

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Code of Conduct Complaints - Update

Meeting/Date: Corporate Governance Committee – 25th July 2019

Executive Portfolio: Councillor G J Bull, Executive Leader

Report by: Elections and Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

This report provides Members with an update on complaints cases regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct. The Committee is responsible for maintaining high standards of conduct by Members of the District and Town and Parish Councils, for monitoring operation of the Code of Conduct and for considering the outcome of investigations in the event of breaches of the Code.

Recommendation:

The Committee is requested to note the progress of any outstanding complaints and the conclusion of cases resolved since the meeting in June 2019.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a summary and update of completed or ongoing complaints received regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct under the Localism Act 2011 since the start of the year.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In accordance with the functions of the Committee, this report seeks to provide a summary of the current position in relation to the Code of Conduct complaints since the last meeting.
- 2.2 At the meeting of the Committee on 13th September 2017, Members requested that this report be submitted on a quarterly basis and to include categories of the Code of Conduct cases to enable feedback to be given to Town and Parish Councils should similar themes emerge on the nature of the complaints to enable further training to be arranged.

3. ANALYSIS

- 3.1 Details of allegations/complaints in relation to the Code of Conduct have been outlined in the table below. Specific detailed information regarding the complaint has not been provided as this may be prejudicial to the conduct of the ongoing complaints process and to protect the identity of councillors who may not have breached the Code of Conduct.

Case Number	District/Town/Parish Council	Allegation/complaint	Outcome
19/24	Huntingdonshire District Council	Complaint against District Councillor alleging he breached 3.4 (disrepute), 3.7 (independent judgement) and 3.8 (acting unlawfully) of the Code	Matter investigated and report produced by Independent Investigator. Final outcome to be determined.
19/28	Huntingdonshire District Council	Complaint against District Councillors alleging they breached 3.1 (leadership), 3.2 (bullying), 3.4 (disrepute) and 3.7(i) exercising own independent judgement in taking decisions of the Code	Matter investigated and concluded that insufficient evidence to suggest that there had been a breach of the Code and not in the public interest to be taken forward for investigation.
19/29	Huntingdonshire District Council	Complaint against District Councillor alleging he breached (leadership) and 3.4 (disrepute) of the Code	Matter investigated and concluded that insufficient evidence to suggest that there had been a breach of the Code, as the complaint was by one Member against another, a greater allowance for robust political debate, (but

			not personal abuse or “unparliamentary” language) may be given and not in the public interest to be taken forward for investigation.
19/30	Upwood Parish Council	Complaint against a Parish Councillor alleging he breached 3.4 (disrepute) of the Code	Matter investigated and concluded that insufficient evidence to suggest that there had been a breach of the Code and not in the public interest to be taken forward for investigation.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no significant implications to report.

5. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

5.1 This is an opportunity for Members of the Committee to be appraised of details of completed complaints and any outstanding complaints alleged against the Code of Conduct. This is in accordance with the functions of the Committee and its duty to discharge functions in relation to the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct within the Council and amongst Town and Parish Councils within the District.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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