

# Standards Committee



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

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Wednesday, 12 March 2025 at 2.00 pm  
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House, St. Peter's Hill,  
Grantham. NG31 6PZ

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**Committee** Councillor Pam Byrd (Chairman)

**Members:** Councillor Sarah Trotter (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ashley Baxter, Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing, Councillor Richard Dixon-Warren, Councillor Ben Green, Councillor Tim Harrison, Councillor Chris Noon, Councillor Max Sawyer, Councillor Peter Stephens and Councillor Mark Whittington

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## Agenda

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **Disclosure of interests**
3. **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 September 2024** (Pages 3 - 8)
4. **Councillor Code of Conduct Complaints - Overview of Cases** (Pages 9 - 41)  
To provide the Standards Committee with an overview of Councillor Code of Conduct complaints received and processed during the 2023/2024 municipal year, as well as those received to date for the 2024/2025 municipal year.
5. **Feedback and lessons learnt from recent Councillor Code of Conduct complaints** (To Follow)  
To consider a briefing note by the Chairman of the Standards Committee.
6. **Any other business, which the Chairman, by reasons of special circumstances, decides is urgent**

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## Minutes Standards Committee

Wednesday, 11 September 2024, 2.00 pm

Council Chamber – South Kesteven  
House, St. Peter's Hill, NG31 6PZ



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

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### Committee Members present

Councillor Pam Byrd (Chairman)  
Councillor Sarah Trotter (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Rhys Baker  
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing  
Councillor Richard Dixon-Warren  
Councillor Ben Green  
Councillor Max Sawyer  
Councillor Graham Jeal

### Other Members present

Councillor Peter Stephens  
Councillor Tim Harrison  
Councillor Lee Steptoe

### Officers

Graham Watts (Monitoring Officer, Assistant Director for Governance and Public Protection)  
Debbie Mewes (Governance Support Team Leader)  
Amy Pryde (Democratic Services Officer)

### Independent Persons

Fred Mann  
Gordon Grimes

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### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ashley Baxter.

Councillor Graham Jeal substituted for Councillor Peter Stephens.

### 2. Disclosure of interests

There were none.

### 3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2024 were **AGREED** as a correct record.

#### **4. Councillor Code of Conduct Complaints – Overview of Cases**

The Monitoring Officer presented the report. The report provided the Standards Committee with an update on the complaints submitted against District Councillors and Parish/Town Councillors for the 2023/24 municipal year. It also reported on those complaints received since 23 May 2024 (the date of the Council's Annual Meeting), which commenced the 2024/25 municipal year.

Appendix A set out the number of complaints received against District Councillors for 2023/24 municipal year, whereby 63 individual complaints were submitted in that period.

Taking into account feedback from the previous meeting, more information had been provided around reasons for a complaint. These included parts of the Code of Conduct that were allegedly breached and a brief overview of what the complaint consisted of, who the complaint was submitted from and the outcome of the complaint.

The Council's complaint procedure was a three-stage process. Every complaint received was shared with the Independent Person who would then provide their views on the complaint made.

The first stage of the complaint assessment process was a jurisdictional test to assess whether or not the Councillor was acting within their capacity as an Elected Member or whether they were still an active Councillor. This test would determine whether the complaint would be passed onto the next stage of the complaints procedure.

The second stage of the process was an assessment stage, where the complaint would be assessed against criteria set out in the Council's procedure. This stage would analyse any sufficient evidence, alternative actions taken, whether consideration should be given to a Councillor's right to freedom of speech and whether the threshold for robust political debate came into consideration.

The extent of seriousness of the complaint would be assessed on whether it was malicious, vexatious, politically motivated, 'tit-for-tat' or whether it was within the public interest to take any further action and whether further action could warrant the available sanctions imposed.

At this point in the process, a decision notice would be issued in consultation with the Independent Persons as to whether any further action would be necessary, or the complaint could be closed via an informal resolution or no action required.

If a complaint warranted further investigation, a referral for a formal investigation would take place. At present, a number of complaints were currently being formally investigated by Wilkin Chapman on behalf of the Monitoring Officer.

Appendix B provided information around complaints for Parish and Town Councillors that were received for the 2023/24 municipal year. The total number of individual complaints was 21, there had not been any formal complaints submitted against Parish and Town Councillors.

