

Report of the City Solicitor

Report to the Standards and Conduct Committee

Date: 7th March 2014

Subject: Update Report

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: n/a Appendix number: n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. The purpose of this report is to present the Standards and Conduct Committee with a summary of the complaints submitted to Leeds City Council regarding potential breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct since these matters were last reported to committee in November. This includes complaints against Leeds City Councillors and about Parish and Town Councillors in the Leeds area.
2. The Monitoring Officer has received 1 complaint in this period. That complaint did not progress beyond stage 1 of the complaints procedure.

Recommendations

3. Members of the Standards and Conduct Committee are asked to note the information set out in this report.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Standards and Conduct Committee with a summary of the complaints submitted to Leeds City Council regarding potential breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct over the past municipal year. This includes complaints against Leeds City Councillors and about Parish and Town Councillors in the Leeds area.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The Standards and Conduct Committee has a duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst Leeds City Councillors. Leeds City Council also has a duty to make arrangements to receive and consider complaints made against Leeds City Councillors and Parish and Town Councillors in the Leeds area.

3 Main issues

Complaints relating to Leeds City Councillors

- 3.1 The Monitoring Officer has received one complaint about Leeds City Councillors since the last data was reported to the committee in November 2013. The complaint was received was submitted by a member of the public and related to two councillors.
- 3.2 In order to be considered under the formal complaints process complaints must be submitted in writing, must provide substantiated information, and should outline what form of resolution the complainant is seeking. The complaint received was not further progressed as the complainant did not provide substantiated information in relation to the allegations made. In these cases the complainant is advised that, for the complaint to be considered further, additional information is necessary to substantiate the complaint made.

Complaints relating to Parish and Town Councillors in Leeds

- 3.3 The Monitoring Officer has received no complaints against Parish or Town Councillors in the Leeds area since the last report to the committee in November 2013.

Dispensations

- 3.4 No further dispensations have been requested since the last report.

Registers of Interest

- 3.5 Where a member or co-opted member of a relevant authority has a sensitive interest, which if disclosed could lead to that member being subject to violence or intimidation, section 32 of the Localism Act 2011 provides for the monitoring officer to consider requests and permit that those interests be withheld from the members register of interests.

3.6 Since the last report to committee, one such request has been received and granted by the Monitoring Officer.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 In all the cases mentioned above the complainant has been contacted and an explanation has been provided as to why the complaint is not being progressed.

4.1.2 In relation to all formal complaints the subject Member has also been informed of the complaint and the response to the complainant. This is for information only.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 There are no issues for equality and diversity or cohesion and integration.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The Council's Code of Corporate Governance sets out that the Council will establish and keep under review a Members' Code of Conduct.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 There are no resource implications arising from this report.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 It is the duty of the Standards and Conduct Committee to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst Leeds City Councillors. Receiving this information allows the Committee to consider whether additional training is required to assist Members in meeting their duties under the Members' Code of Conduct.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered the information above and does not consider that there are any adverse trends in the types of complaints received, and as no potential breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct have been revealed there are no issues to address through training.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Members of the Standards and Conduct Committee are asked to note the information set out in this report.

6 Background documents¹

6.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.