

**Report to:** **Standards Committee**

**Date:** **20th September 2022**

**Report Author:** **Executive Director (Legal & Democratic Services)**

**Title of Report:** **Overview of code of conduct complaints 2020/21**

## **1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 This report provides Committee with a summary of the code of conduct complaints received during 2021/22

## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 That Committee notes this report.

## **3. Background and Reasons for Recommendations**

3.1 The Council has received a very low level of complaints about councillor conduct for many years, with no more than one or two complaints being referred to the Standards Assessment Panel annually, and none being referred for formal investigation for around 10 years.

3.2 Councillors will recall that the Standards Assessment Panel may make one of the following findings in respect of the complaints it considers:

- i) no action needed; or
- ii) referral for informal resolution by the Monitoring Officer; or
- iii) referral for formal investigation.

3.3 There was a marked increase in the number of conduct complaints in 2021/22. A summary of the way those complaints were dealt with is set out below. The complaints referred for formal investigation were referred to an external investigator.

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Assessment Panel Decision</b> | <b>Outcome</b>                             |
|------------|----------------------------------|--|
| 1          | Formal Investigation             | No breach found                            |
| 2          | Formal Investigation             | No breach found                            |
| 3          | Formal Investigation             | No breach found                            |
| 4          | Formal Investigation             | No breach found                            |
| 5          | Formal Investigation             | No breach found                            |
| 6          | Formal Investigation             | Investigation ongoing (nearing completion) |

|    |                      |   |
|----|----------------------|---|
| 7  | Formal Investigation | Investigation ongoing (nearing completion)                        |
| 8  | Formal Investigation | Complaint withdrawn by complainant                                |
| 9  | Formal Investigation | Complaint withdrawn by complainant                                |
| 10 | Not applicable       | Ceased to be a councillor before the complaint could be processed |

#### **4. Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection**

4.1 None. This is a report for information.

#### **5. Implications**

| <b>Issue</b>                        | <b>Comments</b>                |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Financial (including mainstreaming) | No costs identified.           |
| Legal                               | No issues identified.          |
| Assessment of Risk                  | No risks identified.           |
| Equality                            | No equality issues identified. |

#### **6. Consultations**

6.1 None.

#### **7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985: List of Background Papers**

None

#### **8. Freedom of Information**

8.1 The report does not contain exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and all information can be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

