



City of Westminster Standards Committee

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| Meeting: | Standards Committee |
| Date: | 29 November 2023 |
| Classification: | General Release |
| Title: | Member Complaints – Annual Report |
| Report of: | Parveen Akhtar – Director of Law and Governance (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 in December 2022.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the outcomes of complaints against Members referred to in paragraph 3 of this report. No complaints have been referred to the Standards Committee for a hearing.

3. Member complaints

- 3.1 This report considers Member complaints for the period November 2021 to October 2022. During this period the Monitoring Officer has received three complaints.
- 3.2 One complaint related to a failure to respond to a resident in a timely manner and a request by the resident to provide their data. The issue was referred to the data protection team to action a subject access request on behalf of the resident.
- 3.3 A second complaint related to an alleged breach of data protection. The Complainant was asked for further information but did not provide any. The Complainant was referred to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to make a complaint if they had any further concerns.

3.4 A third complaint related to the conduct of a Councillor but was withdrawn by the Complainant as an apology was received.

4. Training

4.1 Councillors are offered annual training on the Members' Code of Conduct. All Members received training on the Code of Conduct following the local elections held in May 2022.

4.2 Further Code of Conduct training was provided to Members in May 2023. A training session was also held in May on the updated Member/Officer Protocol following a review undertaken by the Standards Committee. The training on the updated Protocol was provided in-person and online to all Members and formed part of the process of ensuring the behaviours and treatment that both Members and Officers could expect from the other was embedded in the culture throughout the organisation.

4.3 The Monitoring Officer will continue to review data and monitor any themes and trends relating to the code of conduct which emerge. Monitoring the number of complaints received and the nature of the complaints will enable the Monitoring Officer and Committee to identify any trends and make recommendations for additional training and guidance as appropriate.

4.4 Members of the Standards Committee can also discuss with the Monitoring Officer any further training, linked to the Code of Conduct, they consider will be helpful for Members.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications for this report

6. Legal Implications

6.1 The Council and individual Members are required to promote and maintain high standards of ethical behaviour as required under section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 ("the Act"). Under section of the 28 of the Act, the Council must have in place "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.

7. Consultation

7.1 The report is for information only.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers, please contact:

Tristan Fieldsend, Senior Committee and Councillor Co-Ordinator