One complaint related to a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest which had been referred to the Police for investigation due to it potentially constituting a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

A verbal update was provided that one formal complaint against a District Councillor had been received on 11 September 2024, meaning this was the first complaint for the 2024/25 municipal year. This complaint had been submitted by a member of the public.

It was clarified by the Monitoring Officer that all complaints received in the last municipal year were followed by the current complaints process apart from those prior to September 2023 when the process had not yet been adopted by the Standards Committee. For those complaints dealt with prior to the new procedure being adopted, the LGA guidance was used. The current procedure for dealing with Councillor complaints was in keeping with the LGA guidance and more comprehensive than the Council's previous arrangements. To ensure transparency, the procedure was shared with anybody who submitted a complaint in order that they could understand how their complaint would be dealt with.

It was recognised that a high proportion of the current complaints were regarding social media posts on Councillors accounts. Whilst posts could be subsequently deleted, their publication in the first instance gave the opportunity for others to screenshot and share the post which the owner was then unable to delete.

Following this point, a Member suggested enhanced social media training for all Councillors to take place.

A Member asked the Independent Person whether 63 complaints was an extraordinary figure for a District Council, from their experience.

One of the Independent Persons stated that in their experience of working within 12 Local Government Authorities, the level of complaints received within such a short time at the Council, was the highest he had seen. The Independent Person recognised the role that social media played in this and highlighted complaints due to social media as a national issue.

Another Independent Person noted a factor of the high level of complaints may be due to the Council previously operating within its own Code of Conduct for a significant period of time rather than under the national model Code of Conduct.

Going forward, the Independent Person hoped that the level of complaints at the Council would decrease, as the model Code of Conduct had now been adopted and more training opportunities had been arranged.

A high proportion of the complaints were submitted by District Councillors against District Councillors. The Monitoring Officer highlighted the importance of changing the culture regarding the submission of complaints. It was noted that many of the complaints in question could have been resolved by an informal dialogue rather than a formal process.

A Member encouraged Councillors to take personal responsibility of behaviours. It was noted that the culture seemed to be improving as only one complaint had been submitted for the municipal year of 2024/25.

The Chairman confirmed that there had been 63 complaints received within the 2023/24 municipal period for District Councillors, of which 6 were confirmed as breaches, 15 were progressed to formal investigations, and 42 concluded with no further action.

It was confirmed that the 63 complaints had been dealt with under the new standard for complaints.

A query was raised on any indication of the timeframe for the outstanding complaints being resolved.

The Monitoring Officer clarified that current investigations were being handled by a third-party and they were currently in the process of drafting their reports. With this in mind, the matters would hopefully be resolved by the end of 2024.

One Member queried if Members would be able to view a redacted example of a submitted complaint without necessarily being worthy of a formal investigation.

The Monitoring Officer highlighted that this would be difficult given that the complainant may recognise their complaint being used as an example of a scenario which was regarded by officers as unworthy of a formal complaint.

Concern was raised on the underlying culture causing individuals to feel that they had been sufficiently wronged and that this was eroding public trust and confidence in the Council's decision-making process.

The Vice-Chairman of the Committee noted that progress was being made and assured improvements were being made.

A Member sought clarification as they were under the impression that the Leader of the Council had requested some of the matters to be resolved informally rather than the formal complaints process.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that an offer had previously been made for reconciliation in order that matters could be resolved informally.

The Committee thanked the team for all of their hard work on this subject.

The Monitoring Officer outlined Appendix C which included 21 complaints in relation to Parish/Town Councillors. The majority of these complaints related to ongoing matters within individual Parish Council's.

**That the Committee:**

**Noted the report.**

**5. Training**

The Monitoring Officer provided an update on mandatory training that all Members of the Standards Committee were required to undertake. There was one Member who was due to receive training the following day, however, all other Members of the Committee had completed their training.

Furthermore, other non-Committee Members had received the training in order to be able to substitute on the Committee.

In accordance with a resolution at Full Council, it was mandatory for Members to undertake Code of Conduct training within a six month period in order to continue to sit on Committees. Code of Conduct training sessions had been scheduled since the Annual Meeting held on 23 May 2024 and there were currently five of the 56 Councillors that had not booked onto this training.

The Chairman suggested further training for Members in relation to responsible social media use.

The Vice-Chairman queried whether Police involvement in social media use training would be beneficial to educate Members about the potential consequences of how social media posts could escalate.

