

## Report of the Monitoring Officer

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. This report provides information on the number of complaints received since the implementation of the new standards regime from July 2012. It also aims to help in identifying areas where training or education may assist Councillors' understanding of the regime's requirements.

### 2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the report be noted.

### 3. Details

- 3.1. As previously reported to the Committee, in June 2012, Council agreed a Councillor Code of Conduct in line with provisions within the Localism Act 2011. It also agreed to retain a Standards Committee. Council requested that the Code and the Committee's role and terms of reference be reviewed after a year. At its meeting on 25 July 2013, the Standards Committee undertook this review and its report and recommendations were presented to Council in September 2013.
- 3.2. At its meeting in September 2013, Council upheld the Standards Committee's recommendations with no changes being made to the Committee's composition or terms of reference. In December 2013, Council agreed the appointment of John Baggaley as the Council's Independent Person for standards as required by the Localism Act. At the Standards Committee's request, Mr Baggaley is invited to attend its meetings in order that he is aware of its role and work.
- 3.3. In relation to complaints received since the implementation of the existing standards regime (from the 1 July 2012), there have been a total of 48 cases. Details of these cases have been periodically reported to the Committee, with the last report in October 2017.
- 3.4. Cases 01/13 to 1/17 were contained in the previous report to Committee considered in June 2017. Cases 2/17 to 12/17 were reported at the October 2017 meeting. The new cases received since the last report are set out in the table attached as **Appendix A**. Each of these cases has been dealt with by the Monitoring Officer giving due regard to the published Councillor Complaints Procedure. Where appropriate the Independent Person has been consulted.

- 3.5. The table at **Appendix A** indicates the date of complaint, if it related to a Borough, Parish or Town Councillor, if the complaint was made by another Borough, Parish or Town Councillor and what action was taken to address the complaint.
- 3.6. Since the last report to the Committee a further 3 cases have been received, with 2 of these cases relating to Bingham Town Council. The table highlights that one of the cases received was rejected and one has reached a local settlement after an initial assessment was carried out. At the time of writing the third complaint (1/18), is awaiting further details prior to an initial assessment.

**4. Training etc.**

- 4.1. During the year, the Monitoring Officer has been available to provide support to questions raised by individuals. As reported at the last meeting, the Monitoring Officer attended the Town and Parish Council forum on 16 June 2017. As part of his presentation, the Monitoring Officer offered to arrange meetings with Parish and Town Councillors, and following the last meeting of this committee is developing proposals for a programme of training and development for Town and Parish Chairmen and Clerks. He also attended the Town and Parish Forum on 9 November 2017 and facilitated workshops on both the training and development initiative as well as potential revisions to the Code of Conduct. A report on the former is elsewhere on this agenda and proposals in relation to the Code of Conduct will be reported to the next meeting of this committee.

**5. Implications**

**5.1. Finance**

There are no direct financial implications.

**5.2. Legal**

There are no specific legal implications

**5.3. Corporate Priorities**

Delivery of an effective Standards regime supports the Council's priority of *'Maintaining and enhancing our residents' quality of life –Our residents'*

**5.4. Other Implications**

None

<b>For more information contact:</b>	Nigel Carter Deputy Monitoring Officer ncarter@rushcliffe.gov.uk
<b>Background papers Available for Inspection:</b>	
<b>List of appendices (if any):</b>	<b>Appendix A - Summary of Cases 2017/18</b>



## Appendix A

### Summary of new cases from February 2017

Case Ref	Date received	RBC/Parish Council	Complainant	Independent Person consulted	Decision and date
1/17	23/1/17	Bingham Town Council	Town Councillor	Yes	Complaint rejected following initial appraisal  02/17
2/17	9/3/17	Newton Parish Council	Member of the public	No	Complaint raised issues about the Council corporately with no confirmation of complaints against specific Councillors  20/3/17
3/17	4/7/17	RBC/Newton Parish Council	Member of the public	No	Complaint rejected following initial appraisal
4/17	13/8/17	Cotgrave Town Council	Town Councillor	Yes	Complaint rejected following initial appraisal  4/9/17
5/17	13/8/17	Cotgrave Town Council	Town Councillor	Yes	Complaint withdrawn 28/8/17
6/17	13/8/17	Cotgrave Town Council	Town Councillor	Yes	Complaint rejected following initial appraisal  4/9/17
7/17	10/8/17	Bingham Town Council	Borough and Town Councillor	Yes	To be progressed through the procedure.

<b>Case Ref</b>	<b>Date received</b>	<b>RBC/Parish Council</b>	<b>Complainant</b>	<b>Independent Person consulted</b>	<b>Decision and date</b>
8/17	27/9/17	Bingham Town Council	Borough and Town Councillor	Yes	As above.
9/17	1/10/17	Bingham Town Council	Borough and Town Councillor	Yes	As above.
10/17	19/9/17	Cotgrave Town Council	Member of the public	Yes	Complaint rejected following initial appraisal
11/17	19/9/17	Cotgrave Town Council	Member of the public	Yes	Complaint rejected following initial appraisal
12/17	22/9/17	Stanford on Soar Parish Council	Member of the public	Yes	Complaint rejected following initial appraisal, but significant issues for the Parish Council to address.
13/17	13/10/17	Bingham Town Council	Member of the public	Yes	Complaint rejected following initial appraisal
14/17	13/10/17	Bingham Town Council	Member of the public	Yes	Local settlement reached
1/18	2/1/2018	Bingham Town Council	Member of the public	No	Requested further details of complaint and awaiting response