



CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 24TH JULY 2020

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE OPERATION OF THE MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT 2019/20

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. The 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 Committee will have the opportunity to comment on the consultation on Model Member Code of Conduct recently issued by the Local Government Association. Any changes in the Model Code which may follow that consultation will be subject to a further report to this committee in due course so that the Council may consider whether to adopt the Model code or a variation of it and whether to revise and update the procedures.

Complaints received under the Members' Code of Conduct

5. Since July 2019 there have been six complaints (relating to five members) received by the Monitoring Officer under the Members' Code of Conduct. These complaints were resolved as set out below and a comparison with the previous year is included for information:

Outcome of complaint	Number of members	
	2018/19	2019/20
Complaint withdrawn / not progressed	2	3 (1 complaint)

by complainant		
Complaint did not meet threshold for further investigation as set out in the 'initial test'	2 (1 complaint)	
Complaint resolved informally		1
Complaints currently being considered at the initial stage (as at 14 th July)		2

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.

- 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

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

Independent Persons

- 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. Steps are being taken to recruit persons to serve in this role and to recommend persons to be appointed by the Council at its meeting in September 2020.

Recommendation

- The Committee is asked to note this Report.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

- 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

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