

# Standards and Ethics

## Quarter 3 Report

2024-2025

# Contents

Slide 3 - Introduction

Slides 4 and 5 - Local Determinations of Complaints

Slide 6 - Ethical Indicators

Slides 7 and 8 - Freedom of Information Requests

Slide 9 - Definitions

# Introduction

This is the quarterly report to the Audit and Governance Committee detailing both the figures for the Ethical Indicators and the figures for the Local Determination of Complaints process for 2024/25.

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 and 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.

# Local Determination of Complaints

The Monitoring Officer received 5 complaints in Quarter 3 of 2024/25 (1 October 2024 – 31 December 2024).

1 complaint received in Quarter 2 is still ongoing.

## 2.1 Assessment Sub-committee Decisions

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

The Monitoring Officer pursues an informal dispute resolution process prior to initiating formal proceedings via the Sub-committee route.

0 complaints have been resolved informally in Quarter 3.

## 2.2 Timeliness of Decision

The Local Government Association [guidance](#) states that where the decision has been delegated to an officer, the authority should aim to complete their initial assessment of an allegation within 15 working days of receiving a complaint. Where the assessment is sent to a committee, the committee should be set up along similar timescales. The Council has taken this standard and has included it in the Council's arrangements for dealing with complaints with an aim to hold an Assessment Sub-committee within 15 working days of notifying the parties that informal resolution is not possible

## 2.3 Subsequent Referrals

None to report – see above

## 2.4 Outcome of Investigations

None to report – see above

## 2.5 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

# Complaints made to the Monitoring Officer under the Code of Conduct during Q3 2024/25

<u>Qtr 3</u> <u>24/25</u>	<u>Complaint from</u>	<u>About district/ parish councillor</u>	<u>Regarding</u>	<u>status</u>
	District Councillor	District Councillor	Concerns raised regarding conduct at a Council meeting	Ongoing
	District Councillor	District Councillor	Concerns raised regarding conduct at a Council meeting	Ongoing
	District Councillor	District Councillor	Concerns raised regarding conduct at a Council meeting	Ongoing
	District Councillor	District Councillor	Concerns raised regarding conduct at a Council meeting	Ongoing
	District Councillor	District Councillor	Concerns raised regarding conduct at a Council meeting	Ongoing

# Ethical Indicators

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	22/ 23	23/ 24	24/ 25	22/ 23	23/ 24	24/ 25	22/ 23	23/ 24	24/ 25	21/ 22	22/ 23	23/ 24
Instances of concerns raised re Modern Slavery	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Instances of concerns raised re Modern Slavery referred to national agencies	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of whistle blowing incidents reported	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of Challenges to procurements	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Public interest Reports	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Objections to the Councils Accounts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disciplinary action relating to breaches of the Member/Officer Protocol	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Follow up action relating to breaches of the Member/Officer Protocol	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Use of RIPA powers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

# Freedom of Information Requests

	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25	21/22	22/23	23/24
Total Number (FOIs)	147	157	122	122	196	132	108	157	197	196	148	194
% answered on time	51%	93%	89%	79%	86%	90%	60%	92%	92%	78%	91%	92%
Average per month	49	52	39	41	71	44	38	52	65	65	49	64
Average response time (days)	7	11	11	9	12	14	14	10	9	15	13	11
Withheld due to exemption/fees (FOI and BAU)*	0	13	18	0	2	13	7	13	17	13	3	19
Transfers (TFRs)	29	18	22	21	15	27	18	20	16	28	26	38
Subject access requests (SARs)	3	11	11	6	11	10	5	9	12	13	10	8
Internal Reviews	1	1	0	3	2	0	3	1	2	2	1	0
Environmental Information Requests/ Land Charges Searches (personal)	4	6	4	4	7	6	7	360	249	1	7	409

- There has been an increase in the number of requests received this quarter. This has not affected the response time, which is still above target.
- The requests that have not been answered on time continue to be from a specific service area due to capacity/staffing issues.
- The number of SAR requests received have remained at consistent levels to previous quarters.

# FOI Data for Q2 24/25

	Subject Access Requests											
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25	21/22	22/23	23/24
Total number received	3	11	11	6	11	10	5	9	12	13	10	8
% answered on time			100%			90%		78%	92%			88%
Internal reviews			1			0			1			

	Freedom of Information Requests											
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25	21/22	22/23	23/24
Total number received	147	157	122	122	196	132	108	157	197	196	148	194
% answered on time	51%	93%	89%	79%	86%	90%	60%	92%	92%	78%	91%	92%
Internal reviews	1	1	0	3	2	0	3	1	1	2	1	0

	Environmental Information Requests											
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25	21/22	22/23	23/24
Total number received	4	6	4	4	5	6	7	3	1	1	7	3
% answered on time			100%		80%	100%		100%	100%			100%
Internal reviews			0		0	0		0	0			0



# Definitions

**Business as usual** Information requested can be sent quickly and easily within the normal course of business

**Land Charges** specific information about a particular property

**Ombudsman Complaint** a customer has followed Stage 1 and 2 complaints procedure but unhappy with the outcome they are entitled to take complaint to the Local government Ombudsman who will decide if the Council has a case to answer.

**Subject Access Request** a request by an individual to see information an organisation holds on them

**Transfers** requests received that fall out of our remit i.e. Adult social Care or Highways

**Environmental Information Request** a right for any person to request access to environmental information held by public authorities.