The Monitoring Officer acknowledged this, noting that he was considering a social media protocol alongside the Council's Code of Conduct, as adopted by other Local Authorities.

A query was raised on whether such social media training could be made mandatory or just advisory, given the conflicts that this could create with the Freedom of Speech principle.

The Monitoring Officer clarified that social media training would solely be regarding posts made under their official capacity as a Councillor. This would not restrict any Members personal social media use outside of their Councillor responsibilities. Any additional mandatory training would require approval by Full Council.

It was raised that social media use was included within the Code of Conduct itself and was covered as part of the Code of Conduct training, therefore the discussion

was around how to make social media use more comprehensive within the Code of Conduct.

One Member queried the scope of the Code of Conduct across accounts in instances where Members have separate social media accounts for their personal use, business use and their capacity as a Councillor.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that the Code of Conduct would be engaged where the posts themselves included a direct link to the Council or their role as a Councillor, regardless of which account they were posted from.

A Member suggested engaging with the Local Government Association for assistance in appropriately framing social media use training.

**6. Any other business, which the Chairman, by reasons of special circumstances, decides is urgent**

There were none.

**7. Close of meeting**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 15:30.



12 March 2025

Report of Graham Watts, Monitoring  
Officer

## Councillor Code of Conduct Complaints – Overview of Cases

### Report Author

Graham Watts, Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer

 [Graham.watts@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Graham.watts@southkesteven.gov.uk)

### Purpose of Report

To provide the Standards Committee with an overview of Councillor Code of Conduct complaints received and processed during the 2023/24 municipal year, as well as those received to date for the 2024/25 municipal year.

### Recommendations

**That the report be noted.**

### Decision Information

Does the report contain any  
exempt or confidential  
information not for publication? No

What are the relevant corporate  
priorities? Effective Council

Which wards are impacted? All

## 1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

### ***Finance and Procurement***

- 1.1 Depending upon the complexity, nature or volume of complaints received, it may be necessary to commission external support to undertake assessments or investigations on the Monitoring Officer's behalf. This would incur further costs to the Council.
- 1.2 Fifteen complaints referred for formal investigation incurred external costs of £64,380 during the 2023/24 and 2024/25 municipal year.

Completed by: David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer

### ***Legal and Governance***

- 1.3 There are no significant legal or governance implications not already referred to in the body of this report.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer

## 2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Monitoring Officer at South Kesteven District Council is responsible for considering complaints against Councillors where allegations of a breach of the Code of Conduct are made. This means that any complaints against any of the 56 District Councillors will be assessed and processed by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with the agreed procedure for dealing with complaints against Councillors. The Council's procedure is included as part of the Council's Constitution and can be viewed via the following link:  
[Procedure for dealing with complaints against Councillors](#)
- 2.2 As the designated Principal Authority for the District, the Monitoring Officer at South Kesteven District Council is also responsible for considering complaints against any Parish or Town Councillors where allegations of a breach of the Code of Conduct are made. These complaints are treated in the same way in accordance with the agreed procedure for dealing with complaints against Councillors.

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1 This report provides the Standards Committee with an update on the complaints submitted against District Councillors and Parish/Town Councillors for the 2023/24 municipal year. It also reports on those complaints received since 23 May 2024 (the date of the Council's Annual Meeting), which commenced the 2024/25 municipal year.
- 3.2 As part of the Council's procedure for dealing with complaints against Councillors it is a requirement to report, for information, the outcome of any complaint where a formal investigation has been undertaken.

#### **Complaints against District Councillors**

- 3.3 For the 2023/24 municipal year, 63 individual complaints were received against District Councillors of South Kesteven District Council. Details relating to these complaints are set out in **Appendix A**.
- 3.4 Of the 63 complaints received during the period, 14 resulted in breaches of the Councillor Code of Conduct having been confirmed.
- 3.5 For the 2024/25 municipal year, up to 4 March 2025, 46 individual complaints were received against District Councillors of South Kesteven District Council. Details of which are set out in **Appendix B**.
- 3.6 Of the 46 complaints received, one breach of the Councillor Code of Conduct has been confirmed. 34 of these complaints are still subject to assessment.

