

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Audit & Corporate Governance Committee **DATE:** 29th September 2016

CONTACT OFFICER: Gurpreet Anand, Monitoring Officer
01753 875213

WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR INFORMATION**

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITY – CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Purpose of Report

This report updates members of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on the activity undertaken by the Council's Monitoring Officer in relation to complaints received under the Code of Conduct.

2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Committee is requested to note the report.

3. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

The delivery of the Joint Wellbeing Strategy priorities is dependent on good governance arrangements being in place in order that the Council has a transparent and accountable process for effective decision-making. This is underpinned by the Code of Conduct, which forms the bedrock of the conduct regime for Members in ensuring ethical behaviour and governance of the highest order is maintained.

4. Other Implications

(a) Financial

There are no financial implications of this report.

(b) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

The Council is under a statutory duty to adopt a code of conduct maintain a register of members' interests.

(c) Equalities Impact Assessment

It is important to ensure measures taken under the standards regime do not impact disproportionately on any group. The Monitoring Officer retains a detailed list of subject Members and carries out a periodic audit check to ensure that application of the regime is equitable across specific groups of members having regard to race, gender or political group.

5. Supporting Information

5.1 In its approved complaints process, the Council has agreed arrangements to delegate to the Monitoring Officer the initial decision on whether a complaint requires investigation, subject to consultation with the Independent Person. In appropriate cases the Monitoring Officer may seek to resolve the complaint informally without the need for a formal investigation. When a complaint is referred for investigation, the Investigating Officer's report will be reviewed by the Monitoring Officer, who will either send it for determination to a Standards Determination Sub-Committee set up for the purpose, or decide that no further action is required.

5.2 The following table contains a summary of the complaints received from October 2015 (date from when current Monitoring Officer took post) to August 2016. A total of 44 complaints were received, of which:

Rejected: Not Investigated- 11
Rejected: After Investigation – 13
Referred to Police for Further Investigation – 3
Upheld After Investigation - 4
Withdrawn - 2
Number Carried Forward – 11

5.3 In relation to Paragraph 5.2, it should be noted that where the Monitoring Officer has not investigated a complaint, this is because after initial investigation, there is either insufficient evidence and/or the complaint does not accord with code of conduct matters as both constitutional and statutory provisions. Additionally, it should be noted that where matters have been carried forward, this is because the Monitoring Officer is still in the process of investigating the matter.

6. Conclusion

The Committee will note that 44 complaints have been received within a ten month period. There is an impact on officer time/resources in dealing with complaints, in particular where they are referred for investigation.

7. Background Papers

None.