

Report To:	STANDARDS AND PERSONNEL APPEALS COMMITTEE	Date:	24 MARCH 2021
Heading:	ANNUAL ETHICAL GOVERNANCE UPDATE		
Portfolio Holder:	NOT APPLICABLE		
Ward/s:	NOT APPLICABLE		
Key Decision:	NO		
Subject to Call-In:	NO		

Purpose of Report

- To give the Committee an overview of the work of the Standards and Personnel Appeals Committee during 2020/2021.
- To consider work plan items for 2021/2022.
- To note the update in relation to Member Code of Conduct complaints to date.

Recommendation(s)

Committee is asked to:

1. Note the progress made in relation to the agreed 2020/21 work plan;
2. Consider future work plan items;
3. Note the number of Member complaints received during 2020/21 to date as summarised in the report and the current outstanding complaints as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)

To enable the Committee to carry out its role in monitoring ethical governance.

Alternative Options Considered

Options are considered within the body of the report.

Detailed Information

WORK PLAN – 2020/2021

At its meeting in July 2020, the Committee agreed a programme of work for the 2020/2021 year.

The table below sets out the work item, the agreed timeframes and an update in relation to the progress made

Work Plan Item	Timeframe	Progress
1. Quarterly Complaint Update <ul style="list-style-type: none">A report to committee to keep it updated in respect of new and ongoing complaints made relating to the conduct of Members.	July 2020 October 2020 December 2020 March 2021	Reports have been submitted to each Committee meeting and Members have commented on the information provided. The Committee meeting in October 2020 was cancelled. An update is included in this report.
2. Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life <ul style="list-style-type: none">To consider the Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life	Ongoing throughout 2020/21	Reports to the Committee and informal working groups have taken place during the year. A further report and recommended revised Code of Conduct is presented elsewhere on this Agenda. This work will be ongoing during 2021/2022.
3. Review of the Nottinghamshire Authorities Protocol with Nottinghamshire Police <ul style="list-style-type: none">To review the Nottinghamshire Authorities Protocol with Nottinghamshire Police regarding the reporting of potential breaches of the Code of Conduct relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests	December 2020	This work remains outstanding. This item will be rolled forward to the 2021/2022 work plan.
4. Whistleblowing Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none">Annual report to consider amendments (if required) to the	March 2021	A report is presented to this Committee meeting elsewhere on the agenda.

policy and to monitor the application of the policy		
5. Annual Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to consider the work of the Committee over the year compared to the Work Plan To consider an overview of the ethical governance of the Council 	March 2021	This report provides the update to Committee.
6. Constitution Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of proposed amendments to the Constitution for recommendation to Council 	March 2021	A report is presented to this Committee meeting elsewhere on the agenda.

Committee is therefore asked to note the progress made in relation to the agreed work plan.

FUTURE WORK PLAN ITEMS FOR 2021/22

Work Plan items for 2021/22 are suggested below. Members may wish to suggest other items for inclusion.

Proposed Work Plan Item	Timeframe
1. Quarterly Complaint Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A report to committee to keep it updated in respect of new and ongoing complaints made relating to the conduct of Members. 	July 2021 October 2021 December 2021 March 2022
2. Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life and implementation of Best Practice Recommendations to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised Code of Conduct Complaints Process Online Register of Gifts and Hospitality, quarterly reporting and guidance notes 	Ongoing throughout 2021/22
3. Use of Resources Policy	July/October 2021

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To revisit the previously drafted (but not finalised) Policy in light of the revised Code of Conduct 	
4. Members Training Policy and Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To revise the Members Training Programme 	July 2021
5. Review of the Nottinghamshire Authorities Protocol with Nottinghamshire Police <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review the Nottinghamshire Authorities Protocol with Nottinghamshire Police regarding the reporting of potential breaches of the Code of Conduct relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests 	December 2021
6. Whistleblowing Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual report to consider amendments (if required) to the policy and to monitor the application of the policy 	March 2022
7. Annual Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to consider the work of the Committee over the year compared to the Work Plan To consider an overview of the ethical governance of the Council 	March 2022
8. Constitution Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of proposed amendments to the Constitution for recommendation to Council 	March 2022

Committee is therefore asked to consider the proposed work plan items for 2021/2022.

SUMMARY AND UPDATE OF MEMBER COMPLAINTS RECEIVED DURING 2020/21

I have received 10 formal complaints during 2020 and 4 during 2021 regarding the behaviour of Councillors.

Of these 14 complaints:

- 6 complaints related to District Councillors during 2020
- 3 complaints relates to District Councillors during 2021
- 4 complaint related to Parish Councillors during 2020
- 1 complaints relate to Parish Councillors during 2021

Appendix 1 sets out the complaints in more detail.

Comparing the total number of complaints since 2011:

YEAR	NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS
2011	0
2012	13
2013	15
2014	8
2015	12
2016	4
2017	18
2018	24
2019	14
2020	10
2021	4

Committee is therefore asked to note the number of Member complaints received during 2020/21 to date as summarised in the report and the current outstanding complaints as detailed in Appendix 1.

Implications

Corporate Plan:

To ensure we deliver high-quality public services we have adopted a set of corporate values which underpin the successful delivery of our priorities. How we work is as important as what we do. The Council's values are:

- People Focussed
- Honest
- Proud
- Ambitious

Legal:

This report is presented in accordance with the Terms of Reference for this Committee as set out in the Constitution.

Finance:

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	None

General Fund – Capital Programme	None
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	None
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	None

Risk:

Risk	Mitigation
Lack of transparency. Lack of monitoring. Failing to meet the duty of maintaining high standards of behaviour.	The work plan for this Committee, the quarterly update reporting and this Annual report ensures the Council is open and transparent in the way it deals with ethical governance. The reporting and work of the Committee demonstrates the Council's commitment to maintaining high levels of ethical behaviour.

Human Resources:

There are no significant Human Resource issues identified in the report.

Environmental/Sustainability

There are no Environmental/Sustainability issues identified in this report.

Equalities:

There are no significant equalities issues identified in the report.

Other Implications:

None

Report Author and Contact Officer

Ruth Dennis
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE
MONITORING OFFICER
r.dennis@ashfield.gov.uk
01623 457009