

Standards and Ethics

Quarter 2 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 2 complaints in Quarter 2 of 2025/26 (1 July 2025 - 30 September 2025).

One complaint received in Quarter 2 is still ongoing.

One complaint received in Quarter 2 was unable to be progressed as the initial tests were not met.

One complaint received in Quarter 1 of 2025/26 is still ongoing.

2.1 Assessment Sub-committee Decisions

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 2.

There have been three Assessment Sub-committee meetings in this quarter. These related to complaints received in Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 of 2024/25 and a complaint received in Quarter 1 of 2025/26. The Sub-committee decided to refer two of the complaints for further investigation and to take no further action in relation to the other complaint.

2.2 Determination Sub-Committee Decisions

None to report - see above.

Complaints made to the Monitoring Officer under the Code of Conduct during Q2 2025/26

<u>Qtr 2 25/26</u>	<u>Complaint from</u>	<u>About District/ Parish councillor</u>	<u>Regarding</u>	<u>Status</u>
	District Councillor	Parish Councillor	Unacceptable behaviour and being declined the opportunity to vote on a matter when declaring a pecuniary interest.	Ongoing
	Member of the Public	Parish Councillor	Causing offense by their actions and not respecting the public or welcoming challenge.	Initial tests not met

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
- Confidentiality and access to information
- Use of position
- Bringing the Council into disrepute

Ethical Indicators

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26	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 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

FOI Data for Q1 25/26

	Subject Access Requests											
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25
Total number received	11	11	25	11	10	24	5	9	12	10	8	21
% answered on time		100%	100%		90%	87%		78%	92%		88%	95%
Internal reviews		1	0		0	0			1			1
	Freedom of Information Requests											
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25
Total number received	157	122	161	196	132	154	108	157	197	148	194	204
% answered on time	93%	89%	91%	86%	90%	90%	60%	92%	92%	91%	92%	90%
Internal reviews	1	0	4	2	0	2	3	1	1	1	0	1
	Environmental Information Requests											
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26	22/23	23/24	24/25	22/23	23/24	24/25
Total number received	6	4	10	5	6	15	7	3	1	7	3	6
% answered on time		100%	90%	80%	100%	87%		100%	100%		100%	85%
Internal reviews		0	0	0	0	1		0	0		0	0

The Council received one fewer SAR in this Quarter than in Q1. The number being answered on time is below target, due to delays in receiving information on more complex requests from the relevant service area.

This Quarter saw a decrease in FOI Requests, with a slight decrease in the amount dealt with on time.

The number of EIRs answered on time is also below target, as the service area dealing with most requests is struggling to provide responses in time due to issues with resourcing.

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

