

Public Document Pack



**Service Director – Legal, Governance and
Commissioning**

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Friday 19 March 2021

Notice of Meeting

Dear Member

Standards Committee

The **Standards Committee** will meet remotely at **1.30 pm** on **Monday 29 March 2021**.

This meeting will be live webcast. To access the webcast please go to the Council's website at the time of the meeting and follow the instructions on the page.

The items which will be discussed are described in the agenda and there are reports attached which give more details.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julie Muscroft", on a light background.

Julie Muscroft

Service Director – Legal, Governance and Commissioning

Kirklees Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair/Clerk of their intentions prior to the meeting.

The Standards Committee members are:-

Member

Councillor Eric Firth (Chair)

Councillor Martyn Bolt

Councillor James Homewood

Councillor Alison Munro

Councillor Mohan Sokhal

Councillor Rob Walker

Councillor Aleks Lukic

Agenda

Reports or Explanatory Notes Attached

Pages

1: Membership of the Committee

The Committee will receive any apologies for absence.

2: Minutes of Previous Meeting

1 - 4

To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 29 September 2020.

3: Interests

5 - 6

The Councillors will be asked to say if there are any items on the Agenda in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, which would prevent them from participating in discussion or the vote on any of the items, or any other interests.

4: Admission of the Public

Most agenda items will be considered in public session, however it shall be advised whether Cabinet will consider any matters in private, by virtue of the reports containing information which falls within a category of exempt information as contained at Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

5: Deputation/Petitions

The Committee will receive any petitions and hear any deputations from members of the public. A deputation is where up to five people can attend the meeting and make a presentation on some particular issue of concern. A member of the public can also hand in a petition at the meeting but that petition should relate to something on which the body has powers and responsibilities.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10 (2), Members of the Public should provide at least 24 hours' notice of presenting a deputation.

6: Public Question Time

Due to current Covid-19 restrictions, Members of the Public may submit written questions to the Committee. Any questions should be e-mailed to executive.governance@kirklees.gov.uk no later than 10am on 26 March 2021.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11(5), the period allowed for the asking and answering of public questions shall not exceed 15 minutes. A maximum of 4 questions per person may be submitted.

7: Code of Conduct Complaints Update

7 - 20

To receive a report detailing complaints received since 29 September 2020.

Contact Officer: David Stickley – Senior Legal Officer

8: Cases and News Update

21 - 70

To receive a report setting out news and cases of interest since September 2020.

Contact Officer: David Stickley – Senior Legal Officer

9: LGA Model Code of Conduct and Standards Survey

71 - 156

To receive a report in relation to the LGA Model Code of Conduct and to report on the Standards Survey.

Officer: David Stickley – Senior Legal Officer

Contact Officer: Leigh Webb

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Tuesday 29 September 2020

Present: Councillor Paul Davies (Chair)
Councillor Bill Armer
Councillor Martyn Bolt
Councillor James Homewood
Councillor Mohan Sokhal

In attendance: Mike Stow – Independent Person

1 Membership of the Committee

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Munro and Pandor.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on the 11 March 2020 be approved as a correct record.

3 Interests

It was noted that Councillors Armer, Bolt and Davies were Members of either a Town or Parish Council.

4 Admission of the Public

It was noted that agenda items would be considered in public session.

5 Deputation/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were considered.

6 Public Question Time

The following question had been sent in form Mrs G Humphries:

"Does the standards committee only deal with matters concerning councillors? Has any complaint that has been sent ever been upheld or are they just a way of appearing to listen to the public and then ignoring or dismissing a complaint? After a statement sent to me about a recent complaint from the monitoring officer which stated....

There is a possibility that he may have been mistaken in his recollection of the precise route given the time period that has elapsed" which I find totally unacceptable. It could have just as easily said "It does not matter what a councillor says at a committee meeting whether it is true or not, as long as they say that they thought it was true" Just another way to dismiss a complaint. This is one of the reasons that people do trust the complaints procedure. And why are any complaint that are sent about the planning and highways reports presented to a planning committee simply ignored and get no response at all? Who is responsible for the

complaint about these departments? As officers or departments working for Kirklees surly someone must be responsible for the inaccurate and misleading information, they present to committees. Or again doesn't it matter if people and committees are not given the full facts and only receive a sub-standard and misleading report?"

A verbal response was provided by the Chair, Cllr Davies, with an undertaking that a full written response would be sent to Mrs Humphries including the terms of reference for the Committee and the complaints procedure

7 Code of Conduct - Complaints Update

The Committee received a report which provided an update on complaints that had been received since the previous meeting of the Committee on the 11 March 2020. The Committee was informed that the report is prepared every six months and gives a breakdown of complaints received.

Since the 11th of March 2020 the Monitoring Officer has received 60 complaints relating to alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct. This figure includes multiple complaints relating to 4 councillors. 32 relate to Kirklees Councillors (a total of 13 Councillors) and 28 relate to parish councillors. The number of identified Town or Parish councillors complained about is 3, from 3 Town or Parish Councils. Of these 60, 24 were not progressed after the initial assessment process and 1 was reported by the complainant as being resolved. A further complaint was dealt with as a staffing issue rather than as a standards issue. Of the remaining 34, 2 were resolved informally, 18 were progressed through the formal standards process (along with 3 carried forward from the previous reporting period) and findings were made. The remaining 14 complaints are relatively recent and are currently being investigated before being considered under the initial assessment process. It was reported that there are a number of interrelated complaints involving one Town or Parish Council.

Of the 13 complaints recorded in the previous report as then ongoing, these have mostly now been concluded. 3 of these were taken through the formal standards process with the 18 complaints referred to 1 complaint was dealt with as a staffing issue, rather than as a standards issue. 1 complaint is on hold, pending further clarification from the complainant. 4 complaints were not taken forward. 4 were referred back to the Town / Parish Council for resolution by mediation.

RESOLVED - That the report be received and noted

8 Cases and News Update

The Committee considered a report which provided information on developments, news and matters of local government ethics, including relevant case law.

RESOLVED - That the report be received and noted

9 COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE FOLLOW UP

The Committee considered a report which provided information on the current review being undertaken by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL).

The CSPL had indicated, when their report was originally published, that they would review the implementation of their best practice recommendations with local authorities to measure their progress.

The Cabinet Office has now written to the Chief Executives of local authorities in England reminding them of this and advising that they will be following up progress on the implementation of the recommendations in the Autumn of 2020. A copy of the letter was appended to the report along with a reminder of the recommended best practices

With regard to Kirklees progress on the 15 best practice recommendations, the report set out the recommendations together with a summary of what we are doing in Kirklees in response to the recommendations. It was reported that Kirklees are already meeting most of the recommendations or have taken steps to do that.

RESOLVED - That the report be received and noted

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KIRKLEES COUNCIL				
COUNCIL/CABINET/COMMITTEE MEETINGS ETC				
DECLARATION OF INTERESTS				
Standards Committee				
Name of Councillor				
Item in which you have an interest	Type of interest (eg a disclosable pecuniary interest or an “Other Interest”)	Does the nature of the interest require you to withdraw from the meeting while the item in which you have an interest is under consideration? [Y/N]	Brief description of your interest	

Signed: Dated:

NOTES

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your disclosable pecuniary interests under the new national rules. Any reference to spouse or civil partner includes any person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or as if they were your civil partner.

Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner, undertakes.

Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses.

Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority -

- under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
- which has not been fully discharged.

Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.

Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.

Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) - the landlord is your council or authority; and the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.

Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -

- (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
(b) either -

the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.



Name of meeting: Standards Committee

Date: 29th March 2021

Title of report: Code of Conduct complaints update

Purpose of report

To brief the standards committee on Councillor complaints under the Code of Conduct since the last Standards Committee meeting in September 2020.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	not applicable
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	no
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	no
Date signed off by Strategic Director & name	YES - Rachel Spencer-Henshall
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services?	Yes
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	Yes
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Graham Turner

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report follows on from the report that was before the Standards Committee on the 29th of September 2020.
- 1.2 This report will look at the number of complaints received since the 29th of September 2020, along with their type and nature.
- 1.3 It will also look at which of those new complaints have been resolved and which are still subject to investigation or further action. It will also provide an update on those complaints that were received in the previous reporting period and were not resolved at the time of the previous report.
- 1.4 It will also compare this period's complaints with the previous period, to see if there are any significant differences or trends.

2. Information required to take a decision

2.1 Complaints Summary

- 2.1.1 Since the 29th of September 2020 the Monitoring Officer has received 16 complaints relating to alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct. This figure includes one multiple complaint relating to 6 councillors.
- 2.1.2 All 16 relate to Kirklees Councillors (a total of 13 Councillors). There are no complaints that relate to Town or Parish councillors.
- 2.1.3 Of these 16, 13 were not progressed after the initial assessment process and 1 was not pursued by the complainant, after further information was requested. The remaining 2 complaints are relatively recent and are currently being investigated before being considered under the initial assessment process.

2.2 Update on previous complaints

- 2.2.1 Of the 18 complaints that were carried forward from the previous report as ongoing, these have mostly now been concluded. None were taken through the formal complaints process 3 were closed because the member complained of had ceased to be a member and the Monitoring Officer felt there was nothing to be gained by continuing with any of these, 1 was closed due to the complainant failing to respond, and 5 were not found to have been breaches of the Code of Conduct after investigation and closed at the informal stage. There are 4 complaints relating to one member of a Parish Council that are effectively repeat complaints and need to be taken through the formal process. 5 complaints are still under investigation, 3 of which are multiple

complaints about the same issue, but it can be anticipated that these will be completed shortly.

2.3 Previous Report and comparison with the present report

2.3.1 The previous report contained a total of 44 new complaints about 12 named Kirklees members, plus a total of 3 Town and Parish Councillors, covering the period from the 11th of March 2020 to the 29th of September 2020. This compares with the current period under review, the 30th of September 2020 to the 29th of March 2021, where there is a total of 15 new complaints that related to 10 named Kirklees Councillors and no named Town or Parish Councillors.

2.3.2 The nature of the complaints in the present report concern behaviour at meetings (9 complaints relating to 5 members), 1 concerns an allegation of an undeclared conflict of interest, and 2 concern the behaviour of a member during lockdown. There are 4 complaints that have arisen from the planning process, concerning the actions of ward members. Of the 9 complaints recorded above relating to behaviour at committee meetings, 8 of these were complaints about behaviour at planning committee meetings.

The sources of the complaints are that 1 was from a Kirklees Councillor, and the remaining 15 were from members of the public.

2.3.3 Comparing this to the previous report, there were complaints about the behaviour of members towards members of the public (5 complaints relating to 6 members), whilst 30 concerned the behaviour of 4 members in social media posts, 1 concerned behaviour towards an officer, 5 concerned behaviour at meetings, and 2 concerned the behaviour of a member during lockdown.

Of these 44 complaints, 6 were received from a Town or Parish Councillor, 1 was from an officer of a Town or Parish Council, 1 was from a Kirklees Councillor, and the remaining 36 were from members of the public.

2.3.4 Comparison between the two reports, shows that the overall number of complaints has fallen from 44 to 16, whilst the number of Councillors complained about has fallen to 13 from 15.

2.3.5 In this period, we have seen 1 instance of a 'multiple' complaint, with the same complaint being made and supported by more than one complainant.

2.3.6 The total number of complaints relating to Town or Parish Councils has fallen to zero in the current period, with all complaints received relating

- to Kirklees members, although some of Kirklees members who are the subject of complaints are also Town and Parish Council members.
- 2.3.7 There have been a number of complaints that relate to behaviour at meetings that perhaps would not have been made if those meetings were not being conducted virtually. Members at committees, such as planning, are possibly forgetting that, unlike in the Council chamber, they remain on camera throughout the entire meeting, which can give rise to their behaviour being scrutinised in a way that would not have happened before the pandemic.
- 2.3.8 Complaints have also been received about elected members being in breach of the Covid regulations. Clearly these are not complaints that could have been made prior to March 2020 and the first national lockdown. They were of sufficient concern to the Monitoring Officer to prompt the sending to all members of a reminder about the regulations in place and the need to comply with these. Since the beginning of the March 2020 lockdown, there have been a total of 3 complaints about members alleged to have been in breach of the regulations. As a percentage, this is 5% of the total number of complaints made between March 2020 and now.
- 2.3.9 Looking at the overall trends, it is clear that two of the periods being reported on did contain a large number of complaints that have somewhat skewed the overall picture. These were complaints concerning Town and Parish Council members and did result in the imposition of sanctions. They were related to posts being put on Twitter that breached the Code of Conduct. There have been no complaints in this period, but we are aware that the Twitter account in question has been suspended.
- 2.3.10 If those two skewed results are disregarded, the overall trend with the total number of complaints is upwards. If we look at Kirklees complaints on their own, the trend is still an upwards one. With regards to Town and Parish Councils, whilst there have been no complaints in this period, the trend is still broadly upwards.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

N/A

3.2 Working with Partners

N/A

3.3 Place Based Working

N/A

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

N/A

3.5 Improving Outcomes for Children

N/A

3.6 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

The promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct by councillors is an important part of maintaining public confidence in both the council and its members. Failure to do so could have reputational implications.

4. Next steps and timelines

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer will continue to assess any complaints about members' conduct as and when they are received and will report the outcomes to this committee as appropriate.

5. Officer recommendations and reasons

- 5.1 It is recommended that the report is noted.

6. Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations

N/A

7. Contact officer

David Stickley
Senior Legal Officer
01484 221000
david.stickley@kirklees.gov.uk

8. Background Papers and History of Decisions

- 8.1 N/A

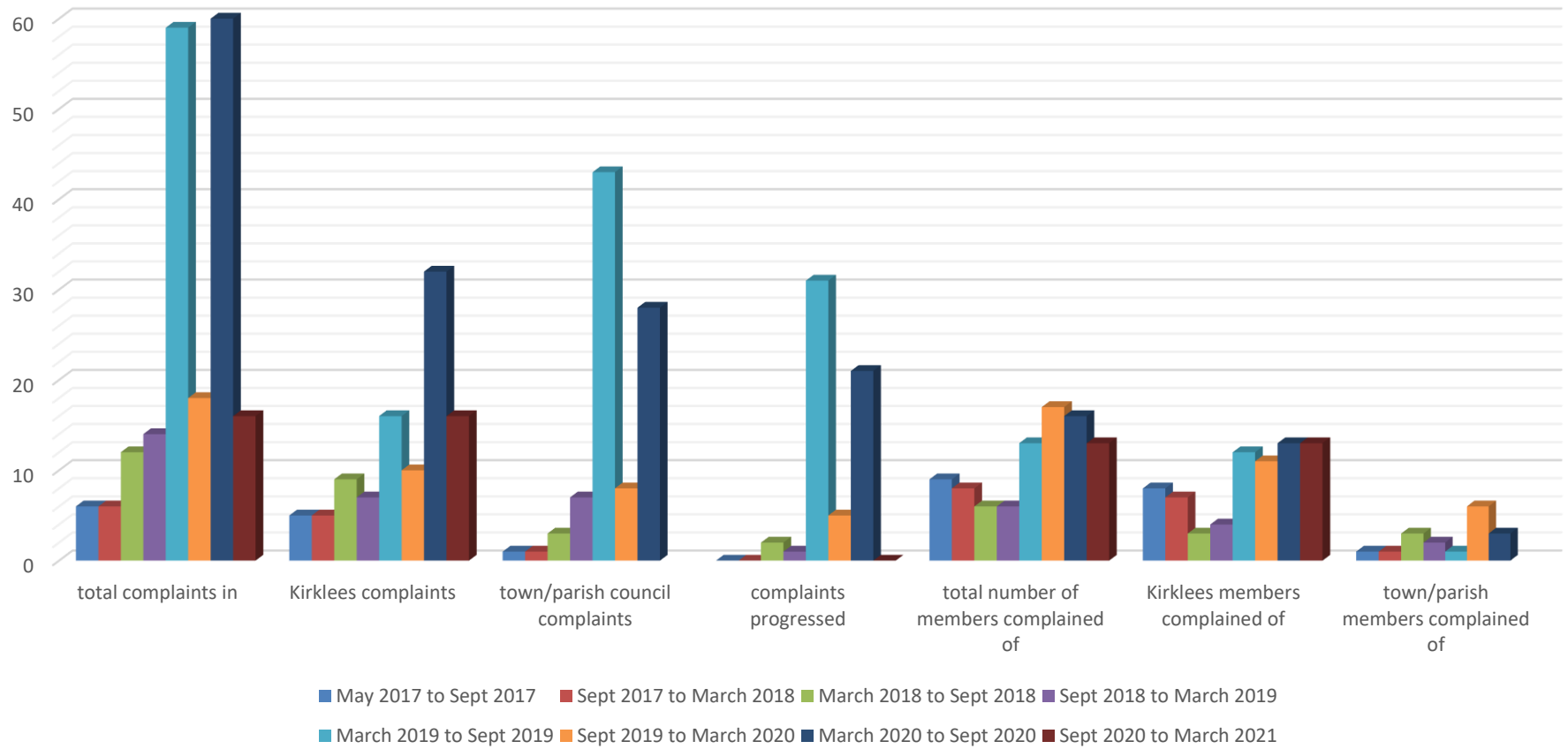
9. Service Director responsible

Julie Muscroft
Service Director – Legal, Governance and Commissioning
01484 221000
julie.muscroft@kirklees.gov.uk

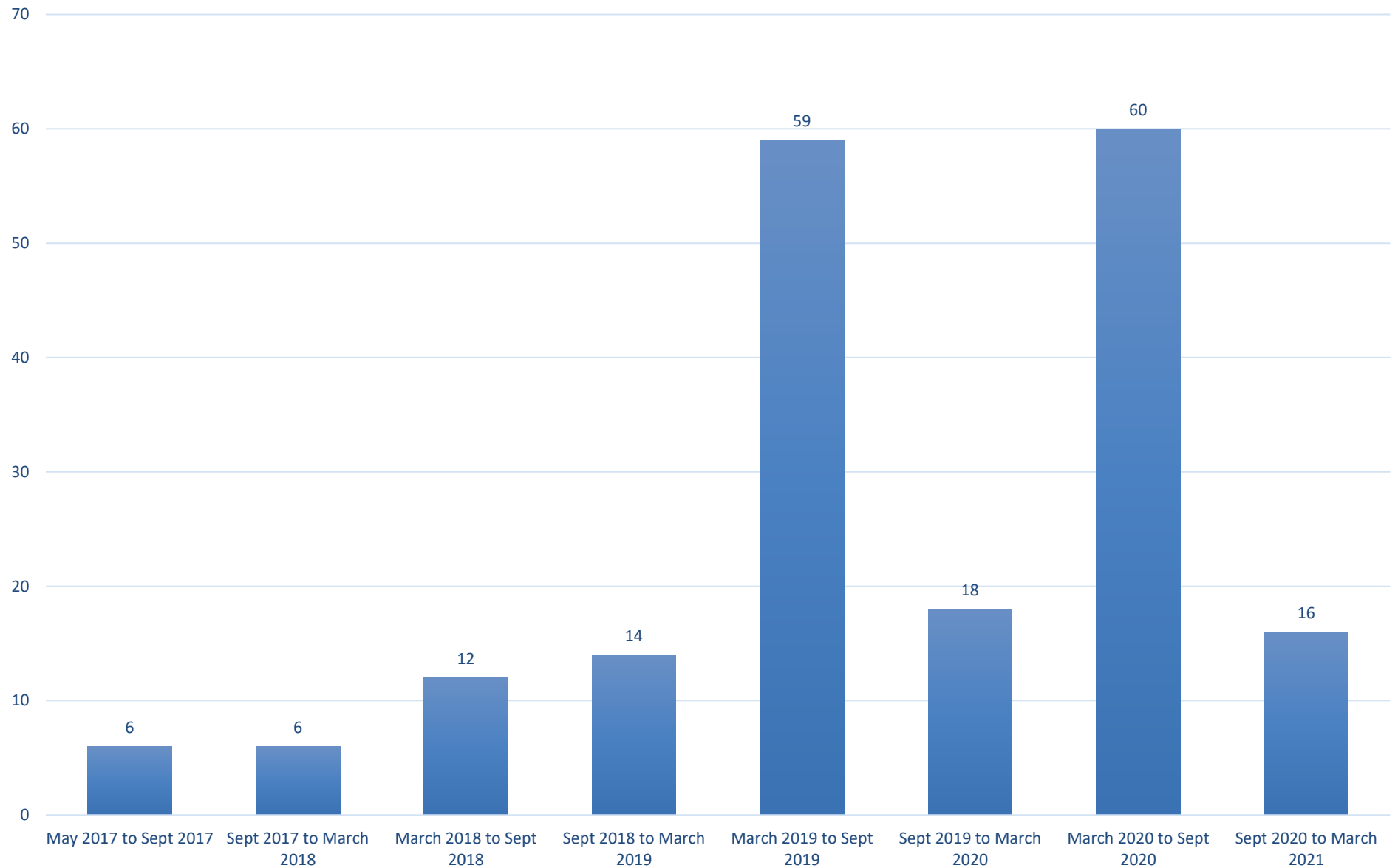
Appendix A

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Complaints summary

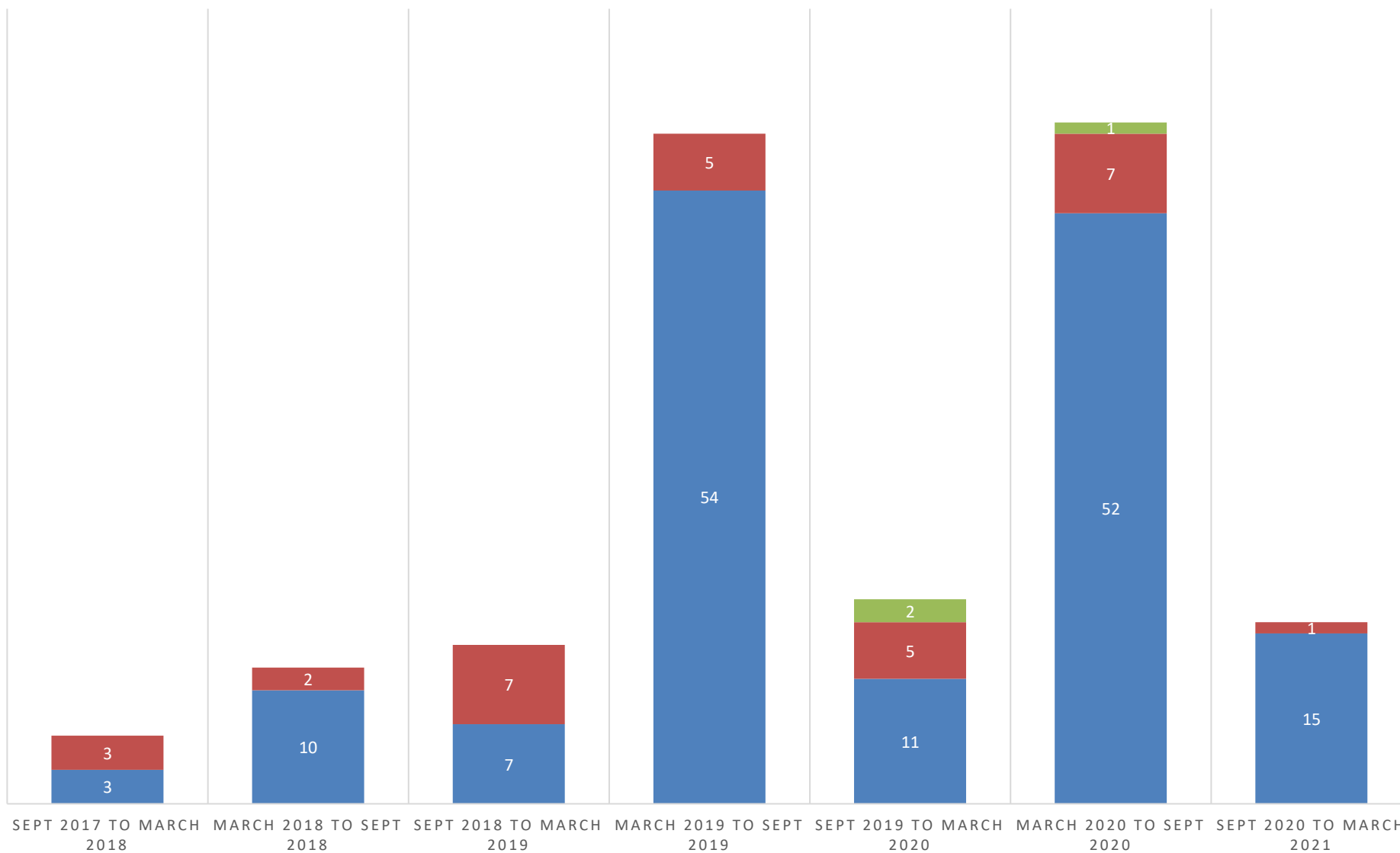


Total complaints in



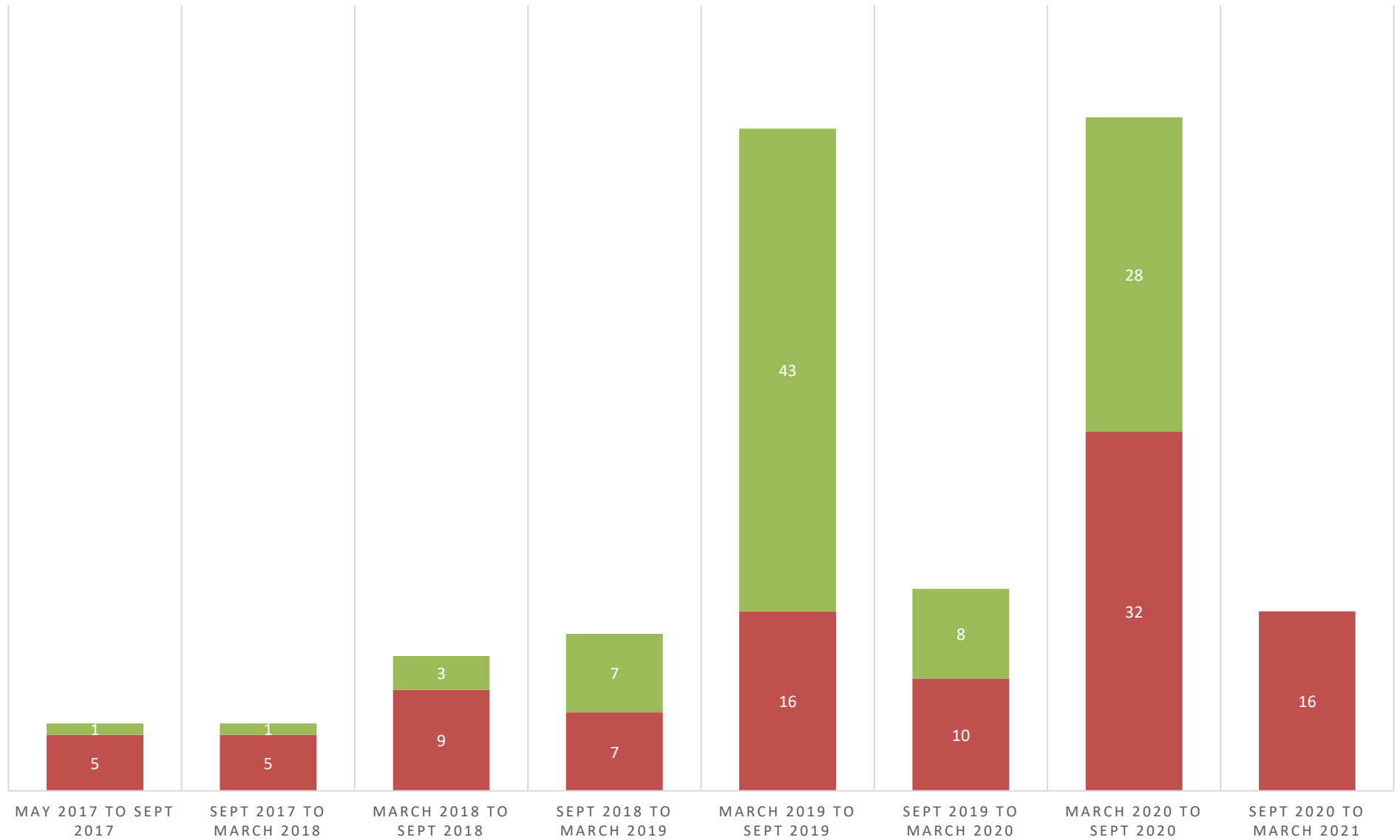
SOURCES OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

