

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Audit and Governance Committee    **DATE:** 16<sup>th</sup> March 2017

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Linda Walker, Interim Monitoring Officer  
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**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 Governance Committee on the activity undertaken by the Council's Monitoring Officer in relation to complaints received under the Councillors' 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 September 2016 to date:

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Subject Member – Borough / Parish</b>	<b>Complainant</b>	<b>Area of Code</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
2016/A	Borough Councillor	Former Parish Councillor (Wexham Parish Council)	2.3 – bringing office into disrepute  2.8 – be accountable for use of expenses, services etc from the public purse	Referred for investigation
2016/B	Borough Councillor	Member of the Public	2.3 – bringing office into disrepute  2.4 - failure of duty to promote high standards	Referred for investigation
2016/C	Borough Councillor(s)	Borough Councillor	2.2 – Duty to uphold the law	Referred for investigation
2017/A	Borough Councillor	Parish Councillor Colnbrook with Poyle Parish Council	2.3 – bringing office into disrepute  2.4 – failure of duty to promote high standards	Referred for investigation
2017/B	Parish Councillor	Chair of Colnbrook with Poyle Parish Council	2.3 – bringing office into disrepute  2.4 - failure of duty to promote high standards	Referred for investigation

**6. Conclusion**

The Committee will note that there have been five complaints within a six-month period. This is a reasonably high number of complaints. There is an impact on officer time/resources in dealing with complaints, in particular where they are referred for investigation and all five were during this period.

**7. Background Papers**

None.