

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 51 cases. Details of these cases have been periodically reported to the Committee, with the last report in January 2018.
- 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. Historical information is in shaded boxes, and fresh information is in white background boxes.

3.6. Since the last report to the Committee a further 2 cases have been received, being complaints from 2 Borough Councillors about actions of another Borough Councillor. At the time of writing the complaint 1/18, is awaiting a formal decision, which will be reported to the meeting.

4. Other Work

4.1. During the year, the Monitoring Officer has been available to provide support to questions raised by individuals.

4.2. Since the last meeting the Monitoring Officer has given a presentation to a Parish Council and two further presentations are scheduled before 1 June 2018.

4.3. The training and development work was reported to the last meeting and is programmed to deliver induction training following the May 2019 elections

4.4. Proposals in relation to the Code of Conduct are the subject of a separate report on this agenda.

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

For more information contact:	Glen O'Connell Monitoring Officer GOConnell@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers Available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices (if any):	Appendix A - Summary of Cases 2017/18

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

Case Ref	Date received	RBC/Parish Council	Complainant	Independent Person consulted	Decision and date
7/17	10/8/17	Bingham Town Council	Borough and Town Councillor	Yes	On 22 February 2018 the Standards Hearings Panel considered this complaint together with complaints 8/17 and 9/17 and concluded that there had been failures to comply with the provisions of the Borough and Town Councils Codes of Conduct. The minutes of the Panel are on the agenda.
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.

Case Ref	Date received	RBC/Parish Council	Complainant	Independent Person consulted	Decision and date
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	Further details of complaint received. Complaint rejected following initial appraisal
2/18	15/3/2018	Borough Council	Borough Councillor	Yes	Awaiting further details from complainant
3/18	15/3/2018	Borough Council	Borough Councillor	Yes	Awaiting further details from complainant