■ from mop ■ from clrs ■ from officers



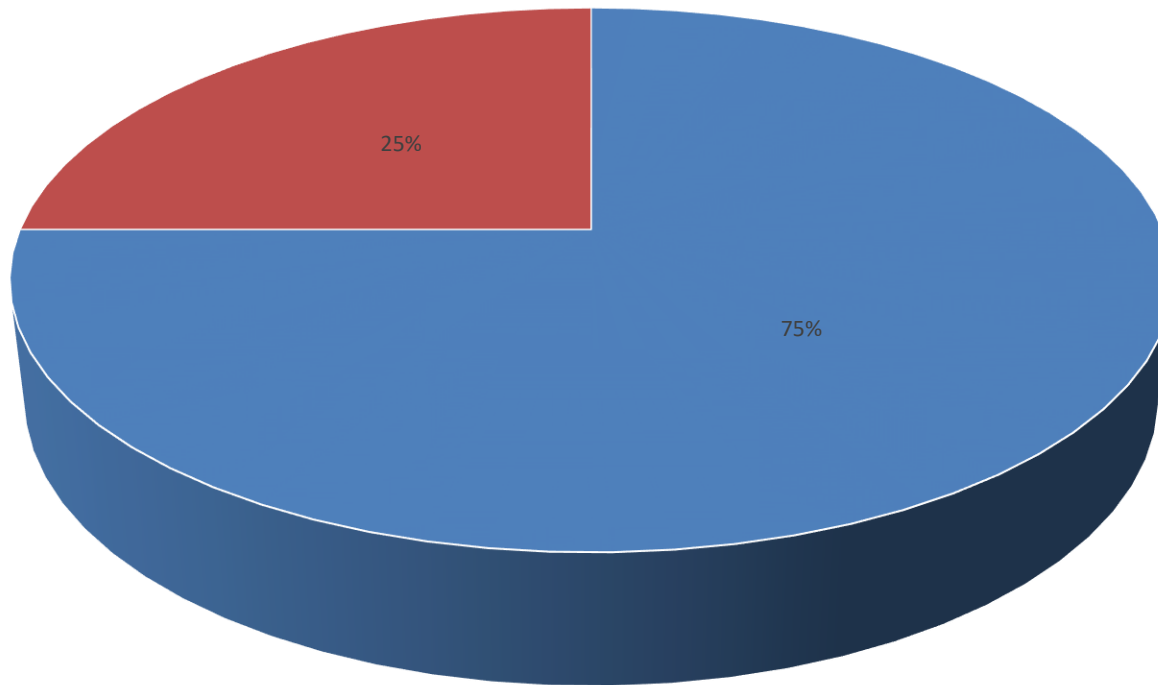
COMPLAINTS - KIRKLEES / TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

Kirklees complaints town/parish council complaints



Planning related complaints

Sept 2020 to March 2021



■ Planning related complaints ■ Other complaints

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Name of meeting: Standards Committee

Date: 29th March 2021

Title of report: Cases and News Update

Purpose of report

To brief the standards committee on any news and cases of interest since September 2020.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	not applicable
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	no
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	no
Date signed off by Strategic Director & name	Yes – Rachel Spencer-Henshall – 18 th March 2021
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services?	Yes
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	Yes
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Graham Turner

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report is intended to brief members on any developments and news on matters of local government ethics.
- 1.2 It will look at news items and any relevant case law, as well as any recent published decisions from other local authorities or any of the existing standards boards.
- 1.3 It will also provide an update on the work of the CSPL that follows on from their report 'Ethical Standards in Local Government'.

2. Information required to take a decision

2.1 News since September 2020

- 2.1.1 A number of sources have been checked for details of any news items that are of relevance or may be of interest to the committee.
- 2.1.2 These include Local Government Lawyer, Lawyers in Local Government, the various standards boards' websites, websites of other local authorities as well as local and national media.
- 2.1.3 There are a number of articles, from various sources, which may be of interest to the committee, even if all are not directly relevant to the work of the committee. Copies of the articles are at appendix A, but the following are of particular interest.
- 2.1.4 In December 2020 a Calderdale Councillor was criticised for comments he made about the free school meals debate. It transpired that the independent Councillor had been expelled from the Conservative Party in the previous year.
- 2.1.5 A number of stories reported an increase in the numbers of complaints being made. Cheshire West reported that complaints about town councils were their highest since 2015, whilst South Tyneside Council reported a surge in complaints, but also that a large number of complaints from the previous period had proved unfounded, with only 16% resulting in a formal investigation. Sandwell Council also reported a rise in the number of complaints, adding that the numbers were so high additional staff had been recruited to deal with these.
- 2.1.6 In December 2020, it was reported that a meeting of the Brighton and Hove Council had to be stopped due to the number of allegations being made by members. This report is interesting as it was comments that were being made out of public view, in the chat, that were the source of the problems.

- 2.1.7 In December 2020 online meetings were another source of complaint, when members of the public reported a number of instances of members allegedly yawning and not paying attention during a meeting of Milton Keynes Council's audit committee. Members hit back, saying the evening meeting was a long one, but that they were giving full attention. It does, however, highlight the dangers of members forgetting that they are always on view during such online meetings.
- 2.1.8 The Welsh Parliament is consulting on a new Code of Conduct for Senedd members, proposed by its own standards committee. If agreed, it will apply after the Senedd elections in May 2021. One proposal is to introduce a new principle – 'Respect'. The committee felt it was appropriate to introduce the principle, citing the independent enquiry on bullying and harassment of House of Commons staff, as well the #metoo and Black Lives Matter movements.
- 2.1.9 In January 2021, a former Councillor for Redbridge was jailed, after being found guilty of election offences, as well as receiving a 5 year ban from standing for public office. He had been charged with making false representations and perverting the course of justice.
- 2.1.10 Finally, mention must be given to Handforth Parish Council, whose virtual Planning Committee meeting went viral. Local Government Lawyer has reported that Cheshire East Council is considering a number of complaints relating to the Parish Council.

2.2 Recent published decisions

- 2.2.1 Some Local Authorities in England publish their decisions on member complaints, as do the Standards Boards in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- 2.2.2 The Standards Commission for Scotland has continued to work, holding hearings remotely.
- 2.2.3 Since the beginning of October 2020, the Commission has held a total of 9 standards hearings, resulting in 5 suspensions and 4 censures.
- 2.2.4 These have been for various reasons, the censures being largely for failing to declare interests, but also one for disclosing confidential information. The suspensions were for disrespectful behaviour, being convicted of a sexual offence and for disclosing confidential information.
- 2.2.5 The Commissioner for Standards in Northern Ireland has not published any further reports since July 2019. The Commissioner's website advises that the office is still closed, with staff working remotely, but there is a published list of hearings that are yet to be listed.

- 2.2.6 There is not a great amount of detail about the circumstances of each of these cases, beyond reference to the part of the code of conduct that the complaint relates to. A check of these, suggests that various issues around poor behaviour, with bullying, lack of respect, bringing a Council into disrepute, failing equality duties, improper use of position and council resources, failing to co-operate with the Commissioner, as well as a number relating to the declaration of interests.
- 2.2.7 The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales publishes a 'Code of Conduct Casebook' periodically. There have been no 'casebooks' published since 2019, so no reports of any of its hearing are on its website.
- 2.2.8 The Ombudsman is due publish an annual report in May 2021 and any relevant information published then will be reported back to this committee in the next report.
- 2.2.10 In England, publication of decisions still remains discretionary, although the CSPL did support publishing these, so it may be the case that more decisions from English local authorities are published in due course.
- 2.2.11 There is in general a lack of cases published English local authority websites in this period and none of interest have been found.

2.3 Case Law

- 2.3.1 There does not appear to have been any recent reported decisions in the Courts on any matters directly relating to local authority standards.

2.4 The work of the Committee on Standards in Public Life

- 2.4.1 The CSPL have been fairly quiet in follow up work to their 2019 report.
- 2.4.2 Since the last report, the CSPL have published the minutes of their meeting held on the 21st of January 2021, in which the Chair reported that the Minister for Housing's office hoped to provide an update to the committee on the progress of the government's response to the 2019 report. There was nothing in the minutes of the 17th December, 19th November 2020 or the 10th of September 2020 meetings of relevance to the follow up work on the 2019 report.
- 2.4.3 The committee did ask all local authorities in England to provide them with an update on their implementation of the 15 best practice recommendation and on the 8th of January 2021, reported on that on their 'blog'. As well as noting that the government is yet to respond to

the 2019 report, it highlighted the responses from local authorities on the best practice recommendations. A copy is at Appendix B.

2.4.4 In December 2020 the committee published an update report on its progress on the 'Intimidation in Public Life' exercise that it ran. A copy of that is at Appendix B.

2.4.5 The committee is currently running what it describes as a 'landscape review of the institutions, processes and structures in place to support high standards of conduct'. This is called 'Standards Matter 2'. Future progress will be reported back to this committee. Further information is in the press release, a copy of which is at Appendix B.

2.5 Update on work from the CSPL report

2.5.1 The Code of Conduct review that was recommended be undertaken annually has been taking place, and is the subject of the third report before the committee.

2.5.2 The consultation exercise has now taken place and the results are the subject of the third report before the committee.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

N/A

3.2 Working with Partners

N/A

3.3 Place Based Working

N/A

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

In order to minimise any impact, printing is kept to a minimum.

3.5 Improving outcomes for children

N/A

3.6 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

The promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct by councillors is an important part of maintaining public confidence in both the council and its members. Failure to do so could have significant reputational implications.

4. Next steps and timelines

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer will continue to monitor any relevant news and cases and will report back to this committee. She will also continue to monitor and report back on the work of the CSPL.

5. Officer recommendations and reasons

- 5.1 Members are asked to consider the report and comment on its contents (as applicable) and note its contents.

6. Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations

N/A

7. Contact officer

David Stickley
Senior Legal Officer
01484 221000
david.stickley@kirklees.gov.uk

8. Background Papers and History of Decisions

- 8.1 N/A

9. Service Director responsible

Julie Muscroft
Service Director – Legal, Governance and Commissioning
01484 221000
julie.muscroft@kirklees.gov.uk

Appendix A

NEWS items

23/12/2020

Halifax councillor slams smart phone generation and says parents should feed children not the taxpayer

Calderdale independent councillor refuses to apologise over his comments

A Halifax councillor has hit out at the smart phone generation and parents over free school meals saying "if you can't feed, don't breed".

Roger Taylor, an independent councillor on [Calderdale Council](#), sent the reply to a newsletter from the public services union Unison, which contained a request to help save the school meals service and referenced the recent campaign by footballer Marcus Rashford to tackle child food poverty.

Mr Taylor, who was expelled from the Conservative party last year, said he is a supporter of school meals but he believes it is parents' responsibility to feed their children during the holidays and not that of the taxpayer.

Unison said it was "beyond belief that someone could show so little compassion".

The email from Unison, sent on December 10, contained a letter to councillors asking for their help to stop the school meals service from becoming a "casualty of the pandemic", which they said had led to cuts to the service, staff numbers, pay and hours of work.

The letter said: "It is good news that the Government finally agreed to fund free school meals holiday provision over the Christmas holiday period, and we pay tribute to Marcus Rashford for his determination.

"But this is not the only area where school meals are under pressure - provision of hot meals for pupils during term-time in schools is suffering too."

In his response on December 18, Mr Taylor said: "If you can't feed, don't breed. Simple."

Speaking to the PA Media news agency, Mr Taylor said: "I'm not going to apologise for it. What I said is what I said. That's my opinion, I'm entitled to say it."

He added: "Whilst I am a supporter of school meals and the service, the only threat will be the financial situation, with the lockdown making the economy, and level of income, much weaker.

"However, during the holidays it is the parents' responsibility and I make no bones about that."

Mr Taylor, who represents the Northowram and Shelf wards in Halifax, continued: "Many of these so-called impoverished children have smart phones and we expect the taxpayers to dip into their pockets to feed them.

"Where does it end? I don't mind free school meals when they're at school, that's fine. I just think enough's enough."

Jon Richards, Unison head of local government, said: "It's beyond belief that someone could show so little compassion. Children all over the country are going hungry because of the pandemic.

"Low-income families need support, not abuse from those who should know better.

"It's hard to fathom how a politician would think this is an appropriate way to react when asked to help children living in abject poverty."

Mr Taylor faced calls to resign in March this year after a colleague said he replied to an email about a constituent whose son had Covid-19 with the word "yawn".

Halifax Conservatives said he was expelled from the Conservative Party in December last year following an investigation.

England and Manchester United forward Rashford successfully lobbied the Government into a U-turn over its free school meals policy in England during the first coronavirus lockdown, ensuring children in need would receive meals over the summer.

08/12/2020

News

8th December

Cheshire West town councillor complaints highest since 2015

LAST year saw the most complaints made against Cheshire West's town and parish councillors since 2015.

There were 22 complaints made against representatives from town and parish councils in 2019/20, overtaking the previous high of 18 in 2016/17.

Five CWAC councillors received complaints, down from seven in 2018/19 and 18 in 2016/17.

A pre-CWAC council report said: "Between May 2019 & April 2020, the Monitoring Officer assessed 27 complaints about member conduct.

"One complaint was referred for independent investigation. The investigator reported no findings of failure and no further action was taken.

“The Monitoring Officer consulted the Independent Persons on 13 complaints. The Monitoring Officer referred one complaint about a CWAC member to their Group Leader for informal action.

“She referred six complaints about town/parish council members to their chairman for informal action e.g. training on the code of conduct.”

The information has been made available as part of CWAC’s final full council meeting of 2020, which is at 6pm on December 10.

Five of the cases dealt with by the council concerned councillors’ declaring interests — with the remainder related to general obligations, including respect for others, including on social media.

In total, ‘no action’ was taken on eight complaints, which according to the authority means that the complaint was either about a council decision, the manner in which a meeting was run, or outside the roles and responsibilities of councillors — and not about the councillor’s conduct itself.

'Disturbing' rise in complaints against South Tyneside councillors revealed

Town hall chiefs have demanded answers over the ‘disturbing’ surge in complaints against elected councillors.

Standards bosses at South Tyneside Council have been contacted more than 30 times in less than three months about the behaviour or actions of members of the local authority.

But just 16% of complaints submitted in 2020 have been found to be serious enough to prompt a formal investigation, leading to concerns some may be misusing the process for their own ends.

[The rises in complaints] is slightly concerning,” said independent opposition councillor Glenn Thompson.

“I couldn’t help thinking when going through them, wouldn’t it be great if certain complaints could be identified as vexatious, to give us a better understanding.”

Thompson was speaking at a meeting of the borough council’s Standards Committee, which was held by videolink and broadcast via YouTube.

According to a report for the panel 59 complaints have been processed since the start of the year.

Of these, 47 have been closed either because the person who submitted the original representation later decided they did not want to pursue it, or because it was rejected by the local authority’s monitoring officer, the legal official responsible for standards.

John Rumney, the council's head of legal services, said some were turned down 'on the grounds of triviality or [because they are] tit for tat'.

Of this year's complaints, 13 have progressed to a formal investigation, but none have yet gone the distance of being presented to the Standards Committee itself for consideration.

Almost two thirds of all complaints against councillors have been made by their fellow councillors.

Labour councillor Gladys Hobson said: "I've been a member of this committee for many years and I find the number of complaints coming through quite disturbing

"We've never had this many complaints coming through on an annual basis before and I think it quite disturbing that a lot of these involve members."

09/12/2020

Two Sandwell councillors cleared as complaints of wrongdoing mount

By [George Makin](#) | [Sandwell](#) | Published: Dec 9, 2020 | Last Updated: Dec 9, 2020

A local authority at the centre of a storm of claims of misconduct has cleared two unnamed councillors of wrongdoing.

Sandwell's ethical standards and member development committee was told of the results of investigations as it reviewed a list of 13 probes into claims the council's code of conduct had been broken.

The findings of no breaches comes as the council is beset by complaints against local politicians ranging from interfering in a land sale, breaking Covid regulations and making defamatory statements.

At the same time, internal disagreements within the authority's ruling Labour group have seen claims of racism, anti-Semitism and bullying.

The number of council allegations is so high Sandwell has hired extra staff to deal with all the cases.

Surjit Tour, director of law and governance and monitoring officer, said two cases had now been resolved. They included claims a councillor shared confidential staff information and a second charge of alleged misconduct in relation to domestic arrangements.

The names of the councillors and details of the investigations were withheld but a council spokesman said: "The committee was informed of the outcome, namely that there was no breach found and the matters have been closed accordingly.

"The council does not share details of councillors facing a standards complaint unless the complaint is to be considered by the Standards Sub-Committee after an investigation has been undertaken and a significant breach found. This is to help ensure complaints can be dealt with effectively and fairly to all parties concerned."

The committee was told another four cases are expected to be completed by the end of this month after which a decision will be made on any disciplinary action.

Final reports on a further five cases are expected between January and February next year.

Separate to the council's investigations, the Labour Party has suspended the membership of four councillors while a further two are the subject of internal complaints.

Code of conduct complaints made against members of Alston Moor Parish Council

by CWH — 17 December 2020 in News, Featured



Several code of conduct complaints in relation to various members of Alston Moor Parish Council are under investigation.

Lisa Tremble, Eden Council's monitoring officer, told Monday's parish council meeting: "It's no secret to the members of this parish council and the members of the public as well that I am dealing with several complaints in relation to various members of this council.

"They are ongoing and they are all being dealt with. Not all councillors will know the extent of all of the complaints, for obvious reasons, but they are being dealt with."

Mrs Tremble made the comment after parish council chairman Andy Holt said there was "only one" current code of conduct complaint against himself and that had been made by Alix Martin.

She was one of five Alston Moor parish councillors who resigned from the council in October after Gary Wright stood down as chairman of the council at the authority's September meeting.

In a written statement read out at this week's meeting, Ray Miller, who resigned alongside Ms Martin, questioned the five councillors who had voted for Mr Holt to become chairman on how it could be the "right and proper thing to do" when he had several pending complaints against him.

These were from members of the public, which are currently being investigated by Eden District Council, and from the former councillors concerning breaches of the parish council's code of conduct.

"Can councillor Holt explain why he appeared to dial 999 during the September meeting, got a response, and then hung up without telling the operator there was no emergency," said Mr Miller.

He added that as it looks certain that an election will be held to fill vacant seats on the council, all remaining councillors should resign so that Alston Moor can have a completely new council voted for by the community.

"If the decision is not to do this voluntarily, then a petition will take place, asking the voting public what they want to see happen.

"I have been approached by dozens of members of the public believing that this should happen as many have been present at the most recent Zoom meetings and word of mouth has spread across the parish," said Mr Miller.

The meeting was told that Mr Miller also intends to make a further complaint to Eden Council's monitoring officer about the way he was "shouted down and prevented from speaking" at the November meeting of the parish council.

Mr Holt said: "I certainly didn't shout at you Ray. I have to take control of the meeting and at the last meeting it got very personal. A little bit of inexperience on my behalf, as well, as I have only been the chair of a parish council for two months.

I have undertaken a lot of training and I have gone through it and learnt a lot, which is absolutely fantastic."

He said he could not comment on any of the complaints. If they were going to be made official, they will have to go to the monitoring officer and he would then respond accordingly.

Mr Holt said he had no intention of resigning and that there was "no case to answer" following the code of conduct complaint made against him, which had already been dealt with.

There were a couple of recommendations, but they were to remain private, he said.

Mrs Tremble, who was observing the meeting, stepped in to explain that the procedure at Eden was that the authority does not routinely publish the findings of its code of conduct investigations, but does have the ability to do so.

If freedom of information requests were made, unless they fell into an exception, on confidential data grounds, the district council would probably disclose them, she said.

"Pretty much all code of conduct complaint decision notices should be publicised and made public and that is something that Eden will be looking at in the review of our constitution," said Mrs Tremble.

18/12/2020

18th December

'Particularly serious breach' says report which led to councillor resigning after Twitter spat

A COUNCIL chief who resigned his position this week after a Twitter spat was set to be sacked from his role anyway, documents have revealed.

Liam Walker, the Oxfordshire County Council cabinet member for Highways Delivery and Operation, resigned his leadership post on Wednesday.

In his letter of resignation to council leader Ian Hudspeth, Mr Walker said he was standing down because the council's monitoring officer had found his conduct on Twitter 'breached the code of conduct set by the council'.

But the council's official decision notice on his breach of the code of conduct, published the same day, had recommended he be removed from his post by his boss.

A total of 11 complaints were made against Mr Walker because of his contribution to a discussion about cycling on Twitter.

One user, called @JohnCarline3, wrote: "Cyclists constantly w**king off the dutch [sic]. F**k off over there then."

And Mr Walker replied: "Well put in a way people would complain if I said the same."

The councillor later deleted the tweet.



The twitter exchange which led to complaints against Liam Walker.

The Twitter exchange

The council's monitoring officer had recommended the council leader 'remove councillor Walker from the cabinet' as of January 1.

The officer's decision also said: "The breach was rendered particularly serious given councillor Walker's status as cabinet member for highways; and given that councillor Walker had previously been found in breach of the code for a misuse of social media."

The councillor had once used emojis to insult a Labour rival on Twitter, leading to complaints.

In his resignation letter, Mr Walker wrote: "I have already apologised to those who were genuinely offended by the tweet. "It is regrettable that the process has taken up valuable staff time and that taxpayers' money has been used to investigate; at times, aspects of the response have felt disproportionate."

"I have always spoken freely and engaged with councillors and members of the public on social media where many others choose not to. The freedom to exchange frank views is a core part of our democracy and should be defended. My job is to speak frankly and to do my best for the residents of Oxfordshire."

Council leader Ian Hudspeth had defended his colleague when asked about the tweet during November's full council meeting.

At the time, he described Mr Walker as a 'strong supporter of active travel'.

After receiving Mr Walker's letter of resignation, Mr Hudspeth said: "It is with deep regret that I accept councillor Walker's resignation. I thank him for the hard work he has undertaken in his cabinet post during 2020."

Mr Walker will continue in his role as the councillor for Hanborough and Minster Lovell.

17/12/2020

Racism row halts meeting as councillors go Christmas crackers

Posted On 17 Dec 2020 at 11:55 pm By : Frank le Duc Comments: 7

A row about racism stopped a council meeting mid-flow this evening, with further recriminations promised.

It started with a question about a recent commitment by Brighton and Hove City Council to become an anti-racist council.

Conservative councillor Mary Mears asked why Labour councillor Nancy Platts had refused to answer questions about her former role in Jeremy Corbyn's office when he was Labour leader.

The questions followed the publication of a critical report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission after its "Investigation into the Labour Party".

The report found that Labour had broken equality law in its handling of complaints about anti-semitism.

Councillor Platts is not named in the report.

Green council leader Phélim Mac Cafferty said that it would be "inappropriate" for him to answer Councillor Mears's question.

But he said: "Members have said that they want to fight racism and I know that Councillor Platts is among those councillors."

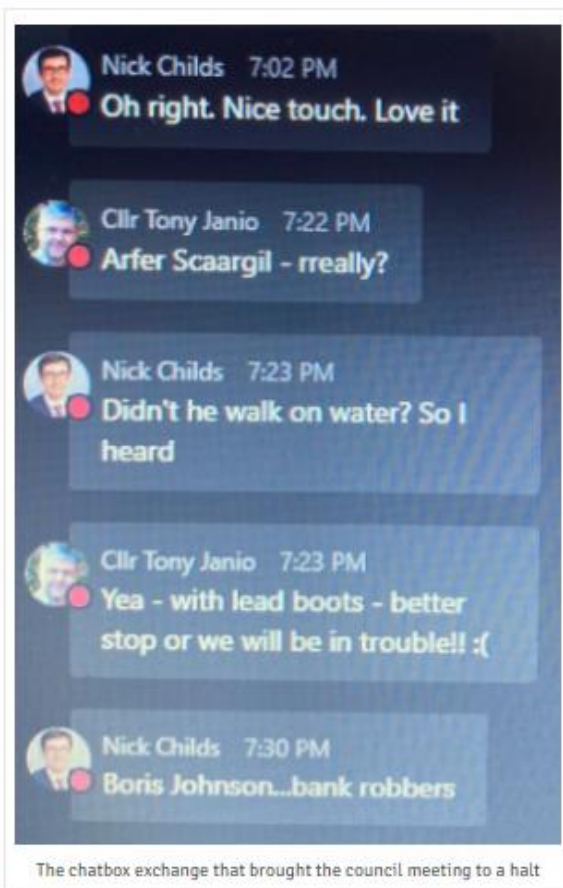
But while the public debate moved on to another topic, messages were being exchanged behind the scenes, including in the meeting's "chatbox".

The fomenting tensions were brought to the surface by former mayor Dee Simson. The Conservative councillor said: "Comments have been left in the chatbox which are just there to incite.

"We can all be civil to each other. It's completely unnecessary."

Labour councillor Nick Childs immediately held up his hand and said: "It was my comment in the chatbox about the Prime Minister."

He had referenced Boris Johnson writing in a newspaper column that women wearing a burqa resembled bank robbers.



Councillor Childs said: "I'm happy to retract it as long as Councillor Mears retracts her libellous comment about Councillor Platts."

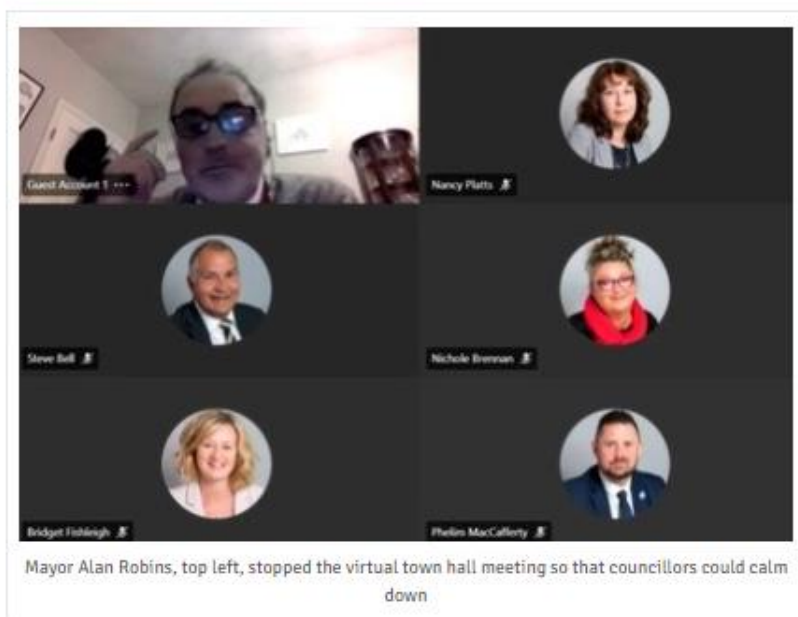
Councillor Platts said that she was happy to take the matter through the council's "standards" process, adding: "I do consider it to be a libellous comment and I'm considering legal action."

One challenge will be the legal protection, known as privilege, attached to comments made in council meetings, although unlike MPs, who have absolute privilege in Parliament, councillors have qualified privilege.

Independent councillor Kate Knight said that she and her colleagues had had meetings at which councillors' conduct had been discussed.

Councillor Knight said: "It was agreed that these meetings were acrimonious and unpleasant."

She spoke about a tendency towards personal abuse and added: "Not only are there serious personal allegations being made but flippant and offensive and personal remarks that have no place in this sort of meeting."



As others interrupted, the mayor, Councillor Alan Robins, who chairs meetings of the full council, called a five-minute break so that members could calm down.

The remote meeting restarted about 20 minutes later and came to an early end because of technical problems.

The final council meeting before Christmas is more often marked by councillors exchanging cards and pleasantries – including across party where friendships exist despite the political rivalries.

Although it is the season of goodwill, this was a meeting with fewer signs of the festive spirit on show than usual.

One councillor said privately: "This was a disgraceful, petulant and childish display from all sides and they should be ashamed of themselves."

09/12/2020

Furious residents accuse councillors of yawning and appearing distracted during important meeting in Milton Keynes

Video footage of a crucial meeting is causing chaos on social media

Blakelands Residents Association has publicly accused Labour councillors of damaging the council's reputation during last week's special audit committee meeting.

But council leader Pete Marland has disputed their complaint and defended his members, saying: "The meeting was four hours long, I think yawning is allowed."

The meeting, held virtually via Zoom, was to discuss residents' objections to the council's approval of a giant warehouse they say is "blighting" their estate and overshadowing their homes.

Sitting on the committee were Labour councillors Mick Legg, Martin Petchley and Elaine Wales - and all three have been accused by the residents of "unacceptable" behavior. Councillor Legg and Councillor Wales have responded to the complaints and assured

residents they were focused on the discussions. Councillor Petchley has not yet responded

The association has now put in a complaint to MK Council. It states: "We are emailing you because we are thoroughly shocked and appalled by the behaviour of certain members of the audit committee during the meeting. This was an important meeting for residents of Blakelands. There were a large number of people watching the meeting live on YouTube.

It adds: "Over the last 48 hours, we have received a large number of messages, comments and emails from the residents of Blakelands and the wider community in Milton Keynes. All of those individuals have condemned the unacceptable behaviour of certain members of the audit committee."

The complaint then goes on to make direct accusations. It states: "Councillor Legg: You were repeatedly yawning and using your mobile phone in a very visible manner."

The complaint also accused Councillor Petchley of yawning and criticised what they said were "deeply insulting" comments about campaigners.

The campaigners added: "Councillor Wales: You were seen watching television in the background and we could hear it when you spoke."

The complaint continues: "It was also highly visible during the meeting that some members appeared to be receiving group messages on their mobile phones. When the mobile phones of the four Labour members are heard going off at the same time and they are then seen reading those messages, the public are only able to draw one conclusion. The visible actions and behaviour of certain members have further damaged the reputation of the council at a time when you be seeking to rebuild public trust and confidence."

The video of the meeting shows another Labour councillor, Norman Miles, cooking his dinner and doing a crossword puzzle during the session.

But he is not a member of the committee and leader Pete said: "I'm not sure why he was on the team's call, he could have watched on YouTube but he should have switched his camera off."

Councillor Mick Legg has admitted he was yawning throughout the meeting. He told the Citizen: "I certainly was yawning but I'd had a really long day and I was tired. My work day started at 7.30am and that meeting went on until 11pm."

Councillor Legg works at a plumbers merchants.

Cllr Elaine Wales has defended having her TV on. She told the Citizen: "As a single working mum I had spent the day at work and then took part in a four-hour council meeting in the

evening. I don't live in a big house and my daughter may have had the TV on. Covid-19 has impacted on all our lives and I don't think it's reasonable that my family should be impacted by my taking part in a long council meeting in our home."

She added: "I listened to the meeting throughout and considered all the points raised during the meeting carefully. I have the utmost sympathy (which I did express during the meeting) for the residents and their situation."

Cllr Martin Petchey has so far not replied to the Citizen's messages inviting him to comment.

Meanwhile, Conservative councillor John Bint, who was at the meeting to defend the residents' views about the warehouse, has given his view.

He said: "For councillors taking part in online committee meetings, I think

the odd lapse in concentration or the occasional domestic distraction is completely understandable. But what I think we saw at Tuesday's meeting was several councillors apparently not listening to the subject being discussed by a committee that they were part of."

He added: "I think that was deeply disrespectful to the members of the public who are affected by the situation."

Leader of Welsh council suspended for seven months for code of conduct breaches, vows to appeal

January 6, 2021



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The Adjudication Panel of Wales has suspended the Leader of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Cllr Kevin O'Neill, for seven months for breaching the local authority's code of conduct.

According to the Local Democracy Reporting Service, Cllr O'Neill has vowed to appeal the panel's ruling.

The panel had received a referral in July 2020 from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales in relation to allegations against him.

The panel's [decision notice](#) said there were six allegations:

-
- The first allegation was that Cllr O'Neill had failed to declare orally the existence and nature of a personal interest in the business of the authority relating to a property at Luther Lane at an inter-agency meeting on 15th August 2018.
 - The second allegation was that he had a prejudicial interest in relation to the business of the authority regarding the property at Luther Lane and was in breach of the Code in not withdrawing from the room when the property was being considered at the inter-agency meeting on 15th August 2018.
 - The third allegation was that the respondent, Cllr O'Neill, had a prejudicial interest in relation to the business of the authority regarding the property at Luther Lane and was in breach of the Code in that he was seeking to influence a decision about that business and made oral representations at the inter-agency meeting on the 15th August 2018.

- The fourth allegation was that Cllr O'Neill's email to the Director of Social Services on 16th August 2018 failed to include details of the respondent's personal interest in the business of the authority in relation to the property at Luther Lane, and that the email sought to influence a decision about that business and made written representations about that business in which he had a prejudicial interest, in breach of the Code.
- The fifth allegation related to whether the respondent's actions in speaking at the meeting of the 15th August 2018 and sending written correspondence to an officer in the form of an email to the Director of Social Services on 16th August 2018 were seeking to influence a decision about the business of the property at Luther Lane in breach of the Code, and whether such conduct, if proved, could reasonably be regarded as bringing his office or authority into disrepute, in breach of the Code.
- The sixth allegation related to the meeting with the former chief executive of the council on the 5th March 2019 and whether the respondent's conduct towards the former chief executive was inappropriate and failed to show respect and consideration to him in breach of the Code.

The case tribunal determined its adjudication by way of written representations, in accordance with Cllr O'Neill's wishes, at meetings last month by Cloud Video Platform.

"The Case Tribunal found by unanimous decision that the Respondent had failed to comply with the Code with regard to all of the allegations," the decision notice said.

The Case Tribunal decided, also unanimously, that Cllr O'Neill should be suspended from acting as a member of the council for a period of seven months or, if shorter, the remainder of his term of office. The relevant period starts on 23 December 2020.

Cllr O'Neill has the right to seek the leave of the High Court to appeal this decision.

The Case Tribunal also recommended that the council's monitoring officer (or their delegate) provide further training to Cllr O'Neill on the Code of Conduct, the meaning of 'prejudicial interests' and the approach to be taken to, and the status of, the advice of the Monitoring Officer. "Such training to be undertaken within one month of the Respondent returning to his post following the service of his suspension."

Responding to the ruling, Merthyr Tydfil said: "During this period, Kevin O'Neill will be treated as a member of the public, not as a councillor.

"In the meantime, Deputy Leader, Councillor Lisa Mytton will represent the Leader's office."

In a statement given to the [Local Democracy Reporting Service](#) and [reported on the BBC](#), Cllr O'Neill said he would give a "full explanation" on the matters concerned "if and when the time is right".

"I was shocked by the tribunal's decision and surprised it has been picked up by the press before I have been given the reasons for it."

He added: "My motivations during my time in office have been (and will always be) doing right by the people of Merthyr Tydfil.

"I don't believe that commitment has ever been questioned during this process.

"I will be scrutinising the reasons closely with my legal team as soon as they're received. My firm wish is to appeal so I can return to public service as soon as possible."

Standards committee for Welsh Parliament consults on new code of conduct including new principle of 'Respect'

January 6, 2021



The Senedd Cymru's standards committee last month launched a consultation on a proposed new Code of Conduct for Members of the Senedd.

If the new Code is agreed, the Senedd's Members would be subject to the standards of behaviour set out in the Code - including a new principle of 'Respect' - after the election in May 2021.

The committee said it believed that the addition of a 'Respect' principle would now be appropriate, reflecting:

1. The independent inquiry report on the Bullying and Harassment of the House of Commons staff which led to the adoption of the Senedd's Dignity and Respect Policy.
2. Wider movements in society such as #MeToo and Black Lives Matter.

The committee said the code outlines how Members should engage with each other as well with staff, stakeholders and the public.

The proposed Code also makes it clear that those standards of behaviour should apply to Members at all times, "including in their personal and private lives".

If anyone believes that a Member has not met the standards of behaviour set out in the Code, they can make a complaint to the independent Commissioner for Standards.

In its consultation, the committee asks whether the current complaints procedure works or whether it should be changed in any way. The current Code was agreed in May 2016.

The proposed new Code does not refer specifically to the use of social media but says that members *"must not subject anyone to personal attack in any communication (whether verbal, in writing or any form or electronic or other medium) - in a manner that would be considered excessive or abusive by a reasonable and impartial person, having regard to the context in which the remarks were made"*.

By including a new principle of 'Respect', the committee hopes the new code can address some of these concerns by setting a respectful standard of debate and encouraging people of all backgrounds to get involved in politics.

Following the consultation the committee will present the new Code to the Senedd who will decide, as a whole, whether or not to agree to it.

It is intended that this review will be completed by the end of the current Senedd in preparation for the next Senedd.

Jayne Bryant MS, Chair of the Senedd's Standards Committee, said: "The Code of Conduct sets the standard and tone of political debate, and now more than ever it is important to get this right.

"With a serious problem of online abuse and powerful campaigns such as the #MeToo movement and Black Lives Matter, we've got to do all we can to improve the tone of debate and set a standard that encourages trust in elected representatives and inspires people from all backgrounds to stand for election.

"We're keen to hear the view of people from across Wales on the refreshed Code of Conduct for Members of the Senedd."

Cabinet member resigns over breach of code of conduct in dealing with grant application by motorcycle display team

December 17, 2020



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A Hampshire cabinet member has resigned after a standards investigation found he breached the code of conduct over a council grant to a children's motorcycle display team.

Sean Woodward, a Conservative, was cabinet member for recreation and heritage. He is also leader of Fareham Borough Council, a post he retains.

Hampshire's **conduct panel decided** that no further action need be taken against him.

Two local residents Russell Collier and Jason Morris complained that Cllr Woodward broke the councillors' code of conduct.

In January 2020 Hampshire appointed as investigator Simon Goacher, a partner with law firm Weightmans.

He concluded that Cllr Woodward failed to comply with the code over the award of a £15,000 grant to the Rockets display team.

Mr Goacher said: "Cllr Woodward was heavily involved in supporting Ms A [an official of the team] in making the application.

"He has shown an extensive interest in the application from before it was even made."

A dispute developed within the Rockets' management led Ms A to set up the separate Solent Stars team to which she asked that the Rockets grant be made instead.

The report said: "The applications of both the Rockets and the Solent Stars related to the provision of a lorry for the team. Cllr Woodward told officers that he was taking his HGV licence when the application was being made and later showed a video to officers of him driving the Solent Stars' lorry (which was not funded by the council).

Former councillor at London borough jailed for electoral offences

January 20, 2021



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A former councillor at the London Borough of Redbridge has been jailed for electoral offences and banned from holding elected office for five years.

Chaudhary Mohammed Iqbal, 51 of Cecil Avenue, Barking was sentenced on 4 January for three counts of making false statements in candidate nomination papers, contrary to Sec 65A(1A) of the Representation of the People Act 1983, and one count of perverting the course of justice.

The Metropolitan Police said the charges related to false declarations by Iqbal regarding his address, in relation to the 2018 local government elections in the London Borough of Redbridge.

He had previously pleaded guilty to three counts of causing or permitting a false statement to appear on a nomination form and one count of conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.

Iqbal appeared at Southwark Crown Court and was sentenced to nine months' imprisonment for each of the three electoral malpractice offences, to run concurrently.

He was also sentenced to eight months' imprisonment for perverting the course of justice, to run consecutively.