#### **Complaints against Parish/Town Councillors**

- 3.7 For the 2023/24 municipal year, 21 individual complaints were received against Parish and Town Councillors in the South Kesteven district. Details relating to these complaints are set out in **Appendix C**.
- 3.8 Of the 21 complaints received during the period, one resulted in a breach of the Councillor Code of Conduct having been confirmed.
- 3.9 For the 2024/25 municipal year, up to 4 March 2025, six Code of Conduct complaints were received against Parish and Town Councillors in the South Kesteven district. Details relating to these complaints are set out in **Appendix D**.
- 3.10 Of the six complaints received during the period, one resulted in a breach of the Councillor Code of Conduct having been confirmed.

## **Formal investigations**

3.11 Fifteen complaints were referred for formal investigation during the 2023/24 municipal year and reached their respective conclusion since the last meeting of the Standards Committee. Documentation associated with each case, including the investigation report, evidence bundle and decision notice, can be viewed via the respective links below:

**Councillors Ben Green and Graham Jeal v Councillor Tim Harrison:**  
[Decision Notice and supporting documents](#)

**Councillor Ashley Baxter v Councillor Ben Green:**  
[Decision Notice and supporting documents](#)

**Councillor Graham Jeal v Councillor Steven Cunningham:**  
[Hearing Review Panel Documents - 17 January 2025 \(10am\)](#)

**Councillor Penny Milnes v Councillor Steven Cunningham:**  
[Hearing Review Panel Documents - 17 January 2025 \(2pm\)](#)

**Councillors Ben Green, Graham Jeal and Sue Woolley v Councillor Tim Harrison:**  
[Hearing Review Panel Documents - 21 January 2025 \(10am\)](#)

**Councillor Graham Jeal v Councillor Tim Harrison:**  
[Hearing Review Panel Documents - 21 January 2025 \(2pm\)](#)

**Councillor Matthew Bailey v Councillor Tim Harrison:**  
[Hearing Review Panel Documents - 28 January 2025 \(10am\)](#)

## **4. Other Options Considered**

4.1 No other options are highlighted for consideration as the report is for noting only.

## **5. Reasons for the Recommendations**

5.1 To provide the Standards Committee with an overview of information associated with complaints against District and Parish/Town Councillors where allegations of a breach of the Councillor Code of Conduct have been made.

## **6. Appendices**

**Appendix A** – complaints against District Councillors 2023/24 municipal year

**Appendix B** – complaints against District Councillors 2024/25 municipal year

**Appendix C** – complaints against Parish and Town Councillors 2023/24 municipal year

**Appendix D** – complaints against Parish and Town Councillors 2024/25 municipal year

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APPENDIX A

Complaints against District Councillors – 2023/24 Municipal Year

Number	Date received	Reason for complaint	Complainant	Outcome
1	19.05.2023	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint alleging inappropriate scrutiny of register of interest and threat to go to the press	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
2	05.06.2023	<b>Equality and diversity</b>  Complaint regarding social media posts relating to the transgender community. Not acting in official capacity	Member of the public	Stage One Assessment – Code not engaged (not in official capacity)
3	16.06.2023	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint that County Council was not consulted on a local issue	County Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
4	16.06.2023	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint that County Council was not consulted on a local issue	County Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
5	16.06.2023	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint that County Council was not consulted on a local issue	County Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action

6	16.06.2023	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint that County Council was not consulted on a local issue	County Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
7	20.06.2023	<b>Publication of confidential or exempt information</b>  Disclosure of exempt information on social media	Monitoring Officer	Stage Two Assessment – <b>breach of the Code</b>  Apology issued by Subject Councillor and social media post withdrawn
8	20.06.2023	<b>Publication of confidential or exempt information</b>  Disclosure of exempt information at public meeting of third party organisation	Monitoring Officer	Stage Two Assessment – <b>breach of the Code</b>  Apology issued by the Subject Councillor and statement made to recipients of information
9	02.09.2023	<b>Integrity, openness and transparency</b>  Complaint of no response from local member	Member of the public	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
10	01.11.2023	<b>Disrepute</b>  Complaint relating to attendance at a pro-Palestinian rally	Member of the public	Stage One Assessment – Code not engaged (not in official capacity)

11	01.11.2023	<b>Disrepute</b>  Complaint relating to attendance at a pro-Palestinian rally	Member of the public	Stage One Assessment – Code not engaged (not in official capacity)
12	23.11.2023	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint relating to disrespectful behaviour at public meeting of the Council and patterns of similar behaviour	District Councillor	Formal investigation – <b>breach of the Code</b>  Censure notice on the Councillor's profile on the Council's website until May 2025
13	01.12.2023	<b>Impartiality and objectivity</b>  Complaint accusing a Councillor of not representing their residents and misleading a Planning Officer	Parish Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
14	30.01.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint regarding disrespectful comments at a public meeting, political description of the administration/leadership and failure to report instances of intimidation	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action

15	02.02.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint regarding disrespectful comments on social media post	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
16	13.02.2024	<b>Conflict of interest</b>  Complaint regarding a conflict associated with membership of an outside body and acting in a different capacity to that of local ward member. Subject Councillor in receipt of correspondence displaying unnecessary and unsavoury language and tone	Member of public	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
17	30.01.2024	<b>Respect and confidentiality</b>  Complaint regarding disrespectful comments at a meeting of the Council, allegations of false or misleading claims and an allegation of breaching confidentiality	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action

18	02.03.2024	<p><b>Respect, bullying, harassment and disrepute</b></p> <p>Complaint regarding publication of social media post inappropriately targeting another Councillor and a pattern of online harassment</p>	District Councillor	<p>Hearing – <b>breach of the Code in relation to respect and bringing office of Councillor into disrepute</b></p> <p>Sanction to attend social media training and Code of Conduct training</p> <p>Censure notice regarding bring own office of Councillor into disrepute</p>
19	03.03.2024	<p><b>Respect, bullying, harassment and disrepute</b></p> <p>Complaint regarding publication of social media post inappropriately targeting another Councillor and a pattern of online harassment</p>	District Councillor	<p>Hearing – <b>breach of the Code in relation to respect and bringing office of Councillor into disrepute</b></p> <p>Sanction to attend social media training and Code of Conduct training</p> <p>Censure notice regarding bring own office of Councillor into disrepute</p>

20	03.03.2024	<p><b>Respect, bullying, harassment and disrepute</b></p> <p>Complaint regarding publication of social media post inappropriately targeting another Councillor and a pattern of online harassment</p>	District Councillor	<p>Hearing – <b>breach of the Code in relation to respect and bringing office of Councillor into disrepute</b></p> <p>Sanction to attend social media training and Code of Conduct training</p> <p>Censure notice regarding bring own office of Councillor into disrepute</p>
21	03.03.2024	<p><b>Declaration of interest</b></p> <p>Complaint regarding alleged failure to declare an interest</p>	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
22	03.03.2024	<p><b>Respect</b></p> <p>Complaint regarding inappropriate and disrespectful comment on social media about another Councillor</p>	District Councillor	Stage One Assessment – Code not engaged (not in official capacity)

23	03.03.2024	<b>Disrepute and respect</b>  Complaint regarding use of inappropriate language at public meeting of the Council	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – <b>breach of the Code</b>  Apology issued by the Councillor and attendance at refresher training
24	03.03.2024	<b>Disrepute and respect</b>  Complaint regarding use of inappropriate language at public meeting of the Council	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – <b>breach of the Code</b>  Apology issued by the Councillor and attendance at refresher training
25	03.03.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint regarding alleged inappropriate comments on social media about another Councillor	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
26	03.03.2024	<b>Selflessness, objectivity and honesty</b>  Complaint alleging the falsification of information presented to a public meeting of the Council	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action

27	03.03.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint regarding an inappropriate post on social media about another Councillor	District Councillor	Hearing – no breach and no further action
28	03.03.2024	<b>Selflessness, honesty and leadership</b>  Complaint regarding misleading comments on social media regarding another Councillor	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
29	03.03.2024	<b>Selfishness, objectivity, honesty and leadership</b>  Complaint regarding social media post and use of intimidating language	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
30	03.03.2024	<b>Selflessness, objectivity, honesty and leadership</b>  Complaint regarding misleading comments on social media regarding another Councillor	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action

31	03.03.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint regarding content of a social media post and potential targeting of another Councillor	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
32	03.03.2024	<b>Selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership</b>  Complaint regarding content of a social media post and potential targeting of another Councillor	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
33	03.03.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint regarding the inappropriate 'liking' of a post on social media	District Councillor	Formal investigation – no further action
34	04.03.2024	<b>Honesty</b>  Complaint alleging the falsification of information presented to a public meeting of the Council	District Councillor	Stage One Assessment – no further action
35	04.03.2024	<b>Disrepute and respect</b>  Complaint alleging the publication of an inappropriate post on social media	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action

