

Values and Ethics Sub Committee

25th September 2023



Report of: Director: Legal and Democratic Services

Title: Summary of Complaints against Councillors and revised Complaints procedure

Ward: N/a

Officer Presenting Report: Nancy Rollason Head of Legal Service

Recommendation

That the Committee notes the report and the summary of Complaints made against Councillors since the last report to the Committee in June 2022 and approve the revisions to the complaints procedure.

The significant issues in the report are:

As set out in the report and Appendix 1 and 2 to the report.



Policy

1. This is an annual report providing details of Complaints made against Members of the Council.

Context

2. The Committee agreed to receive an annual report in relation to Complaints made against Members of the Council at its meeting in March 2021.
3. A complaint against a Councillor relates to an allegation that a Councillor has not observed the Code of Conduct for Members. Complaints must be about councillors' actions relating to their role as a Member of the Council.
4. The Localism Act 2011 places a duty on the Council to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority and to adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting in that capacity. Codes of conduct must be consistent with the following principles: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. Bristol City Council's Code of Conduct for Members incorporates these principles.
5. The Act also requires all local authorities (other than parish and town councils) to have procedures in place to deal with complaints about member conduct. It is for the Authority to decide the details of those procedures, but they must appoint at least one Independent Person, whose views are to be taken into account, before making a decision on a complaint. The Authority has appointed 3 Independent persons and updated the complaints procedure. The revised procedure is attached at Appendix 2 of the report for consideration and approval.
6. The summary of complaints at Appendix 1 of the report covers all complaints received since March 2021.
7. It is not possible to provide further details about complaints received, or the outcomes of complaints, as only complaints that have been upheld are published. No complaints have been upheld during this time.

Other Options Considered

8. Not applicable.

Risk Assessment

9. Not applicable.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

As set out in the report
(Legal advice provided by Nancy Rollason – Head of Legal Services)

Financial / Land / Human Resources

Not applicable.

Appendix 1 – Summary of complaints 21-22

Appendix 2 – Revised Complaints procedure

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers: None