



CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 26TH JULY 2019

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE OPERATION OF THE MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT 2018/19

Purpose of Report

1. This report fulfils the requirement for the Monitoring Officer to report to the Committee on an annual basis on the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct in accordance with a decision of the Committee on 24th September 2012.

Background

2. In the light of the changes introduced in the Localism Act 2011 a revised Members' Code of Conduct was adopted at the County Council meeting on 4th July 2012. The effect of the changes was to give this Committee responsibility for dealing with matters relating to the Code.
3. Detailed arrangements for dealing with allegations against Members were considered by this Committee on 24th September 2012 and a procedure for dealing with allegations was agreed. These were reviewed and updated by this Committee in September 2017.
4. Since then, the Committee has received and commented on the report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life and the Government's response is awaited which will inform the future arrangements for the Code of Conduct nationally and locally.

Complaints received under the Members' Code of Conduct

5. Since May 2018 there have been seven complaints (relating to five members) received by the Monitoring Officer under the Members' Code of Conduct. These complaints were resolved as follows:

Outcome of complaint	Number of members
Complaint withdrawn / not progressed by complainant	2
Complaint did not meet threshold for further investigation as set out in the 'initial test'	2 (1 complaint)

6. As in previous years there are no trends in relation to the subject matter or in relation to the members who have been the subject of a complaint.
7. As members will be aware, complaints alleging failure to register a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest are matters for consideration by Leicestershire Police as the Localism Act 2011 has made such failures a criminal offence. No such complaints have been received during the period under review.

Member Conduct Panel

8. There have been no referrals to the Member Conduct Panel during the period of this review.

Independent Persons

9. The Council at its meeting in September 2016 appointed a panel of Independent Persons as required by the Localism Act 2011 for a period of four years. These arrangements will be kept under review as any further information arises from the report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life in due course. Otherwise steps will be taken to recruit and/or reappoint where appropriate a panel to serve from September 2020.

Recommendation

10. The Committee is asked to note this Report.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

11. None arising from this report.

Background papers

Guide to the Leicestershire County Council Members' Code of Conduct

Leicestershire County Council's Procedure for dealing with allegations of a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct.

Report to the Corporate Governance Committee on 24 September 2012 - 'Arrangements for dealing with Member Conduct Complaints'

Report to the Corporate Governance Committee on 26 November 2012 - 'Arrangements for dealing with Member Conduct Complaints'

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Officer to contact

Lauren Haslam
Director of Law and Governance and
Monitoring Officer
Tel: 0116 3056240 Email: lauren.haslam@leics.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank