



# STANDARDS AND ETHICS

## QUARTER 3 REPORT 2016-2017

## 1. Introduction

This is the quarterly report to the Audit & Governance Committee detailing both the figures for the Ethical Indicators and the figures for the Local Determination of Complaints process for 2016/17.

For clarification purposes the months covered by the quarters are as follows:

Quarter 1 – 1 April to 30 June  
Quarter 2 – 1 July to 30 September  
Quarter 3 – 1 October to 31 December  
Quarter 4 – 1 January to 31 March

The report is split into 2 parts for ease of reference; Part 1 refers to the local determination of complaints, part 2 is the table showing the ethical indicators figures.

The report will enable the Audit & Governance Committee to build up a picture over time of how many complaints are received and where these are coming from. The parts of the Code of Conduct which have been breached will also be recorded to enable training to be targeted effectively.

## 2. Part 1 – Local Determination of Complaints

The Monitoring Officer received 0 complaints in Quarter 3 of 2016/17.

### 2.1 Assessment Sub-committee Decisions

There has been 0 Assessment Sub-committee meetings in this quarter.

As members will be aware, the Monitoring Officer now pursues an informal dispute resolution process prior to initialling formal proceedings via the Sub-committee route.

Two complaints received in Quarter 2 have been resolved informally in Quarter 3.

### 2.2 Timeliness of Decision

The Standards for England Guidance stated that the Assessment Sub-committee should complete its initial assessment of an allegation “within an average of 20 working days” to reach a decision on what should happen with the complaint. The Council has taken this standard and adapted it under the new rules to aim to hold an Assessment Sub-committee within 20 working days of notifying the parties that informal resolution is not possible.

### 2.3 Review Requests

There have been no review requests in Quarter 3. Review requests can only be made following a decision of ‘No further Action’ by the Assessment Sub-committee where there is submission of new evidence or information by the complainant.

### 2.4 Subsequent Referrals

None to report – see above.

## **2.5 Outcome of Investigations**

There were no investigations concluded in this period.

## **2.6 Parts of the Code Breached**

This section is intended to show where there are patterns forming to enable the Audit and Governance Committee to determine where there needs to be further training for Councillors. Targeting training in this way makes it more sustainable and, hopefully, more effective.

So far this year, the following areas of the code were found to have been breached:

N/A

## 4. Part 2 – Ethical Indicators

Ref.	Performance Indicator Description	Officer Responsible for Providing Information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			Actual 2015/16	2016/17	Actual 2015/16	2016/17	Actual 2015/16	2016/17	Actual 2015/16	2016/17
SE1	Objections to the Councils Accounts	Financial Planning Team Manager	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
SE3	Follow up action relating to breaches of the Member/Officer Protocol (Members)	Head of Legal and Support Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
SE3a	Disciplinary action relating to breaches of the Member/Officer Protocol (staff)	Human Resources Team Manager	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
SE4	District Audit Public Interest Reports	Senior Auditor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
SE5	Number of Whistle blowing Incidents reported		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
SE6	No. of recommendations made to improve governance procedures / policies		2	11	0	3	23	9	8	
SE6a	No. of recommendations implemented		1	8	7	18	3	12	20	

Ref.	Performance Indicator Description	Officer Responsible for Providing Information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			Actual 2015/16	2016/17	Actual 2015/16	2016/17	Actual 2015/16	2016/17	Actual 2015/16	2016/17
SE7	No. of Ombudsman complaints received	Corporate Complaints Officer	0	2	1	6	3	4		
SE7a	No. of Ombudsman complaints resolved		0	1	0	4	2	1		
SE7b	No. of Ombudsman complaints where compensation paid		0	0	0	0	0	1		
SE8	No. of Corporate Complaints received		83	86	116	92	79	46		
SE8a	No. of Corporate Complaints resolved		79	99	93	74	52	38		
SE8b	No. of Corporate Complaints where compensation paid		0	2	0	4	2	0	1	

- The 4 complaints received from the Ombudsman in Q3 were as follows:- 2 cases unhappy with the outcome of their Stage 2 response, 1 case was unhappy with the priority they were given for a move as a result of a neighbour nuisance, 1 related to outstanding housing repairs.
- A total of 46 corporate complaints were received during Q3, which shows a decrease of 42% against the same period for Q3 -15/16.
- A total of 38 corporate complaints were resolved during Q3, which shows a decrease of 27% against the same period for Q3 -15/16.
- 24 of the complaints received (63%) were for the Housing Service.
- During Quarter 3 2016/17 (September 2016 to December 2016), Housing has paid a total of £1736.82 in compensation to tenants as a result of a corporate complaint. This was in relation 2 cases, an Ombudsman case where the tenant was awarded £1436.82 and a Stage 1 complaint which we issued compensation for £300.00.

Ref.	Performance Indicator Description	Officer Responsible for Providing Information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			Actual 2015/16	2016/17	Actual 2015/16	2016/17	Actual 2015/16	2016/17	Actual 2015/16	2016/17
<b>Freedom of Information Act Indicators</b>										
SE9	Total no. of requests received	Head of Legal and Support Services	117	143	150	170	98	172	199	
SE9a	No. of requests compliant		73	134	110	157	85	141	135	
SE9b	No. of Non compliant requests		30	9	40	13	13	31	64	
SE9c	No of requests still open and within the 20 working days		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	
SE9d	Number withheld due to exemptions/fees applied		10	10	17	13	0	1	10	

- There has been a 56% increase in FOI requests during Q3 this year compared to the same period of 2015/16 which can be in part attributed to the increase in the housing market and property searches, journalistic campaigns relating to refugees and rating enquiries.
- The number of non-compliant requests has increased mainly due to the number of requests we have received that relate to information not held by this authority.
- The Business Improvement Team took ownership of the FOI process from Monday 5 December 2016. As the transitional period of the process was the lead up to Christmas, this would account for a reduction in FOI requests received. In addition to FOI requests, 4 requests were transferred to LCC, 5 additional requests were treated as business as usual and one Land Charges request. These categories, which are currently not captured, will form part of the table going forward.
- A Disclosure Log is currently under development, and all FOI requests and responses will hopefully be published on the council website by the end of March 2016/17.