36	04.03.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint alleging disrespectful posts and comments on social media against other Councillors	Member of public	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
37	04.03.2024	<b>Selflessness, integrity, honesty and leadership</b>  Alleged intimidation and attempt to interfere with due process	District Councillor	Withdrawn prior to assessment
38	05.03.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint alleging inappropriate terms to describe political groups	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
39	05.03.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint regarding the 'liking' of a comment on social media	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
40	06.03.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint regarding the 'liking' of an inappropriate post on social media	District Councillor	Formal investigation – no further action

41	06.03.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Complaint regarding the 'liking' of an inappropriate post on social media	District Councillor	Formal investigation – no further action
42	11.03.2024	<b>Respect and confidentiality</b>  Sharing of confidential information relating to conversation with fellow Councillor on social media	District Councillor	Hearing – <b>breach of the Code</b>  Sanction to attend social media training and Code of Conduct training  Censure notice regarding disrespect, disclosing confidential information and bringing the role of Councillor and the Council into disrepute
43	11.03.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Alleged deliberate slurring of a political group and Councillors at a public meeting	Member of the public	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
44	15.03.2024	<b>Disrepute and respect</b>  Use of inappropriate language at public meeting of the Council	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – <b>breach of the Code</b>  Apology issued by the Councillor and attendance at refresher training

45	15.03.2024	<b>Disrepute</b>  Allegation of a Councillor acting dangerously and potentially unlawfully	District Councillor	Withdrawn prior to assessment
46	26.03.2024	<b>Misuse of position</b>  Allegation of incorrect and misleading information relating to item considered at a meeting of the Parish Council	Parish Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – informal resolution (no further action)
47	03.04.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Allegation of disrespectful personal attack on social media	Member of the public	Stage Two Assessment – informal resolution (no further action)
48	08.04.2024	<b>Respect, bullying, harassment and disrepute</b>  Allegation of pattern of behaviour in use of social media to bully, harass and disrespect fellow Councillors as well as bring the Council into disrepute	District Councillor	Formal investigation – one breach of the Code of Conduct identified.  Informal resolution – no further action
49	01.05.2024	<b>Bullying</b>  Allegation of a threat and bullying behaviour following a post on social media against a fellow Councillor	District Councillor	Formal investigation – no further action

50	02.05.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Allegation of disrespect shown to a fellow Councillor via a social media post	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
51	03.05.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Allegation of disrespect shown to a fellow Councillor via a social media post	Member of the public	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
52	08.05.2024	<b>Bullying, harassment and disrepute</b>  Allegation of bullying and harassment shown through the submission of a complaint and bringing their role and the Council into disrepute by comments made at a public meeting	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
53	08.05.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Allegation of disrespect shown to a fellow Councillor via a social media post	District Councillor	<p>Hearing – <b>breach of the Code</b></p> <p>Sanction to attend social media training and Code of Conduct training</p> <p>Censure notice regarding failure to co-operate with investigation</p>

54	08.05.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Allegation of disrespect shown to a fellow Councillor via a social media post	District Councillor	Hearing – <b>breach of the Code</b>  No breach regarding specific complaint but Censure Notice regarding failure to co-operate with investigation
55	08.05.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Allegation of disrespect shown to a fellow Councillor via a social media post	District Councillor	Hearing – <b>breach of the Code</b>  No breach regarding specific complaint but Censure Notice regarding failure to co-operate with investigation
56	08.05.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Allegation of disrespect shown to a fellow Councillor via a social media post	District Councillor	Hearing – <b>breach of the Code</b>  Sanction to attend social media training and Code of Conduct training  Censure notice regarding failure to co-operate with investigation
57	08.05.2024	<b>Respect and bullying</b>  Allegation of a threat and disrespect shown to a fellow Councillor via a social media post	District Councillor	Formal investigation – no further action

