

Standards and Ethics

Quarter 4 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 four complaints in Quarter 4 of 2025/26 (1 January to 31 March 2026).

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

Two complaints received in Quarter 1 of 2025/26 are still ongoing.

One complaint received in Quarter 2 of 2025/26 is still ongoing.

One complaint received in Quarter 3 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 4.

There has been one Assessment Sub-committee meeting in this quarter. This relates to a complaint received in Quarter 1. The Sub-committee decided to refer the complaint to the Monitoring Officer for further action and an Assessment Sub-committee is now being reconvened.

2.2 Determination Sub-Committee Decisions

None to report - see above.

Complaints made to the Monitoring Officer under the Code of Conduct during Q4 2025/26

Qtr 4 25/26	Complaint from	About District/ Parish councillor	Regarding	Status
	Parish Councillor	Parish Councillor	Misleading the public, bullying and misrepresentation of the Parish Council	Ongoing
	District Councillor	District Councillor	Interrupting a Councillor surgery for local residents and failure to declare a relevant interest	Ongoing
	Member of the Public Parish Councillor	Parish Councillor	Treatment by Councillor in relation to concerns raised about an event	Ongoing
	Member of the Public Parish Councillor	Parish Councillor	Treatment of Cllr behaving dishonestly and has exhibited bullying and misogynistic behaviour	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:

1. Respect
2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination
3. Impartiality of officers of the Council
4. Confidentiality and Access to Information
5. Disrepute
6. Use of position

Nolan Principles

Selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, leadership

Ethical Indicators

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26
Instances of concerns raised re Modern Slavery	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	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	1	0	0	0
Use of RIPA powers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

FOI Data for Q4 25/26

	Subject Access Requests											
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26
Total number received	11	11	25	11	10	24	9	12	19	8	21	22
% answered on time		100%	100%		90%	87%	78%	92%	95%	88%	95%	90%
Internal reviews		1	0		0	0			0		1	2

The Council received more SAR in this Quarter than in Q3. The number being dealt with on time is on target.

This Quarter saw an increase in FOI Requests from Q3. The number dealt with on time is ahead of target.

	Freedom of Information Requests											
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26
Total number received	157	122	161	196	132	154	157	197	161	194	204	165*
% answered on time	93%	89%	91%	86%	90%	90%	92%	92%	93%	92%	90%	95%
Internal reviews	1	0	4	2	0	2	1	1	1	0	1	1

The number of EIRs answered on time has improved from the previous quarter.

	Environmental Information Requests											
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26	23/24	24/25	25/26
Total number received	6	4	10	5	6	15	3	1	14	3	6	23
% answered on time		100%	90%	80%	100%	87%	100%	100%	93%	100%	85%	96%
Internal reviews		0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	3

*19 of these FOI Requests are in progress and a response is not yet due