

COMPLAINTS UPDATE

Report of the Chief Legal Officer

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide an update to Members on the number and the nature of the complaints received by the Chief Legal Officer alleging that members had breached the Code of Conduct

2. Summary and Background

- 2.1 The new standards regime in July 2012 introduced a new procedure for dealing with complaints that members had breached the Code of Conduct. This involves an initial assessment by the Chief Legal Officer in consultation with the Independent Person. If the complaint is rejected at this stage then the complainant has a right of appeal to the Chief Executive. If after initial assessment the Chief Legal Officer considers that there might potentially be a breach of the Code of Conduct then the complaint is referred to investigation.
- 2.2 During the period 1 July 2012 to 30 October 2013 four formal complaints had been received by the Chief Legal Officer. In all cases following consultation with the Independent Person the Chief Legal Officer informed the complainant that the complaint did not amount to a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct. None of the complainants have chosen to appeal this assessment.
- 2.3 Of the four complaints made two were assessed as not relating to the member in their role as County Councillor.
- 2.4 The other two complaints related to either email or verbal comments made by the member concerned in their role as County Councillor but the comments made were not considered such as to amount to a breach of the Code of Conduct.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That the Committee note the Report.