person.
- 3.4 The parties in the above matters have been notified of the outcome and these two complaints are at an end.

### **Complaints awaiting resolution**

- 3.5 The complaint referred to as 'complaint no 5' in the last Update is yet to be resolved. So too is an entirely separate complaint alleging disrespectful conduct directed at a member of the public. The issues complained of in the latter complaint necessitated clarification, and this has now been done with a view to progressing the complaint as soon as possible. Finally, a further complaint has been received in close to the deadline for publication of this report. That is also pending, the complainant having been asked to provide further clarification.
- 3.6 The complaints referred to in para 3.7 above remain at preliminary assessment stage. Updates will be provided to this Committee once further progress in relation to them is made.

### **4. ENQUIRY INTO CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH STANDARDS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

- 4.1 A cross party Working Group of members of this Committee was convened in May to provide detailed input into a review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life ('CSPL') into the arrangements in place nationally to regulated local government standards. A detailed response was formulated and submitted on behalf of Brighton & Hove City Council.
- 4.2 The CSPL has indicated that it intends to publish its findings and recommendations during 2018, and those will be reported to this Committee once those are available.

### **5. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 5.1 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. No alternative proposals are suggested.

### **6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 No need to consult with the local community has been identified.

### **7. CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 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 are maintained in a way which is compliant with local requirements.

### **8. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

#### **Financial Implications:**

- 8.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from the recommendation in this Report. All activity referred to has been, or will be, met from existing budgets.

*Finance Officer Consulted: James Hengeveld*

*Date: 05/07/2018*

Legal Implications:

8.2 These are covered in the body of the Report.

*Lawyer Consulted: Victoria Simpson*

*Date: 18.6.18*

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

