



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY, PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE**

**to
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
31 OCTOBER 2019**

STANDARD COMPLAINTS

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To set out details of previous conduct complaints made to the Joint Standards Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the information contained within this report be noted.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 At its meeting on 2 October 2019 this Committee, having considered a report on the Council's procedures for dealing with issues relating to Members' Code of Conduct, agreed that a further report be provided detailing the following information:
- (i) the number of complaints raised since 2015;
 - (ii) the number of referrals to Joint Standards;
 - (iii) the outcome; and
 - (iv) political affiliations of those involved in the aforementioned points.
- 3.2 In requesting a breakdown of the make up of complaints the Council is able provide details from 2017 in relation to the complaints which were referred to the Joint Standards Committee.
- 3.3 In relation to previous years, it has not been possible to identify details of the complaints and the political party which they represent. However, attached at **APPENDIX 1** is a breakdown of complaints which was considered by the Joint Standards Committee in 2017.

3.4 2017

- 3.4.1 In relation to Complaints made in 2017 against District Councillors we can confirm the following:

Complaints made against District Councillors:

Conservatives	3
Independents	2
Other (whole Committee)	1

Complaints made by...

Conservative Councillor	1
Independent Councillor	1
Chief Executive	1
Members of the Public	3

3.5 2018

- 3.5.1 In relation to 2018 no matters in relation to District Councillors were placed before the Joint Standards Committee. Only 2 matters were brought in relation to Heybridge and Althorne Parish Council.

3.6 2019

- 3.6.1 In relation to 2019 only 2 matters have been heard by the Joint Standards Committee to date. One in relation to a Parish Council matter and the second involved a complaint against an independent member which was received by a Conservative member and members of the public.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officers during these periods will have dealt with issues throughout the year and may have informally dealt with enquiries and made decisions that there was no breach of the code.
- 4.2 These figures reflect the matters that were only deemed to have passed the threshold and required a decision by the Joint Standards Committee.

5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 5.1 These policies impact on the theme of performance. By adhering to the process, the Council can be seen to be addressing issues of performance of its Councillors in a clear and consistent manner.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Customers can see a clear process for how any complaints will be dealt with.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – Having a clear code of conduct and process for complaints will ensure all complaints are dealt with consistently.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – None from this report.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – None from this report.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None from this report.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None from this report.
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** – Communities can see how the process works and make any relevant complaint in the correct format with clear expectations as to the time frame and options open to them.

Background Papers: Procedure Notes and Code of Conduct.

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