



Northumberland

County Council

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

10 FEBRUARY 2022

Code of Conduct Complaints – Progress Report

Report of the Monitoring Officer

Purpose of report

The report is to inform Members of the progress with complaints received by the authority under the new arrangements adopted by the authority for dealing with standards allegations under the Localism Act 2011.

Recommendations

To note the report

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the “We want to be efficient, open and work for everyone” priority included in the NCC Corporate Plan 2018-2021.

Key issues

1. The Council adopted new arrangements for determination of complaints of breach of Code of Conduct by members on the 1st July 2012
2. The authority continues to have responsibility for complaints relating to Parish and Town Councillors in Northumberland.
3. The progress and status of each complaint received by the authority from 1st April 2019, thus far, is shown in the attached table.

Background

1. Under Section 28(6) and (7) of the Localism Act 2011, the Council must have in place “arrangements” under which allegations that a member or co-opted member of the authority or of a parish council within the authority’s area, or of a Committee or Sub-Committee of the authority, has failed to comply with that authority’s Code of Conduct can be investigated and decisions made on such allegations.

2. The Council has adopted a procedure whereby such complaints may be assessed and investigated and any breaches of the members code of conduct may be reported to the Standards Committee for a hearing if a local resolution is not appropriate
3. A table of complaints received over the past few years is shown in the attached table

Implications

Policy	The local determination of alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct is a statutory requirement
Finance and value for money	There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. The level of complaints received continues to be maintained at a relatively high level which does have an impact on capacity
Legal	The Localism Act 2011 states that arrangements must be put in place to deal with code of conduct complaints
Procurement	None
Human Resources	None
Property	None
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	The Code of Conduct supports the Council's policies on equalities in service delivery
Risk Assessment	Level 1 The procedures in relation to the local assessment of member conduct complaints are designed to support fair and efficient handling of those complaints by the Council with the aim of avoiding challenge or dissatisfaction with that process.
Crime & Disorder	The locally based system of assessment, investigation and determination of complaints supports compliance with the Code of Conduct which in turn supports the Council's general aims in relation to crime and disorder.
Customer Consideration	The Code of Conduct is consistent with and reinforces the Council's approach to customer relations.
Carbon reduction	None
Health and Wellbeing	N/A

Wards	All
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Background papers

Localism Act 2011
 Northumberland County Council Arrangements for dealing with standards allegations under the Localism Act 2011

Report sign off

	Initials
Monitoring Officer/Legal	Suki Binjal
Service Director Finance & Interim S151 Officer	Jan Willis
Relevant Executive Director	Cath McEvoy-Carr
Chief Executive	Daljit Lally
Portfolio Holder(s)	N/A

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