Iqbal was also ordered to pay prosecution costs of £10,422.54, compensation to Redbridge Council of £10,000 for the by-election costs and compensation to Redbridge Council of £18,368 for the allowances paid to him.

He was reminded of section 173 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 setting out the requirements of a person convicted of a corrupt practice in relation to his current elected post and also the five year ban on holding elected office.

Detective Chief Inspector Sarah McConnell, of the Metropolitan Police's Central Specialist Crime Command, said: "This is a significant sentence for this type of offence. It reflects the seriousness with which the court viewed the wrongdoing in an electoral setting."

Parish council that went viral over committee meeting is subject of "multiplicity of complaints"

February 8, 2021



Cheshire East Council has received a "multiplicity of complaints" regarding the conduct and behaviour of Handforth Parish Council, which was in the spotlight last week when a recording of a chaotic Planning and Environment Committee [went viral](#).

Problems at the parish council appear to have been ongoing for some time, however. In an official, but undated, notice to the parish councillors published on [Handforth Parish Council's website](#), the Director of Governance at Cheshire East, David Brown, said that as monitoring officer he had received complaints ranging from multiple complaints about councillors' behaviour; to fundamental issues of governance and member/officer engagement.

"The most recent referrals relate to suggestions that some members of Handforth Parish Council have purported to take decisions that are plainly unlawful, and these decisions have resulted in expenditure of public funds," he wrote.

Mr Brown said that if the Code of Conduct matters raised were taken at face value they were sufficiently serious to warrant detailed consideration. "The detailed consideration may result in a hearing before the Cheshire East Council Committee for Standards."

He went on to warn the councillors "that any member who knowingly acts unlawfully places themselves at risk of personal liability for damages to third parties, and the recovery of any public money purported to be expended by them on behalf of the parish council".

"It may be timely, given the nature of the referrals made, for Councillors to reassure themselves that no element of misfeasance in public office could arise. The elements of the offence are summarised in *Attorney General's Reference No 3 of 2003* [2004] EWCA Crim 868 and expanded upon in the Crown Prosecution Service website."

Referring to the attempts that some councillors had made to reinstate a councillor after they had been disqualified following absence from meetings, Mr Brown said: "Councillors are all aware that there has been no valid challenge, upheld by a court to the declaration of vacancy as notified to the Returning Officer. It is therefore probable that any Councillor acting on the purported belief there is no vacancy may be engaging in misconduct and acting willfully or being recklessly indifferent to that fact."

Brown finished the notice by saying: "Handforth Parish Council, or any individual councillor, may seek advice and assistance from the local association of Town and Parish Councils for help with any potential issue and to seek advice to resolve the difficulties that have been reported. Given the high volume of complaints received, significant scrutiny of the parish council's actions is likely."

In a recent council meeting, Cllr John Smith of Handforth Parish Council said that relationships between the parish clerk, Ashley Comiskey Dawson, and the chair had broken down when a disagreement on reinstating the disqualified councillor arose.

He said: "A councillor missed meetings from December 2019. On taking advice from Cheshire East, they advised Ashley that a vacancy now existed in the West Ward due to self-disqualification rules. Councillors Birkhill, Tolver and Brewerton wanted Ashley to reinstate that councillor. However, Cheshire East Democratic Services instructed Ashley that it would be unlawful if he tried to do that.

"We had a meeting on Monday evening where it listed the Employment Committee meetings and Councillor Birkhill stated in there [...] that, due to the seriousness of the concerns about the actions of the clerk and the fact that relationships had broken down, they suspended him and that was in November."

According to Cllr Smith, the parish clerk, Mr Comiskey Dawson, later received an email in error "saying 'how can we get rid of Ashley. Can we get a solicitor who specialises in employment law to get rid of Ashley' so that they could bring this councillor back".

Two later meetings that took place on 10 December 2020 led to an argument between the members which was viewed more than 5 million times on YouTube and led to nationwide attention from the media.

The 10 December meeting was called by two councillors using Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 which allows for an 'extraordinary meeting' to take place if the Chairman refuses to call a meeting after a requisition for that purpose, signed by two members of the parish council, has been presented to him.

Brian Tolver, Chairman of the council, joined the meeting and attempted to move a proposal to the council to deem the meeting unlawful.

He said: "There are some very specific conditions for calling an extraordinary meeting and these have not been met. These are specified both in our standing orders (standing order 17d) and in law. An extraordinary meeting has to be either called by the Chairman, or it has to be requisitioned formally by two councillors applying to the Chairman for it. I have received no such requisition".

But he was subsequently removed from the meeting by Jackie Weaver, a member of the Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC), who was acting as clerk to the meeting in the absence of the regular clerk, after questioning her authority.

ChALC is a member-based organisation that exists to promote the rights and interests of town and parish councils in the Cheshire area. The organisation also provides professional support for members councils in all aspects of their work, including providing legal advice on council related issues.

Ms Weaver also removed to the waiting room two other councillors who opposed the calling of the meeting: Vice-chair Aled Brewerton, along with Cllr Barry Burkhill. Mr Brewerton had told Ms Weaver that he was in charge and told her to "read the standing orders! Read them and understand them!"

Ms Weaver then proposed the election of a new chair, and Cllr John Smith was elected chair.

A Cheshire East Council spokesperson said: "All matters relating to complaints to the monitoring officer about a parish council or elected member, remain confidential until all processes have been followed. The outcome of any formal investigation is published on the council's website."

Ms Weaver told *Local Government Lawyer* that it should be borne in mind that the 10 December meeting was properly called by two councillors, one of which was not the chairman nor was it the vice chairman.

"Before the meeting started their behaviour was clearly disruptive with the sole purpose of preventing the meeting that had been called," she said. "They were removed from the meeting even before it began (as the chairman stated). The vice chairman was also removed from the zoom session for his disruptive and unreasonable behaviour.

"The meeting then went on to properly elect a chairman for the meeting and the meeting began."

Appendix B

CSPL news

Local government ethical standards – follow up to best practice recommendations

Posted by: Jane Martin, Posted on: 8 January 2021

In January 2019, the Committee published a report and recommendations on local government ethical standards, an area of long-standing interest for CSPL. We approached the work as a health check of the standards framework in place at the time for local authorities across England, established by the Localism Act 2011. The report provided assurance that the arrangements in place are promoting and maintaining the standards expected by the public, and reinforced our view that the majority of local councillors maintain the highest ethical standards. However, we did recommend that some improvements were required, in particular, the need for maximum independence in local complaints processes and the need for greater sanctions where appropriate in the rare cases of significant or repeated breaches of the code of conduct. Having carried out a review of actions since the 2019 report, we can give further assurance that the majority of local councils are demonstrating their strong commitment to high standards in public life.

A key recommendation was that the LGA should develop a non-mandatory, model code of conduct. Following consultation, the LGA has now published this model code, which CSPL views as a welcome step, helping to set clear standards and avoid confusion for both councillors and members of the public alike.

We await the government's formal response to this report.

As well as making recommendations to government, CSPL identified 15 best practice recommendations to drive high ethical standards in local government.

In the report, the Committee said it expected all local authorities could and should implement these best practice recommendations. We therefore followed up on progress in 2020, writing to all local authorities in England inviting them to update the Committee. CSPL is of course aware that the COVID-19 pandemic has involved significant additional work for those in local government and we will continue to accept responses. We have received 213 replies to date.

It was clear from the evidence we received during our review that the vast majority of councillors and officers want to maintain the highest standards of conduct in their own authority. This is also reflected in the positive responses received from local authorities which have replied to date, saying that they have already implemented or are taking steps to implement our best practice recommendations.

Many of the councils, if they didn't use the precise terms of CSPL's best practice recommendation in their codes of conduct, nonetheless had elements in place and were reviewing their practices to comply fully.

For example, with respect to the best practice recommendation: *Codes should have prohibitions on bullying and harassment*, many councils said that their codes contained provisions that members should treat others with respect. And with respect to our best practice recommendation: *Councillors should comply with formal standards provisions*, many councils said that whilst not explicitly articulated in their code, such provisions were contained within their protocols and procedures for handling standards complaints.

Of the 213 local authorities who had responded by 17 December 2020:

75.6 % said they have prohibitions on bullying and harassment in their code of conduct, or were putting them into place. Other councils we heard from were waiting for finalisation of the LGA model code of conduct to review how best to include prohibitions on bullying and harassment.

51.2 % said they have provisions in their code of conduct requiring councillors to comply with formal standards investigation. Most of the other councils we heard from said that they were waiting to see what the LGA model code of conduct looked like before they adapted their own codes of conduct to incorporate our best practice.

98.6 % said their code is readily accessible or were making changes to make the code accessible - published and available on council premises.

86.4 % said they update their gifts and hospitality register regularly and have made it readily accessible to the public.

98.6 % said they consulted an Independent Person as to whether to undertake a formal investigation on an allegation.

98.6 % said they had clear guidance on their websites informing members of the public how to make a complaint under the code of conduct.

93.9 % said that their senior offices had arrangements for meeting with political group leaders/whips to discuss standards issues.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS MADE AGAINST THE REPORT'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Government

The government has made progress in a number of areas. In 2019, they published their Online Harms White Paper, which established a new regulatory framework for online safety, including a statutory duty of care to make companies take more responsibility for the safety of their users. This will be backed up by an independent online harms regulator. The government has not committed to bringing forward legislation to shift the liability of illegal content online towards social media companies.

As per our recommendation, the government consulted on the introduction of a new electoral offence of intimidation of candidates and campaigners during elections. They have committed to legislating for this offence when parliamentary time allows. Similarly, the government published legislation in 2018 to remove the requirement for candidates standing as local councillors to have their home addresses published on the ballot paper. These provisions came into force for the polls on 2 May 2019.

Political parties

In 2017, we found that political parties needed to do more to protect their candidates from intimidation – to show leadership in setting an appropriate tone for candidates and supporters; to tackle intimidatory behaviour undertaken by their members; and to provide support to their candidates who face intimidation during elections.

Political parties have made progress in a number of key areas, but there is still work to be done in others.

All of the political parties represented in Westminster now have in place their own Code of Conduct, which sets out the minimum standards of behaviour expected of their members. The party codes all prohibit bullying, harassment and unlawful discrimination – conduct that clearly falls within the scope of intimidation. Some of the codes list further categories of behaviour that will not be tolerated by parties, including victimisation, abuse and hateful language. Many of the codes explicitly refer to the positive behaviours expected by party members, including fairness, respect, tolerance and dignity, as well the expectation that members will challenge unacceptable behaviour where it occurs. This is a significant step forward.

Similarly, each party has in place its own internal disciplinary process for dealing with alleged breaches of the party's code. A range of sanctions are included in those frameworks, including formal warning, suspension from party membership, prohibition from holding office or standing for election, and revocation of party membership. It is not clear to what extent parties enforce the full range of sanctions available to them to discipline intimidatory behaviour by their members. We would like to see all parties collecting data on the number

of complaints against members for engaging in intimidation and the outcome of any disciplinary process resulting from these complaints.

We have been working with the Jo Cox Foundation since 2019 on the recommendation that political parties work together to develop a joint code of conduct on intimidatory behaviour. That work has resulted in a high-level statement of principle outlining the minimum standards of behaviour that all party members should aspire to. We welcome support for the statement from the Labour Party, the Scottish National Party, the Liberal Democrats, Plaid Cymru, and the Green Party.

Policing

In 2017, we found that the approach taken on intimidation offences by local police forces was inconsistent. To that end, we recommended better training and guidance.

In line with our recommendation, the National Police Chief's Council published joint guidance with the Crown Prosecution Service, the College of Policing, and the Electoral Commission in 2019, about behaviour which candidates in elections may experience during a campaign which is likely to constitute a criminal offence. We were pleased to see that the guidance includes practical advice on how to protect yourself, as well as legal definitions and what might constitute a breach of criminal law.

We were also pleased to see that the College of Policing has updated their Authorised Professional Practice for elections to include information on the Committee's report, intimidation and the police's responsibility to mitigate and investigate allegations related to intimidation.

Social media

In 2017, we found that social media had been the most significant factor enabling intimidation in recent years. We were concerned that not enough was being done by social media companies to proactively address intimidation online.

All three social media companies now have measures in place to protect their users from intimidation and harassment. These include policies and guidelines that are regularly reviewed and updated, mechanisms to identify and remove abusive content, and reporting channels for users to report content that violates their policies. They also all give users options to control the content they see and who they can interact with online. These include block, mute and safe search functions.

In line with our recommendation, all three companies now publish transparency data on reported content and takedowns. This is a significant step forward. Neither Twitter, Facebook or Google appear to publish data on the time it takes to remove reported content, however. This would help satisfy the Committee that social media companies are able to make decisions quickly and consistently on the takedown of intimidatory content.

All three companies established temporary election teams during the 2019 General Election to protect the integrity of election-related content and identify and respond more quickly to potential threats and challenges, including removing intimidatory content. We were pleased to see that Facebook has since established a permanent reporting channel for MPs to flag abusive or threatening content, which runs year round for sitting MPs and is extended for Parliamentary candidates during elections.

We were also pleased to see that all three companies shared bespoke election and safety resources with MPs, political parties and the government, ahead of the General Election.

We were disappointed to see that social media companies have not adequately revised their tools for users to escalate potential illegal online activity to the police. We said in 2017 that general statements, such as “remember that you should contact local law enforcement if you ever feel threatened by something you see on Facebook”, do not help users to constructively engage with the police. It remains our view that social media companies have a responsibility to advise their users about how to escalate any credible threats they receive.

Press regulators

Press regulators IPSO and Impress both wrote this year to update the Committee.

It is clear that the Editors’ Code of Practice Committee, who oversee IPSO’s Code of Practice, acknowledge that intimidation is a problem for all those in public life, and that their Code is robust and protects individuals in a range of circumstances, including discrimination and harassment. They have satisfied the Committee that editors exercise discretion for their own editorial content and language and that they are open to criticism and called to account by the public and those in public life. Editors must comply with the Code and the law. We were glad to hear that publishers are responsible for their freelancers’ work, which must also comply with the Code.

We were pleased to see that Impress is currently undertaking a comprehensive review of their Standards Code, considering issues around discrimination, harassment, online threats and intimidation. They intend to publish a new version of the Code in July 2022.

Press release

Committee on Standards in Public Life announces landscape review of public standards

The independent Committee on Standards in Public Life has today launched Standards Matter 2, a landscape review of the institutions, processes and structures in place to support high standards of conduct.

The independent Committee on Standards in Public Life has today announced that it will be carrying out a review of the institutions, processes and structures in place to support high standards of conduct.

The review will look at best practice and identify any themes and gaps in the way the Seven Principles of Public Life are promoted and maintained.

Announcing the review, Committee Chair, Jonathan Evans said:

“There are now a wide range of different bodies involved in investigating, promoting, and maintaining standards, based on the Nolan principles – some as a result of the Committee’s recommendations over the last 25 years.

“As well as sharing any lessons learned and best practice, we will consider whether there are gaps or issues that require further work. We want to check whether the Nolan principles are well understood, properly embedded and that they continue to reflect the standards expected by the public of those that serve them.

“High standards are a public good. They improve predictability and promote better outcomes for society, increasing public confidence and the functioning of the economy. The Committee last undertook a strategic review of standards structures in 2013. Back then, our predecessors concluded that the institutions, processes and codes of conduct were in place but that organisations needed to work harder to fully embed a culture of high standards.

“Standards issues change and evolve over time. Organisations and institutions need to have the right culture and processes in place to maintain high standards of conduct, with the ability to properly and fairly investigate standards issues where necessary.

“The Committee is launching an open consultation today and will be talking to regulators, academics and parliamentarians, as well as carrying out research with the public as part of this review. We intend to report to the Prime Minister in Summer 2021 with our findings and recommendations.

“We published research mapping the standards regulators last year. The Committee is aware that public perceptions of standards remain low, as they have for many

years in fact. We want to look at what is working well and what more needs to be done to support high standards of conduct across public life.”



Name of meeting: Standards Committee

Date: 29th March 2021

Title of report: Local Government Association (LGA) Model Code of Conduct and Kirklees Standards Survey

Purpose of report:

To inform Standards Committee about proposals in relation to the LGA Model Code of Conduct and to report on the Standards Survey.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	NO
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)</u>?	NO
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	NO
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance? Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Yes – Rachel Spencer-Henshall Yes Yes
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Graham Turner

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: YES

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? YES

1. Summary

1.1 This report is intended to provide an update to members on two matters that have previously been reported to the committee.

1.2 The first is the LGA's Model Code of Conduct and the report will look at the Code itself, what interested parties have said about it and whether Kirklees should adopt the code, in whole or part, or whether the code contains parts that could be incorporated into the existing Kirklees code.

1.3 The second is to consider the results of the stakeholder survey that recently took place as part of a review of the code of conduct.

2. Information required to take a decision

2.1 LGA Model Code of Conduct

2.1.1 The LGA published its Model Code of Conduct in December 2020, following a period of consultation that began in June 2020.

2.1.2 The published consultation response analysis can be found at [LGA Model Member Code of Conduct: Consultation response analysis, November 2020 | Local Government Association](#).

2.1.3 Following the consultation, a final version of the Model Code was published. A copy is at Appendix A.

2.1.4 The most obvious change brought in by the Model Code is that it is written in the 'first person'. It has been suggested that doing so may reinforce to members that it is about them and their obligations.

2.1.5 It has also been suggested that, in setting out a desire for a Model Code in their report, the Committee of Standards in Public Life (CSPL) were anticipating that this would come after the government had considered its response and dealt with any legislative needs to introduce recommended changes. As it stands, the Model Code is likely to need revision as and when a formal government response is forthcoming, should that response result in any legislative change.

2.1.6 The LGA has committed to review its Model Code on an annual basis, which is in line with the recommended review period in the CSPL report. One potential advantage of adopting the Model Code in full might be that it reduces the necessity to consult and review the Code of Conduct on an annual, or bi-annual basis. Clearly, there would still be a need to review any amendments and make a decision as to whether these should be adopted here in Kirklees and how the model code was operating in general. In such circumstances, any revisions to the Model Code would be reported to this committee.

- 2.1.7 The LGA has also undertaken to prepare and deliver training on the Model Code. Again, one advantage of this is that we may be able to use this as part of our training supplemented with any relevant additions through local training.
- 2.1.8 Within West Yorkshire, the Model Code has so far been adopted in full by Calderdale Council. Leeds City Council were recommending its adoption. Wakefield Council are recommending its adoption with some amendments.
- 2.1.9 A number of interested parties have commented on the Model Code. These include Lawyers in Local Government (LLG), who conducted a survey of Monitoring Officers. LLG described the response as 'lukewarm' with principal concerns being that the Model Code was less robust than many existing codes and also over whether it accurately reflected the legal position with regards to members acting in a private capacity.
- 2.1.10 Of the Monitoring Officers who responded to the survey, 20% reported plans to adopt the Model Code in full, with a further 20% reporting plans to adopt the Model Code in part. 55% reported that the Model Code would not be being adopted and, of those 55%, 25% reported that they were planning no changes to their existing Codes whilst the remaining 30% reported that some changes were planned.
- 2.1.11 The Law Society Gazette reported on the draft Code and consultation and makes a valuable point that the Code is '*readily understandable in plain English*'. Having a Code that is easy to understand is important, as members of the public are likely to want to refer to it and it is also likely to be less ambiguous or open to interpretation.
- 2.1.12 Kirklees has 3 options with regards to the model code:
- i) adopt the code in full;
 - ii) adopt parts of the code;
 - iii) retain its own code.
- 2.1.13 Given that the Model Code is based on the recommendations made by the CSPL and that since publication of the CSPL report in early 2019, this committee has been instrumental in looking at the various recommendations and implementing those that could be done on a voluntary basis, there is not a great deal of difference between the current Kirklees code and model code.
- 2.1.14 The principal non-stylistic differences between the two codes are:
- lack of reference and explanation around 'other interests' in the model code
 - a lower limit of £25 in the current Kirklees code compared to a limit of £50 in respect of gifts and hospitality in the model code,

2.1.15 Members are invited to consider and discuss the options available to inform a further report to this Committee with recommendations about whether to adopt the code in full or with any amendments.

2.1. 16 It is not intended to make a decision at Standards Committee at this stage. It is proposed that a report come back to this Committee taking into account comments today and once it has been possible to do a full assessment of the feedback from the survey which is considered below. Given the level of the feedback we have had it would be helpful to consider that in greater depth before making any proposals about whether we adopt the LGA Model code and/or make any other changes to the Code or the Standards process or any other steps we might wish to take to change what we do in Kirklees.

2.2 Kirklees Standards Survey

2.2.1 Members will recall that one of the recommendations of the CSPL was that there should be an annual review / consultation of the Code of Conduct. This Committee considered that a full consultation involving many stakeholders annually might be impractical and considered that instead it should do something two yearly with a smaller review as part of the review of the constitution in other years. The Stakeholder survey is the first consultation of this type that we have carried out.

The standards consultation was conducted by means of an online survey that was widely publicised throughout Kirklees. As you will note it encouraged responses from Members, officers, members of the public, voluntary organisations and partners, Town and parish Councillors and their clerks, the independent person, as well as Monitoring officers from WYLAW

It comprised of a number of questions, some of which were structured and had 'tick boxes' for responses, while others allowed the respondent to enter text comments.

The survey asked initially what role the respondent had and, depending on the answer to that, tailored questions to the respondent. By way of example, anyone completing the survey as a Monitoring Officer would have been asked more questions than a member of the public, those additional questions relating more specifically to their knowledge and experience as Monitoring Officers.

The survey ran from the 1st of February to the 8th of March and 661 responses were received.

2.2.2 The responses to the structured questions are set out in Appendix B.

2.2.3 The general picture from these results is:

- it is important to the respondents that Councillors are respectful and adopt good behaviour – 99% of respondents felt this was *very important or important*
- it is important that Councillors are held accountable for poor behaviour and that they respond to any sanctions – 99% of respondents felt this was *very important or important*
- a significant number of respondents were unaware of the Code of Conduct or the complaints process and member sanctions
- only 28% of respondents felt that the current sanctions were sufficient to address poor behaviour
- 94% of respondents *agreed or strongly agreed* that there should be a power to impose financial penalties, such as removal of allowances
- 96% of respondents *agreed or strongly agreed* that there should be a power to suspend
- 97% of respondents wanted to see the website updated to record when sanctions have been complied with
- the majority of respondents who were asked felt that Town and Parish Councils should have a role in the complaints process, particularly where Town and Parish members were the subject of complaints

2.2.4 The views given in the comments boxes is at Appendix C.

2.2.5 The general picture from these is that they do support and amplify the responses given to the 'tick box' questions. Overall, there does appear to be a level of dissatisfaction with the process, but principally with the ability to enforce standards decisions and the available sanctions.

2.2.6 With regards to whether or not the results of the survey could or should lead to changes to the Code of Conduct of the standards process, it is to be noted that the principal concerns of the respondents cannot be addressed fully without some legislative changes.

2.2.7 These views may, however, be helpful in supporting and amplifying any formal response from Kirklees to central government on the subject of sanctions and may help to secure cross party support for this.

2.2.7 The number of responses we received were much higher than we originally anticipated which we were very pleased with as it gives us lots of information to inform what we might do going forwards and to stimulate some initial discussion today.

2.2.8 Given the number of responses received to the survey, it is not possible to provide this committee now with a comprehensive analysis of the survey results and it is therefore proposed that further work will be done to identify any possible changes to the Code of Conduct or standards process and also to see how the council can best use the information included in the feedback to raise the awareness of member standards in Kirklees. A further report will be made to the committee.

2.2.9 An initial analysis also shows that there are some other pieces of work or questions we need to consider as an organisation. It is possibly the case that the understanding of the functions and role of the council, not just in respect of the issue of standards, is unclear to members of the public. This is an opportunity to undertake some work around the role of the council, to reflect its real impact on people's lives, and the work it does to support the people of Kirklees. It gives an opportunity for members to consider their role in that.

2.2.10 The survey also presents an opportunity to look at a number of other areas, including (though not limited to):

- working with partners
- the council's reputation
- member-officer relationships
- sanctions and how to make them as effective as possible
- social media behaviour

2.2.11 Members are invited to discuss and comment on the survey and inform how it might be used to change the Code of Conduct, influence behaviours moving forwards as well as any other things we may need to look at as a result.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

N/A

3.2 Working with Partners

N/A

3.3 Place Based Working

N/A

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

In order to minimise any impact, printing is kept to a minimum.

3.5 Improving outcomes for children

N/A

3.6 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources) Consultees and their opinions

The promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct by councillors is an important part of maintaining public confidence in both the council and its members. Failure to do so could have significant reputational implications.

4. Next steps and timelines

4.1 LGA Model Code of Conduct

- 4.1.1 The Monitoring Officer will continue to look for a response to the CSPL report from central government.
- 4.1.2 The Monitoring Officer will also consider any comments or views from this committee in considering what changes, if any, should be made to the Kirklees code of conduct.

4.2 Kirklees Standards Survey

- 4.2.1 Due to the volume of information that the survey has provided, it is proposed that further consideration and analysis is made by the Monitoring Officer and a more detailed report is brought back to this committee.
- 4.2.2 Part of the more detailed work will look at the issues highlighted in parts 2.2.9 and 10 that have been brought up by the survey responses.

5 Officer recommendations and reasons

Members are asked to:

- 5.1 Note the large number of responses to the survey and thank those who took the time to contribute to that survey.
- 5.2 Consider the report and comment on its contents (as applicable).

6 Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

N/A

7 Contact officer

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8 Background Papers and History of Decisions

LGA Model Code of Conduct
CSPL report
previous reports to Standards Committee

9 Service Director responsible

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Appendix A



Local Government Association

Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020

Joint statement

The role of councillor across all tiers of local government is a vital part of our country's system of democracy. It is important that as councillors we can be held accountable and all adopt the behaviors and responsibilities associated with the role. Our conduct as an individual councillor affects the reputation of all councillors. We want the role of councillor to be one that people aspire to. We also want individuals from a range of backgrounds and circumstances to be putting themselves forward to become councillors.

As councillors, we represent local residents, work to develop better services and deliver local change. The public have high expectations of us and entrust us to represent our local area; taking decisions fairly, openly, and transparently. We have both an individual and collective responsibility to meet these expectations by maintaining high standards and demonstrating good conduct, and by challenging behaviour which falls below expectations.

Importantly, we should be able to undertake our role as a councillor without being intimidated, abused, bullied or threatened by anyone, including the general public.

This Code has been designed to protect our democratic role, encourage good conduct and safeguard the public's trust in local government.

Introduction

The Local Government Association (LGA) has developed this Model Councillor Code of Conduct, in association with key partners and after extensive consultation with the sector, as part of its work on supporting all tiers of local government to continue to aspire to high standards of leadership and performance. It is a template for councils to adopt in whole and/or with local amendments.

All councils are required to have a local Councillor Code of Conduct.

The LGA will undertake an annual review of this Code to ensure it continues to be fit-for-purpose, incorporating advances in technology, social media and changes in legislation. The LGA can also offer support, training and mediation to councils and councillors on the application of the Code and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the county associations of local councils can offer advice and support to town and parish councils.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a “councillor” means a member or co-opted member of a local authority or a directly elected mayor. A “co-opted member” is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as “a person who is not a member of the authority but who

- a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;
- b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority;

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee”.

