

Hambleton District Council

Report To: Audit, Governance and Standards Committee

Date: 23 March 2021

From: Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Subject: **Annual Report – Code of Conduct Complaints**

Portfolio Holder: Governance
Councillor Mrs I Sanderson

Wards Affected: All Wards

1.0 Purpose and Background

- 1.1 This report sets out the Monitoring Officer's Annual Report on matters relating to ethical governance, including details of any complaints handling activity in relation to allegations of breaches of a member code of conduct.
- 1.2 Having robust ethical governance policies and procedures in place helps to maintain openness, transparency and probity in the way in which the Council conducts its business. This in turn should help increase public confidence in local governance by maintaining high standards of conduct.

2.0 Allegations regarding Code of Conduct Matters

- 2.1 Between April 2020 and March 2021 the Monitoring Officer received ten complaints alleging breaches of a Code of Member Conduct. All ten complaints related to Parish/Town Councillors. There were no complaints received against District Councillors.
- 2.2 In accordance with the Council's procedures (and following an initial investigation and consultation with the Independent Person), all ten complaints were dismissed without a formal hearing because the actions complained of either did not fall within the scope of the applicable Codes of Conduct or there was no case to answer.
- 2.3 There are no overarching standards issues or themes to report as a result of these complaints.

3.0 Hambleton District Council's Code of Member Conduct

- 3.1 The Council's updated Code of Member Conduct is now in place. This will be kept under review.

4.0 Link to Council Priorities

- 4.1 This report supports the Council's foundation of strong governance.

5.0 Risk Assessment

5.1 There are no risks associated with this report.

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

7.0 Legal Implications

7.1 It is a requirement that an annual report on code of conduct complaints is presented to the Audit Governance and Standards Committee.

8.0 Equalities and Diversity Issues

8.1 There are no issues associated with this report.

9.0 Recommendation

9.1 That the Committee notes the report of the Monitoring Officer.

Gary Nelson
Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Background papers: None

Author ref: GN

Contact: Gary Nelson
Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer)
Tel: 01609 767012