58	13.05.2024	<b>Confidentiality</b> Allegation of a breach of confidentiality regarding Code of Conduct complaint	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
59	13.05.2024	<b>Honesty</b> Allegation of dishonesty on a social media post regarding a fellow Councillor	District Councillor	Withdrawn prior to assessment
60	17.05.2024	<b>Impartiality and disrepute</b> Allegation of providing false information to the press and publicly criticising Officers	District Councillor	Withdrawn prior to assessment
61	17.05.2024	<b>Impartiality and disrepute</b> Allegation of providing false information to the press and publicly criticising Officers	District Councillor	Withdrawn prior to assessment
62	17.05.2024	<b>Impartiality and disrepute</b> Allegation of providing false information to the press and publicly criticising Officers	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action

63	17.05.2024	<b>Impartiality and disrepute</b>  Allegation of providing false information to the press and publicly criticising Officers	District Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
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## APPENDIX B

## Complaints against District Councillors – 2024/25 Municipal Year

Number	Date received	Reason for complaint	Complainant	Outcome
1	26.06.2024	<b>Registration and declaration of interest</b>  Failure to register or declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Monitoring Officer	Referral to Police – <b>breach of the Code</b>  Investigation undertaken by the Police – decision not to prosecute. Technical breach of the Code and no further action taken
2	11.09.2024	<b>Social media content</b>  Allegation that comments published on social media breach the Code of Conduct	Monitoring Officer	Stage One Assessment – no further action  Not in official capacity – Code not engaged
3	22.10.2024	<b>Social media content - respect, bullying, harassment and misuse of position</b>  Allegation of misuse of position arising from social media posts	Member of the public	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
4	04.11.2024	<b>Bullying</b>  Allegation of bullying behaviour	Member of the public	Stage Two Assessment – no further action  Vexatious and malicious

5	04.11.2024	<b>Social media content</b> Allegation regarding content of social media posts	Member of the public  Not in official capacity – Code not engaged	Stage One Assessment – no further action  Not in official capacity – Code not engaged
6	04.12.2024	<b>Bullying</b> Allegation of bullying behaviour	Member of the public	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
7 – 39	15.01.2025 – 20.01.2025	<b>Social media content, disrespect and harassment</b>  Allegations of disrespectful and harassing content on social media towards a fellow Councillor and a local business	Members of the public (31)  District Councillor (1)  Parish/Town Councillor (1)	<b>Assessment – ongoing</b>
40	20.01.2025	<b>Social media content</b>  Allegation of disrespectful social media content against a fellow Councillor	Member of the public	Dismissed by Monitoring Officer – no further action  The same, or substantially the same, issue has been the subject of a previous Code of Conduct allegation against an individual Councillor and there is nothing further to be gained

41	21.01.2025	<b>Social media content</b>  Allegation of a breach of respect, misuse of position and bringing the Council into disrepute via a social media post	District Councillor	Withdrawn prior to assessment
42	05.02.2025	<b>Misuse of position</b>  Allegation of misuse of position as Councillor	Member of the public	Withdrawn prior to assessment
43	06.02.2025	<b>Social media content - bullying and harassment</b>  Allegation of bullying and harassment based upon content of social media posts	Member of the public	Dismissed by Monitoring Officer – no further action  The same, or substantially the same, issue has been the subject of a previous Code of Conduct allegation against an individual Councillor and there is nothing further to be gained
44	....	<b>Social media content – respect</b>  Allegation of disrespectful post on social media	Member of the public	Stage One Assessment – no further action  Not in official capacity – Code not engaged

45	13.02.2025	<p><b>Social media content – respect, bullying, harassment and disrepute</b></p> <p>Allegation of inappropriate behaviour on social media post</p>	District Councillor	<p>Stage One Assessment – no further action</p> <p>Not in official capacity – Code not engaged</p>
46	18.02.2025	<p><b>Social media content – respect, bullying, harassment, discrimination, disrepute and misuse of position</b></p> <p>Allegation of using another social media profile and demonstrating disrespectful, bullying and harassing behaviour, together with bringing the Council into disrepute and misusing their position as a Councillor</p>	District Councillor	<b>Assessment - ongoing</b>

APPENDIX C

Complaints against Parish/Town Councillors – 2023/24 Municipal Year

Number	Date received	Reason for complaint	Complainant	Outcome
1	03.05.2023	<b>Respect and bullying</b>  Alleged verbal and physical threats in public place	Parish Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
2	06.06.2023	<b>Misuse of position</b>  Providing incorrect information to benefit use of a facility for community use	Parish Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
3	11.07.2023	<b>Misuse of position</b>  Incorrect information provided to Parish Council meeting	Parish Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
4	07.08.2023	<b>Misuse of position</b>  Failure to declare interest	Parish Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
5	10.11.2023	<b>Respect</b>  Outburst at public meeting. Withdrawn from the meeting and attended as member of the public as part of public forum. Not in official capacity	Member of the public	Stage One Assessment – Code not engaged (not in official capacity)

