

## **Councillor Conduct Committee**

**15 April 2026**

### **Review of Complaints during 2024 and 2025**

Report from/Author: Bhupinder Gill, Assistant Director Legal and Governance

#### **Summary**

The report informs the Committee of the number of complaints received under the code of conduct for councillors and the outcome during the calendar years for 2024 and 2025.

#### **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1. The Committee is requested to note the information relating to the complaints received during 2024 and 2025.

#### **2. Budget and policy framework**

- 2.1. The screening process and delegated powers are within the Council's policy and budget framework. The adopted process, which is published on the Council's website, provides transparency on how decisions will be made, and enables quicker and more efficient decision making.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1. Pursuant to the Localism Act each local authority is required to adopt a code of conduct that members (co-optees) elected/appointed to that authority must comply with when undertaking duties associated with holding public office. The code is derived from the Nolan principles of holding public office together with statutory defined elements that every code must contain.
- 3.2. Every code must provide a mechanism for complaints to be submitted and determined by the committee responsible for upholding high standards of conduct in public office.
- 3.3. Since October 2021, the Council agreed a process for considering complaints to provide greater transparency on the decision-making process and enable decisions to be made quicker and more efficiently. In doing so the Council agreed the following delegation, which has been in place ever since:

*The Councillor Conduct Committee delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer, who shall seek the views of Independent Person, to undertake the initial screening process for complaints and determine, if appropriate, that there is to be no further action (subject to the Independent Person sharing this view) on the following types of cases:*

- a) No Councillor has been identified;*
- b) No potential breach of the code has been identified;*
- c) Insufficient detail to make a determination;*
- d) The complaint is more than 6 months old and no cogent explanation for the delay in reporting;*
- e) The complaint relates to matters that are not within the Councillor Conduct Committee's remit.*
- f) The complaint is considered trivial, malicious or vexatious.*

*Note: If either the Monitoring Officer or the Independent Person consider the complaint should be referred on to the Councillor Conduct Committee for formal assessment, then this will be the action taken.*

#### 4. Complaints received in 2024

- 4.1. Between 1 January and 31 December 2024, twelve complaints were received by the Monitoring Officer and all of them were dealt with under the delegation referred to in section 3.3 above.

Complaint log no.	Medway or Parish Councillor	Reason from list in 3.3 above as to why no further action on the complaint was taken
CCC/2024/001	Medway Cllr	d
CCC/2024/002	Medway Cllr	f
CCC/2024/003	Medway Cllr	e
CCC/2024/004	Medway Cllr	f
CCC/2024/005	Medway Cllr	e
CCC/2024/006	Medway Cllr	b
CCC/2024/007	Medway Cllr	b
CCC/2024/008	Medway Cllr	f
CCC/2024/009	Medway Cllr	b
CCC/2024/010	Medway Cllr	b, f
CCC/2024/011	Medway Cllr	e
CCC/2024/012	Medway Cllr	b

#### 5. Complaints received in 2025

- 5.1. Between 1 January and 31 December 2025, 18 complaints were received by the Monitoring Officer, three of which were dealt with under the delegation referred to in section 3.3 above.

Complaint log no.	Medway or Parish Councillor	Reason from list in 3.3 above as to why no further action on the complaint was taken
CCC/2025/001	Medway Cllr	b
CCC/2025/002	Medway Cllr	MO considered resolved
CCC/2025/004	2 x Parish Cllrs	b, e, f
CCC/2025/005	Medway Cllr	b
CCC/2025/006	Medway Cllr	b
CCC/2025/007	Medway Cllr	b
CCC/2025/008	Medway Cllr	e
CCC/2025/009	Medway Cllr	b
CCC/2025/010	Medway Cllr	e
CCC/2025/011	Medway Cllr	b
CCC/2025/012	Medway Cllr	b
CCC/2025/013	Parish Cllr	b
CCC/2025/014	Medway Cllr	c
CCC/2025/015	Medway Cllr	b
CCC/2025/016	Medway Cllr	b
CCC/2025/017	Parish Cllr	f
CCC/2025/018	Medway Cllr	b

- 5.2. One complaint about a Medway Councillor, CCC/2025/003, was referred to the Councillor Conduct Committee for formal assessment. At its meeting on 8 May 2026, the Committee agreed to refer the complaint for investigation and it considered the outcome of the investigation report, including the views of the Independent Person, at its meeting on 13 August 2025, where it determined that the Councillor had breached the Code of Conduct.
- 5.3. As part of its determination of breach, the Committee agreed that the following sanctions be applied:
- a) a recommendation of censure be made to the next Full Council meeting on 16 October 2025 (this actually took place at Full Council on 13 November as the 16 October meeting was adjourned before the meeting concluded and reconvened on 13 November 2026);
  - b) the subject member was asked to send a sincere and fulsome letter of apology to the complainant, which should first be shared with and approved by the Chairperson of the Councillor Conduct Committee (to date this action has not been undertaken);
  - c) the subject member was asked to undertake further training on the Code of Conduct with the Monitoring Officer (to date this action has not been undertaken).
- 5.4. To date the Monitoring Officer is unaware if the Councillor has submitted a letter of apology and further he has not attended any training.
6. Advice and analysis
- 6.1. The Committee is recommended to note the use of the process and delegated powers.

## 7. Risk management

- 7.1. Risk management is an integral part of good governance. The Council has a responsibility to identify and manage threats and risks to achieve its strategic objectives and enhance the value of services it provides to the community. Using the following table this section should therefore consider any significant risks arising from your report.

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk Rating
Loss of confidence in the complaints process	The public and others lose confidence in the complaints process	1. Timely responses are provided. 2. Fully reasoned and detailed decision are provided. 3. Decisions are shared with the member, so that any learning can be embraced.	CIII

For risk rating, please refer to the following table

<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact:</b>
A Very likely B Likely C Unlikely D Rare	I Catastrophic II Major III Moderate IV Minor

## 8. Consultation

- 8.1. There was no third party consultation undertaken in producing this report but the Independent Person was consulted on in relation to all complaints received, in line with the procedure agreed by the Council.

## 9. Climate change implications

- 9.1. There are no direct implications arising from this report.

## 10. Financial implications

- 10.1. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## 11. Legal implications

- 11.1. These are contained within the body of the report.

Lead officer

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Appendices

None

Background papers

None