



**STANDARDS COMMITTEE
19 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Report of: Head of Legal and Democratic Services

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SUBJECT: COMPLAINTS STATISTICS

Wards affected: Borough wide.

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide statistical information in relation to Standards Complaints.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Standards Complaints Statistics be noted.

3.0 CURRENT POSITION

3.1 During the period 14 March 2023 to 19 September 2023 the Council received Two formal complaints, one relating to a Parish Councillors behaviour at a meeting, one relating to a West Lancs Borough Councillor posting information on social media.

3.2 Following consideration, the Monitoring Officer wrote to the complainant regarding the Parish Councillor, to inform them of the decision that in consultation with the Independent Person the decision is that no further action will be taken in relation to this complaint.

3.3 Following consideration, the Monitoring Officer wrote to the Complainant regarding the Borough Councillor, to inform them of the decision, taking into account the criteria for determining a Standards Complaint, and the fact that we are under a duty to protect the public purse. As the Councillor is no longer an appointed Councillor the Monitoring Officer would be unable to take any action, even if the Councillor was found to have breached the Code of Conduct. As such, it is not felt it is in the public interest to pursue this matter further. The Complainant was advised that the submission of the complaint will be recorded, and the outcome reported to Standards Committee.

4.0 PERIOD 20 SEPTEMBER 2022 TO 18 SEPTEMBER 2023

- 4.1 During the twelve-month period complaints have been four formal complaints received. Two were reported to Standards Committee in March 2023. These were complaints relating to a Parish Council and both were found to not be Breaches of the Members Code of Conduct. The other two are reported above at section 3.

5.0 COMPLAINTS CARRIED FORWARD

- 5.1 A formal complaint was received in relation to a West Lancs Borough Councillor in February 2022. The complaint was considered and partially resolved, and the complainant written to July 2022, informing of the decision that in consultation with the Independent Person, there should be no further action taken in respect of the taking of the first aspect of the complaint, but the second aspect of the complaint would be referred for formal investigation.
- 5.2 Decision regarding the second part of the complaint was reached following formal investigation, and the complainant written to June 2023, informing of the decision that in consultation with the Independent Person no further action will be taken in relation to the complaint.

6.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report and in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder.

7.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no significant financial or resource implications arising from this report. Activity to date has been undertaken within available budgets.

8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 This item does not require a formal risk assessment and no changes have been made to risk registers as a result of this report.

9.0 HEALTH & WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Appendices

None.