6	15.11.2023	<b>Respect</b>  Outburst at public meeting. Withdrew from the meeting and attended as member of the public as part of public forum. Not in official capacity	Member of the public	Stage One Assessment – Code not engaged (not in official capacity)
7	15.11.2023	<b>Respect</b>  Outburst at public meeting.	Member of the public	Stage Two Assessment – <b>breach of the Code</b>  Apology issued by the Subject Councillor
8	19.11.2023	<b>Respect</b>  Outburst at public meeting. Withdrew from the meeting and attended as member of the public as part of public forum. Not in official capacity	Member of the public	Stage One Assessment – Code not engaged (not in official capacity)
9	13.12.2023	<b>Disrepute, respect and misuse of position</b>  Inappropriate comment at a public meeting regarding an officer	Employee of the respective Council	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
10	03.01.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Inappropriate behaviour and comments associated with personal matter	Member of the public	Stage Two Assessment – no further action

11	07.03.2024	<b>Respect and bullying</b>  Allegations of intimidation and bullying at meeting of Parish Council	Parish Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
12	14.03.2024	<b>Respect and bullying</b>  Allegation relating to conduct during a meeting of the Parish Council	Parish Councillor	Withdrawn before assessment – apology issued by Subject Councillor
13	18.03.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Disrespectful comments in email correspondence to all Councillors	Parish Clerk	Stage One Assessment – Subject Councillor no longer in office
14	19.03.2024	<b>Declaration and registration of interests</b>  Allegation that interests were not properly declared or registered	Member of the public	Stage One Assessment – Subject Councillor no longer in office
15	26.03.2024	<b>Misuse of position</b>  Allegation of incorrect and misleading information relating to item considered at a meeting of the Parish Council	Parish Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
16	09.04.2024	<b>Bullying</b>  Allegation of bullying in person and via email	Parish Clerk	Withdrawn before assessment

17	17.04.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Allegation of disrespectful behaviour towards local District Ward Councillor and Chair of the Parish Council	Parish Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
18	23.04.2024	<b>Respect, intimidation, openness and transparency and misuse of position</b>  Allegations of disrespectful and intimidating behaviour, refusing to share information and misusing his position in relation to a decision taken at a meeting of the Parish Council	Member of the public	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
19	06.05.2024	<b>Declaration of interest</b>  Allegation of a failure to declare an interest at a meeting of a Parish Council	Parish Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
20	13.05.2024	<b>Respect and Disrepute</b>  Allegations of a pattern of behaviour relating to disrespect consistently shown towards a fellow Parish Councillor and a failure to adhere to due process, bringing the authority into disrepute	Parish Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action

21	13.05.2024	<b>Respect and Disrepute</b>  Allegations of a pattern of behaviour relating to failure to adhere to due process	Member of the public	Dismissed by Monitoring Officer – substantially the same as previous complaint about the same matter where assessment has been undertaken
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## APPENDIX D

## Complaints against Parish/Town Councillors – 2024/25 Municipal Year

Number	Date received	Reason for complaint	Complainant	Outcome
1	15.07.2024	<b>Registration and declaration of interest</b>  Failure to register or declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Monitoring Officer	Referral to Police – <b>breach of the Code</b>  Investigation undertaken by the Police – decision not to prosecute. Technical breach of the Code and no further action taken
2	08.12.2024	<b>Respect, bullying and harassment</b>  Allegations of disrespectful behaviour, bullying and harassment during and outside of Parish Council meetings	Member of the public	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
3	17.12.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Allegation of disrespectful behaviour during a meeting of the Parish Council	Parish Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action
4	17.12.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Allegation of disrespectful behaviour during a meeting of the Parish Council	Parish Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action

5	17.12.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Allegation of disrespectful behaviour during a meeting of the Parish Council	Parish Councillor	Withdrawn by complainant – no further action
6	02.01.2024	<b>Respect</b>  Allegation of false representation in complaint made against them	Parish Councillor	Stage Two Assessment – no further action

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