

Standards and Ethics Quarter 1 Report

2025-2026



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 2025/26.

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 covers local determination of complaints, ethical indicators and Freedom of Information requests.

The quarterly reports will enable the Audit and Governance Committee to build up a picture over time of how many complaints are received and any trends where similar incidents are occurring. 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 4 complaints in Quarter 1 of 2025/26 (1 April 2025 - 30 June 2025).

2 complaints received in Quarter 1 are still ongoing.

2 complaints received in Quarter 1 were unable to be progressed as the initial tests were not met.

1 complaint received in Quarter 3 of 2024/25 was withdrawn in Quarter 1.

1 complaint received in Quarter 3 of 2024/25 is still ongoing.

1 complaint received in Quarter 4 of 2024/25 will be dealt with at an Assessment Sub-committee in Quarter 2 of 2025/26.

2.1 Assessment Sub-committee Decisions

There has been one Assessment Sub-committee meeting in this quarter. This related to two complaints received in Quarter 4 of 2024/25. The Sub-committee referred one complaint to the Monitoring Officer for further action and decided to take no further action in relation to the other complaint. The Monitoring Officer pursues an informal dispute resolution process prior to initiating formal proceedings via the Sub-committee route. No complaints have been resolved informally in Quarter 1.

2.2 Determination Sub-Committee Decisions

None to report - see above.

Complaints made to the Monitoring Officer under the Code of Conduct during Q1 2025/26

<u>Qtr 1 25/26</u>	<u>Complaint from</u>	<u>About District/ Parish councillor</u>	<u>Regarding</u>	<u>Status</u>
	District Councillor	District Councillor	Promoting another political party on social media.	Initial tests not met
	Member of the Public	District Councillor	Overhearing a comment made by one Councillor to another Councillor (the recipient Councillor did not raise a complaint about this).	Initial tests not met
	Parish Clerk	Parish Councillor	Unacceptable behaviour over a telephone call.	Ongoing
	Parish Councillor	Parish Councillor	Inappropriate language and behaviour at a meeting.	Ongoing

This table helps to show where there are patterns forming as to behaviour complained about, to enable the Audit and Governance Committee to determine where there needs to be further training for councillors. Some matters may not have been found to be a breach of the Code, but it is still important to know what issues are being raised so that future complaints can be prevented. So far this year, the following areas of the Code have been complained about:

- Treating others with respect
- Bullying, harassment and discrimination
- Use of position
- Bringing the Council into disrepute
- Leading by example

This document is official, handle appropriately

Ethical Indicators

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	23/24	24/25	25/26	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25
Instances of concerns raised re Modern Slavery	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	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 Council's 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

FOI Data for Q1 25/26

The Council received an increase in Subject Access Requests (SARs) in this Quarter, all of which were able to be answered on time.

This Quarter saw a decrease in Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests, with an increase in the amount dealt with on time.

*some columns are blank as the reporting format has changed since those dates, so statistics were not previously available.



	Subject Access Requests											
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	23/24	24/25	25/26	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25
Total number received	11	11	25	6	11	10	5	9	12	10	8	21
% answered on time		100%	100%			90%		78%	92%		88%	95%
Internal reviews		1	0			0			1			1

	Freedom of Information Requests											
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	23/24	24/25	25/26	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25
Total number received	157	122	161	122	196	132	108	157	197	148	194	204
% answered on time	93%	89%	91%	79%	86%	90%	60%	92%	92%	91%	92%	90%
Internal reviews	1	0	4	3	2	0	3	1	1	1	0	1

	Environmental Information Requests											
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	23/24	24/25	25/26	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25
Total number received	6	4	10	4	5	6	7	3	1	7	3	6
% answered on time		100%	90%		80%	100%		100%	100%		100%	85%
Internal reviews		0	0		0	0		0	0		0	0