

Committee :	STANDARDS COMMITTEE
Date:	20 April 2015
Title	Allegations against members
Author:	Monitoring Officer
Action:	For Information

1. Background

The purpose of this report is to present information to the Committee regarding formal complaints made against members. The report is based on information received from the Ombudsman and the case references are his.

2. Complaints

2.1 Case No. 6141/201400682

Date received: 29/04/14

Complaint

Complaint by fellow member that a town councillor had misused his position for financial gain.

Decision

Ombudsman investigating aspects of complaint.

2.2 Case No. 201402810

Date received: 28/07/14

Complaint

Member had sent an e-mail to a local organisation, purporting to express the community council's views, without its authorisation.

Decision

Referred to Monitoring Officer for investigation and to report to the Standards Committee. Standards Committee to consider matter on 13/04/15.

2.3 Case No. 201403463

Date received: 18/07/14

Complaint

Complaint by a town councillor that three of his fellow members had failed to declare an interest.

Decision

Investigation continuing in respect of one councillor.

2.4 Case No. 20140314

Date received: 29/09/14

Complaint

Complaint that a community councillor failed to declare an interest.

Decision

No investigation. No evidence that councillor was acting in his capacity as a councillor at the time.

2.5 Case No. 5847/201404989 & 5847/201404990

Date received: 21/10/14

Complaint

That a town council member had behaved in a manner that would bring the council into disrepute.

Decision

Considering whether to investigate.

2.6 Case No. 201408375

Date received: 02/02/15

Complaint

That a councillor had failed to fulfil the financial obligations of a contract and was abusive to the complainant. That he impersonated another person and improperly traded his contracts through another person.

Decision

No investigation. Insufficient evidence provided to substantiate the councillor's involvement. The Ombudsman will not investigate unless there is reasonably strong evidence to suggest a member had breached the code.

2.7 Case No. 8136/201408378

Date received: 29/01/15

Complaint

That a councillor had sent an e-mail referring to members of the public present at a Planning Committee containing language that was racist and offensive.

Decision

No investigation. He did not believe the words used to be racist considering the context in which they were used. However it was likely that their use could be a breach of the code in that the councillor appears not to have shown respect and consideration for others as required under para. 4(b) of the code. However even if proven, the Ombudsman did not believe that it would lead to a sanction being imposed.

2.8 Case No. 8136/201408381

Date received: 29/01/15

Complaint

That a councillor had sent an e-mail agreeing with the contents of the e-mail referred to in para 2.7 above and had therefore acted in an abusive and racist manner himself..

Decision

No investigation. The councillor was expressing an opinion, and the way in

which he did so did not breach any part of the code.

2.9 Case No. 8368/2014

Date received: 09/03/15

Complaint

That a councillor had trespassed on the complainant's property and argued with him and took hold of his finger and bent it back. The Police attended.

Decision

No investigation. No evidence that the councillor was acting in his capacity as a councillor. Ombudsman also noted that the police had been called.

3. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note the information.