

 City of Westminster	Standards Committee
Meeting or Decision Maker:	Standards Committee
Date:	4 November 2021
Classification:	For General Release
Title:	Member Complaints – Annual Report
Report of:	Hazel Best, Monitoring Officer

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report is the Annual report to the Committee setting out, in summary, details of complaints against members of the Council, since the last report to the Committee.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the outcomes of the Members complaint referred to in paragraph 3 of the report

3. Member complaints

- 3.1 This report considers member complaints for the period September 2020 to October 2021. During this period the Monitoring Officer has received seven complaints.
- 3.2 One complaint related to a service issue and therefore did not meet the criteria for a Councillor complaint. The issue was referred to the relevant department to respond to.
- 3.3 One complaint was in relation to a Councillor when they were not acting in their capacity as a Councillor and therefore did not meet the criteria.
- 3.4 Two of the complaints related to one Councillor's posts on social media (separate complaints relating to different posts). The complaints were not formally investigated but the Monitoring Officer and party whip did speak to the Councillor about their activity on social media.
- 3.5 Two of the complaints were cross allegations by Councillors and were resolved without formal investigation. There was no pattern of vexatious complaints or general theme as to the nature of the complaints.
- 3.6 The seventh complaint has only just been received and is currently being reviewed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer.

- 3.7 Councillors are offered annual training on the Members Code of Conduct. An online refresher session was held in June 2021. The focus of which was on social media. There will be a training session on the code of conduct of conduct and issues affecting ethical governance following the local elections in May 2022.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications for this report.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Council and individual Members are required to promote and maintain high standards of ethical behaviour as is required under section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 (“the Act”) Under section of the 28 of the Act, the Council must have in placed “arrangements “ under which allegations that a member or co-opted member of the Council, or of a Committee of Sub-Committee of the Council, has failed to comply with Code of Conduct can be investigated and decisions made on such allegations.

If you have any queries about this report, please contact:

Hazel Best, Legal Services,

Email hbest@westminster.gov.uk