



# STANDARDS AND ETHICS

## QUARTER 4 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 4 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.

No complaints have been resolved informally in Quarter 4.

### 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 4. 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	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	0
SE3a	Disciplinary action relating to breaches of the Member/Officer Protocol (staff)	Human Resources Team Manager	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SE4	District Audit Public Interest Reports	Senior Auditor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SE5	Number of Whistle blowing Incidents reported		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SE6	No. of recommendations made to improve governance procedures / policies		2	11	0	3	23	9	8	17
SE6a	No. of recommendations implemented		1	8	7	18	3	12	20	9

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	4	2
SE7a	No. of Ombudsman complaints resolved		0	1	0	4	2	1	2	0
SE7b	No. of Ombudsman complaints where compensation paid		0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
SE8	No. of Corporate Complaints received		83	86	116	92	79	46	80	47
SE8a	No. of Corporate Complaints resolved		79	99	93	74	52	38	50	33
SE8b	No. of Corporate Complaints where compensation paid		0	2	0	4	2	0	1	2

- The 2 complaints received from the Ombudsman in Q4 were as follows:- 1 case dissatisfied with Environmental Protection Services, 1 case unhappy with the condition of their property, the repairs process, staff conduct and communication from Housing Repairs.
- A total of 47 corporate complaints were received during Q4, which shows a decrease of 41% against the same period for Q4 -15/16.
- A total of 33 corporate complaints were resolved during Q4, which shows a decrease of 34% against the same period for Q4 -15/16.
- 20 of the complaints received (57%) were for the Housing Service.

During Quarter 4 2017 (January 2017 to March 2017), Housing has paid a total of £300.00 in compensation to tenants as a result of a corporate complaint. This was in relation to 2 Stage 1 cases as follows:

- £40.00 for 4x missed repair appointments, specialised part needed which has caused the delay.
- £260.00 paid as a total compensation:- £10 for delay in responding with formal written response, £100.00 for inconvenience associated with the delay in undertaking post-leak related work, and £150.00 for the time, trouble and inconvenience caused to tenant as a result of the complaint.

A project is currently being undertaken to reduce outstanding complaints, with a 47% reduction rate achieved within three weeks.

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	152
SE9a	No. of requests compliant		73	134	110	157	85	141	135	86
SE9b	No. of Non-compliant requests		30	9	40	13	13	31	64	66
SE9c	No of requests still open and within the 20 working days		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SE9d	Number withheld due to exemptions/fees applied		10	10	17	13	0	1	10	3

- There has been a 23.61% decrease in FOI requests during Q4 this year compared to the same period of 2015/16 which can be in part attributed to the number of cases treated as business as usual and transfer cases.
- 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 for example highways, education and tree related questions being particular trends.
- 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 June 2017.

