

Report to: **Standards Committee**

Date: **23 April 2019**

Title of report: **Annual Report of the Standards Committee**

By: **Assistant Chief Executive**

Purpose of report: **To provide an update on Member Conduct issues, the work of the Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Standards Committee is recommended to

- 1) note the report;**
 - 2) agree the report for submission to the County Council for consideration.**
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1. Background information

1.1 The Standards Committee is required to submit an annual report to the County Council on its work during the previous year. The Committee is therefore asked to consider the draft report for submission to the County Council.

1.2 Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019 three complaints were received against Members of the County Council.

1.3 It is considered that the standards of conduct among Members and co-opted members of the Council remain high and maintaining good standards is taken seriously. A summary of the complaints received during 2018/19 is set out in Appendix 1. The table below shows the number of complaints considered by the Assessment Sub Committee over the past 10 years:

Year	No. of complaints considered
2018/19	3
2017/18	0
2016/17	1
2015/16	1
2014/15	3
2013/14	1
2012/13	1
2011/12	1
2010/11	2
2009/10	4

2. Applications for Dispensation

2.1 In limited circumstances, Members can apply in writing for dispensations to take part in business that they would otherwise have been unable to participate in through having prejudicial interests. During 2018/19 there were no applications for dispensations.

2.2 All dispensations are entered on the register of Members' interests and remain there for the appropriate period.

3. Register of Members' Interests

3.1 The Monitoring Officer is required to establish and maintain a register of interests of Members of the Council. All Members have completed and returned their registers and are reminded every six months of the need to notify the Monitoring Officer of any changes. The registers are available for public inspection and are available on the Council's website.

3.2 A register of Gifts and Hospitality is also maintained by the Monitoring Officer. Members have to register gifts and hospitality received with an estimated value of £50 or more. Councillors are reminded every 6 months of the need to declare gifts and hospitality of such a value.

3.3 There is an ongoing requirement to keep the information of the register of interest form up to date. Councillors must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new registerable personal interest or change to any registered interest, give written notification to the Monitoring Officer.

4. Training

4.1 Following the election on 4 May 2017 and the by-election on 10 January 2019, training was given to members on the Code of Conduct including register of interests, personal interests, disclosable pecuniary interests and gifts and hospitality at the Induction Day. All councillors have signed a declaration undertaking to comply with the County Council's Code of Conduct for Members.

5. Standards in Public Life Local Government Ethical Standards

5.1 In April 2018 the County Council responded to consultation from the Committee on Standards in Public Life on local government ethical standards. A report on the Committee's report including its recommendations and proposed amendments to the Council's Code of Conduct for Members is set out in a separate item on the agenda.

6. Conclusion

6.1 The Committee is recommended to note the report and to recommend to the County Council the Annual Report of the Standards Committee for consideration.

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Local Members: All

Background Documents: None