

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY, 24 JULY 2019

Title of report	STANDARDS AND ETHICS - QUARTER REPORT
Contacts	Councillor Nick Rushton 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Legal and Commercial Services and Monitoring Officer 01530 454762 elizabeth.warhurst@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To receive the figures for local determination of complaints and the ethical indicators for Quarter 1 of 2019/20.
Council priorities	Value for Money
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	N/A
Health and Safety	N/A
Risk Management	By receiving this information members will be able to manage risks.
Equalities Impact Screening	N/A
Human Rights	N/A
Transformational Government	This relates to the new ways in which Councils are being asked to deliver their services
Consultees	N/A
Background papers	None
Recommendations	1. THAT THE REPORT BE RECEIVED AND NOTED. 2. THAT THE COMMITTEE ENDORSES BY WAY OF FEEDBACK TO OFFICERS ON THE NEW REPORT STRUCTURE THE COMMENTS BY MEMBERS IN THE MINUTES OF THIS MEETING.

1 STANDARDS AND ETHICS QUARTER 1 REPORT

1.1 At the meeting of the Committee on 20 March 2019, the Monitoring Officer sought two volunteers from the Committee to meet with her to discuss the format of the Standards and Ethics quarterly reports.

1.2 The reports were created around 10 years ago and it was considered that it was a good time to review their format and usefulness to members of the Committee. The reports comprise three sections; information regarding the complaints made about councillors under the Members' Code of Conduct, data on complaints, MP enquiries and Ombudsman cases and, finally, the remaining ethical indicators (number of whistleblowing reports, objections to the accounts, number of breaches of the member / officer protocol, etc). An example of the report can be found here:

<https://minutes-1.nwleics.gov.uk/documents/s22634/Enc.%201%20for%20Standards%20and%20Ethics%20-%20Quarter%203%20Report.pdf>

1.3 Councillors Sheahan and Clarke met with the Monitoring Officer on 9 April to discuss the report. The following was agreed, subject to consideration by this meeting.

- (a) That the information regarding complaints about councillors under the Members' Code of Conduct was helpful and necessary given the responsibilities of the Committee to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by councillors and monitoring the operation of the Code of Conduct. The terms of reference of the Audit and Governance Committee in the Constitution refers.
- (b) That the reporting of complaints, MP enquiries and Ombudsman data and analysis should be via the quarterly reports. This would enable reports to be considered by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet and for the information to be more closely linked to the performance of the organisation.
- (c) That the efficiency of the remainder of the ethical indicators be reviewed.

1.4 Accordingly the attached quarterly report for Q1 of 2019/20 has been revised with the sections on the Code of Conduct and ethical indicators being updated. A summary of the updates to ethical indicators is as follows:

Added

- Instances of concern raised re Modern Slavery
- Instances of concerns re Modern Slavery referred to national referral agencies
- Number of challenges to procurement

Removed

- No. of recommendations made to improve governance procedures/policies
- No. of recommendations implemented.

Members are invited to comment on the revised structure. The minutes of this meeting will be considered by officers as member's feedback and appropriate refinements will be implemented in the report for Quarter 2.

1.5 The Corporate Scrutiny Committee will consider the complaints, MP enquiry and Ombudsman data at the meeting on 4 September 2019 where it considers the Q1 performance report.