

To: Standards Committee
Date: 24 February 2025
Report of: Director of Law, Governance & Strategy
Title of Report: Code of Conduct Complaints – Next steps

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To determine next steps following the conclusion of an investigation into complaints against two members that they have breached the Members' Code of Conduct
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	N/A
Corporate Priority:	None
Policy Framework:	None

Recommendation(s):
That the Standards Committee resolves to:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Note the investigation report appended to the report as Appendix 2 (on the exempt part of the agenda) Decide whether the complaints to which the investigation report relate, that two members of the Council breached the Members' Code of Conduct, should be dealt with by local resolution or local hearing before the Standards Committee.

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Procedure for dealing with code of conduct complaints against councillors	No
Appendix 2	Report of an investigation into an allegation concerning the conduct of Councillors dated 6 December 2024	Yes This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 on the following basis: Information about individuals

Introduction and background

Introduction

1. This report seeks the views of the Committee about next steps in relation to four complaints that members of the Council breached the Council's Members' Code of Conduct ("the Code") following the conclusion of an investigation by an independent investigator into those complaints.

Procedure for dealing with code of conduct complaints against councillors

2. The Monitoring Officer received complaints about two members of the Council relating to the meeting of the Council on 18 March 2024. The Deputy Monitoring Officer dealt with the complaints in accordance with the Council's Procedure for dealing with code of conduct complaints against councillors ("the Procedure"), which is appended to this report as Appendix 1, and consulted one of the Council's Independent Persons.
3. At the Assessment stage it was established that there were valid grounds to investigate the complaints. At that stage there was no consideration or decision about whether or not there had been any breach of the Code of Conduct.
4. The Deputy Monitoring Officer considered that the complaints merited investigation and appointed an independent investigator and an investigation report regarding the complaints has been prepared in accordance with the Procedure and his report is appended as Appendix 2 on the exempt part of the agenda.
5. The Procedure requires that the Monitoring Officer will review an investigator's report and after consulting one of the Council's Independent Persons will then either seek local resolution or send the matter for local hearing before the Standards Committee.
6. Since the complaints relate to alleged breaches of the Code which affected the Monitoring Officer it is not considered appropriate for her to determine how the complaints should be dealt with. For this reason, the Standards Committee is asked to decide how the complaints should be disposed of. The Standards Committee is not being asked at this stage to determine whether or not the Code of Conduct was breached.
7. The Deputy Monitoring Officer has consulted with one of the Council's Independent Persons before bringing this report to the Committee.

Financial implications

8. None

Legal issues

9. None

Level of risk

10. Not relevant.

Equalities impact

11. Not relevant

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

12. None

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Background Papers:	
1	None

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