

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>STANDARDS AND PERSONNEL APPEALS COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>16 DECEMBER 2024</b>
<b>Heading:</b>	<b>QUARTERLY ETHICAL GOVERNANCE UPDATE</b>
<b>Executive Lead Member:</b>	<b>NOT APPLICABLE</b>
<b>Ward/s:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Subject to Call-In:</b>	<b>NO</b>

### **Purpose of Report**

This report provides an update in respect of Members' Code of Conduct complaints up until the end of quarter 2 (April 2024 to September 2024). This report further provides an update on Gifts and Hospitality Declarations up until the end of quarter 2 (April 2024 to September 2024).

### **Recommendation(s)**

The Standards and Personnel Appeals Committee is recommended to:

- a. Note the updated position in respect of Members' Code of Conduct complaints and Gifts and Hospitality declarations.

### **Reasons for Recommendation(s)**

To enable the Standards and Personnel Appeals Committee to monitor the volume and progress of Members' Code of Conduct complaints and Gifts and Hospitality declarations.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

No alternative options are considered appropriate.

### **Detailed Information**

#### **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS – APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2024**

There have been 5 new Member complaints submitted between July and September 2024. All 5 relate to District Councillors, 3 were submitted by Members of the Public, with 1 being dismissed as

being outside of the Code of Conduct and 2 complaints submitted by a Councillor against another ADC Councillor.

4 complaints remain ongoing, with one of these being referred to an external investigator. 2 were reviewed and determined to not be a breach and 2 were dismissed at the initial stages, one for not being in the public interest and another for being outside of the scope of the Code of Conduct.

Please see Appendix A for full update on complaints schedule.

## **GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY DECLARATIONS – APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2024**

Committee is advised that there have been no Gifts and Hospitality declarations made between July to September 2024.

## **Implications**

### **Corporate Plan:**

In line with the Corporate Plan 2023 – 2027, the Council will strive to ensure effective community leadership, through good governance, transparency, accountability, and appropriate behaviours.

### **Legal:**

There are no direct legal implications resulting from the recommendations within this report. [RLD 05/12/2024]

### **Finance:**

The Council incurs costs investigating complaints of alleged Member misconduct if investigations are carried out externally. These costs are met through the General Fund. The Council investigates complaints internally as much as possible to reduce costs. Where complaints need to be investigated externally, these costs are expected to be contained within existing budgets.

There are no direct financial implications resulting from the recommendations within this report.

<b>Budget Area</b>	<b>Implication</b>
General Fund – Revenue Budget	N/A
General Fund – Capital Programme	
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	

## **Risk:**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Potential for negative perception of the Council which could impact the Council's reputation. Potentially adverse impact upon the workings of the Council. Associated legislation does not provide "strong" sanctions for breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct which may make regulation of poor ethical behaviour difficult and leave complainants dissatisfied with outcomes.	The Standards and Personnel Appeals committee approved an annual work plan to consider how it will ensure high standards of ethical behaviour. Presentation of Quarterly Ethical Governance Updates to the Standards and Personnel Appeals Committee ensures ongoing monitoring of complaints to identify any trends and areas for improvement.

## **Human Resources:**

There are no direct HR implications resulting from the recommendations within this report.

## **Environmental/Sustainability:**

There are no direct environmental/sustainability implications resulting from the recommendations within this report.

## **Equalities:**

There are no direct equalities implications resulting from the recommendations within this report.

## **Other Implications:**

There are no other implications resulting from the recommendations within this report.

## **Reason(s) for Urgency**

None.

## **Reason(s) for Exemption**

None.

## **Background Papers**

None.

## **Report Author and Contact Officer**

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