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, “local authority” includes county councils, district councils, London borough councils, parish councils, town councils, fire and rescue authorities, police authorities, joint authorities, economic prosperity boards, combined authorities and National Park authorities.

Purpose of the Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a councillor, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow councillors, local authority officers and the reputation of local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all councillors and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The LGA encourages the use of support, training and mediation prior to action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of councillor and local government.

General principles of councillor conduct

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors and local authority officers; should uphold the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#), also known as the Nolan Principles.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of councillor.

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- ☐ I act with integrity and honesty
- ☐ I act lawfully
- ☐ I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- ☐ I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of councillor.

In undertaking my role:

- ☐ I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- ☐ I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- ☐ I avoid conflicts of interest
- ☐ I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- ☐ I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my local authority's requirements and in the public interest.

Application of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of the office of councillor or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a councillor.

This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:

- ☐ you misuse your position as a councillor
- ☐ Your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a councillor;

The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times when acting as a councillor.

Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from your Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct. Town and parish councillors are encouraged to seek advice from their Clerk, who may refer matters to the Monitoring Officer.

Standards of councillor conduct

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a councillor. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

General Conduct

1. Respect

As a councillor:

1.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.

1.2 I treat local authority employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the local authority with respect and respect the role they play.

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in councillors.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the local authority, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow councillors, where action could then be taken under the Councillor Code of Conduct, and local authority employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the local authority's councillor-officer protocol.

2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination

As a councillor:

2.1 I do not bully any person

2.2 I do not harass any person

2.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate,

denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

3. Impartiality of officers of the council

As a councillor:

3.1 I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the local authority.

Officers work for the local authority as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they are political assistants). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

4. Confidentiality and access to information

As a councillor:

4.1 I do not disclose information:

a. given to me in confidence by anyone

b. acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless

i. I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;

ii. I am required by law to do so;

iii. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or

iv. the disclosure is:

1. Reasonable and in the public interest; and

2. Made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and

3. I have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.

4.2 I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a councillor for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.

4.3 I do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.

Local authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the local authority must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

5. Disrepute

As councillor:

5.1 I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute.

As a Councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other councillors and/or your local authority and may lower the public's confidence in your or your local authority's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring your local authority into disrepute.

You are able to hold the local authority and fellow councillors to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

6. Use of position

As a councillor:

6.1 I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.

Your position as a member of the local authority provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities, and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

7. Use of local authority resources and facilities

As a councillor:

7.1 I do not misuse council resources.

7.2 I will, when using the resources of the local or authorising their use by others:

a. act in accordance with the local authority's requirements; and

- b. ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the local authority or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.**

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the local authority to assist you in carrying out your duties as a councillor.

Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones, and computers
- transport
- access and use of local authority buildings and rooms.

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a councillor more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the local authority's own policies regarding their use.

8. Complying with the Code

As a councillor:

8.1 I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my local authority.

8.2 I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.

8.3 I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.

8.4 I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.

It is extremely important for you as a councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the local authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the local authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Monitoring Officer.

Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the local authority

9. Interests

As a councillor:

9.1 I register and disclose my interests.

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the authority .

You need to register your interests so that the public, local authority employees and fellow councillors know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that

can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in **Table 1**, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from your Monitoring Officer.

10. Gifts and hospitality

As a councillor:

- 10.1 I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.**
- 10.2 I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.**
- 10.3 I register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.**

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the local authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a councillor. If you are unsure, do contact your Monitoring Officer for guidance.

Appendices

Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public Life

The principles are:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain

financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Appendix B Registering interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

"Disclosable Pecuniary Interest" means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

"Partner" means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.
5. Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –
 - a. your own financial interest or well-being;
 - b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative, close associate; or
 - c. a body included in those you need to disclose under Other Registrable Interests as set out in **Table 2**

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied

9. Where a matter **affects** your financial interest or well-being:
 - a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
 - b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

10. Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you have made an executive decision in relation to that business, you must make sure that any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of your interest.

Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.]

Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the

	councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land and Property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licenses	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.

Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.</p>
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* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2: Other Registrable Interests

You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

- a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- b) any body
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
 - (ii) any body directed to charitable purposes or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

Appendix C – the Committee on Standards in Public Life

The LGA has undertaken this review whilst the Government continues to consider the recommendations made by the Committee on Standards in Public Life in their report on [Local Government Ethical Standards](#). If the Government chooses to implement any of the recommendations, this could require a change to this Code.

The recommendations cover:

- Recommendations for changes to the Localism Act 2011 to clarify in law when the Code of Conduct applies
- The introduction of sanctions
- An appeals process through the Local Government Ombudsman
- Changes to the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012
- Updates to the Local Government Transparency Code
- Changes to the role and responsibilities of the Independent Person
- That the criminal offences in the Localism Act 2011 relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests should be abolished

The Local Government Ethical Standards report also includes Best Practice recommendations. These are:

Best practice 1: Local authorities should include prohibitions on bullying and harassment in codes of conduct. These should include a definition of bullying and harassment, supplemented with a list of examples of the sort of behaviour covered by such a definition.

Best practice 2: Councils should include provisions in their code of conduct requiring councillors to comply with any formal standards investigation and prohibiting trivial or malicious allegations by councillors.

Best practice 3: Principal authorities should review their code of conduct each year and regularly seek, where possible, the views of the public, community organisations and neighbouring authorities.

Best practice 4: An authority's code should be readily accessible to both councillors and the public, in a prominent position on a council's website and available in council premises.

Best practice 5: Local authorities should update their gifts and hospitality register at least once per quarter, and publish it in an accessible format, such as CSV.

Best practice 6: Councils should publish a clear and straightforward public interest test against which allegations are filtered.

Best practice 7: Local authorities should have access to at least two Independent Persons.

Best practice 8: An Independent Person should be consulted as to whether to undertake a formal investigation on an allegation, and should be given the option to review and comment on allegations which the responsible officer is minded to dismiss as being without merit, vexatious, or trivial.

Best practice 9: Where a local authority makes a decision on an allegation of misconduct following a formal investigation, a decision notice should be published as soon as possible on its website, including a brief statement of facts, the provisions of the code engaged by the allegations, the view of the Independent Person, the reasoning of the decision-maker, and any sanction applied.

Best practice 10: A local authority should have straightforward and accessible guidance on its website on how to make a complaint under the code of conduct, the process for handling complaints, and estimated timescales for investigations and outcomes.

Best practice 11: Formal standards complaints about the conduct of a parish councillor towards a clerk should be made by the chair or by the parish council, rather than the clerk in all but exceptional circumstances.

Best practice 12: Monitoring Officers' roles should include providing advice, support and management of investigations and adjudications on alleged breaches to parish councils within the remit of the principal authority. They should be provided with adequate training, corporate support and resources to undertake this work.

Best practice 13: A local authority should have procedures in place to address any conflicts of interest when undertaking a standards investigation. Possible steps should include asking the Monitoring Officer from a different authority to undertake the investigation.

Best practice 14: Councils should report on separate bodies they have set up or which they own as part of their annual governance statement and give a full picture of their relationship with those bodies. Separate bodies created by local authorities should abide by the Nolan principle of openness and publish their board agendas and minutes and annual reports in an accessible place.

Best practice 15: Senior officers should meet regularly with political group leaders or group whips to discuss standards issues.

The LGA has committed to reviewing the Code on an annual basis to ensure it is still fit for purpose.

Appendix B

Kirklees councillor standards process - stakeholder survey

Note on redactions

It has been necessary to make some redactions to the comments, as these either named councillors or provided details that could have led to the identification of the members referred to.

Pronouns have been replaced by their/them/they're. No other words have been altered and no corrections to spelling errors / typos have been made.

Names and other identifiers have been replaced by xxxxxxxx (the number of x does not correspond to the number of letters that have been redacted). These are anything that could lead to a member being identified and include political groups, ward names, and committee names as well as member names.

If it has not been possible to redact fully, this has been noted.

Any replacement words have been italicised to identify them as replacements.

Kirklees councillor standards process - stakeholder survey

661 responses received to an online survey January - March 2021.

This marked up questionnaire provides a summary of results and a full list of all comments received. The comments are in a separate document, appended to this.

Are you completing this survey as... (Select all that apply)

495	A local citizen
8	A previous complainant (someone who has made a complaint about a councillor)
12	A community group
213	A Kirklees Council employee
24	A local councillor
0	A Group Business Manager (someone who manages the councillors in a political group)
10	A town or parish councillor or clerk
6	An Independent Person or Monitoring Officer (non-political roles ensuring fair decision making and compliance with standards)

Please note that, as respondents could reply in more than one capacity, the figures above total more than 661.

Do you work closely with councillors? This will help us ask you relevant questions in the survey.

63 (30%)	Yes
85 (40%)	Sometimes
63 (30%)	No

How important is it to you that...

	Very important	Important	Not important	Not at all important
Councillors are respectful and treat people fairly	601 (93%)	43 (7%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)
Councillors set a good example through their behaviour	585 (91%)	53 (8%)	1 (0%)	1 (0%)
Councillors are held accountable for their behaviour	610 (95%)	30 (5%)	1 (0%)	1 (0%)
Anyone is able to raise a complaint about a councillor	541 (84%)	94 (15%)	4 (1%)	2 (0%)
Councillors respond appropriately to any required sanctions (actions to address poor behaviour), following the completion of a complaint	582 (91%)	54 (8%)	1 (0%)	1 (0%)

Are you aware that we support good councillor behaviour through...

	Yes	No	Unsure
A Code of Conduct which sets out the standards of behaviour required of councillors	361 (56%)	234 (36%)	49 (8%)
A complaint process if someone has a concern about a councillor's behaviour	366 (57%)	222 (34%)	56 (9%)
Putting sanctions in place to help maintain good standards	258 (41%)	286 (45%)	93 (15%)

Have you ever experienced poor behaviour on the part of an elected councillor?

319 (49%)	Yes
336 (51%)	No

Have you ever experienced good behaviour on the part of an elected councillor?

390 (61%)	Yes
253 (39%)	No

Sanctions

Sanctions currently include:

- requiring a councillor to apologise for any breach of the Code of Conduct
- requiring a councillor to undertake remedial action, e.g. deleting a social media post that has breached the Code
- requiring a councillor to undertake training
- being removed from committee roles
- formal censure by the council

Do you think the sanctions currently available sufficiently address poor behaviour?

180 (28%)	Yes
287 (45%)	In most cases, but not all
174 (27%)	No

In their review on Local Government Ethical Standards, the Committee on Standards in Public Life recommends some more serious sanctions be made available.

How much do you agree the following sanctions should be used in Kirklees, if legislation made them available to us?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The power to impose a financial penalty (e.g. removal of allowances)	399 (63%)	195 (31%)	33 (5%)	9 (1%)
The power to suspend councillors, without allowances, for up to 6 months	463 (71%)	164 (25%)	19 (3%)	4 (1%)
Another sanction - please specify below:*	151 (73%)	34 (16%)	19 (9%)	4 (2%)

*See Appendix for the comments

Where a complaint has proceeded to a formal investigation, the outcome is currently published on the council's website.

Do you think outcomes should be updated to record when councillors have complied with the sanction imposed, where a finding of a breach of the Code of Conduct is made?

633 (97%)	Yes
20 (3%)	No

What do you consider to be an appropriate time limit, from an issue occurring with regards to a councillor's behaviour or actions, for someone to make a complaint?

18 (10%)	Up to 1 month
47 (26%)	Up to 3 months
13 (7%)	Up to 6 months
7 (4%)	Up to 12 months
7 (4%)	Up to 24 months
92 (50%)	Different time limits based on the nature of the complaint

Complaints can sometimes refer to a pattern of poor behaviour, which becomes apparent over a period of time. In cases like this, do you think...

31 (17%)	The agreed time limit should still apply from the latest occurrence
149 (83%)	Time limits should be considered on a case by case basis

How much do you agree that...

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Town and Parish councils should have a role in decisions around complaints	12 (32%)	16 (42%)	8 (21%)	2 (5%)
Town and Parish councils should be able to participate in the Kirklees standards process when this relates to Town and Parish councillors	19 (50%)	16 (42%)	1 (3%)	2 (5%)
There should be one consistent Code of Conduct for councillors and Town and Parish councillors	28 (74%)	7 (18%)	2 (5%)	1 (3%)

Kirklees councillor standards process - stakeholder survey comments

Are you able to give any examples of poor councillor behaviour?

289 comments:

- "Members shouting over each other at council meetings when virtually"
- "Councillors not responding to emails."
- "Dismissing important issues as frivolous because the decision has already been made. Lack of having an open mind. Not following up on issues to this conclusion"
- "A councillor shouting at someone who they thought had undermined *them*, when in fact it was a fellow councillor's action that caused the upset. No apology was given and the individual has been informed that they can never work for the Council. A clear abuse of power but what can you do?"
- "Failure to respond re a complaint of the high speed of vehicles using xxxxxxxx lane. The combs and The common in xxxxxxxx "
- "Poor behaviour in Full Council"
- "I have experienced when a councillor and chairperson of a sub committee who makes promises and never fulfils those promises"
- *It was not possible to anonymise this comment.*
- "Don't deliver tangible results when asked to help remedy ward level issues"
- "Councillor swearing in their mother tongue language. Be littling community members atca meeting."
- "N/A"
- "Are you asking personal behaviour or not responding to something that as a resident would like them to see what they can do on your behalf?"
- "Yes they came to my door around election time and after and I asked them some questions n they were rude and very unprofessional and argumentative"
- "They lie to you"
- "Attacking council services on social media when staff are doing their best and it is counterproductive"
- " xxxxxxxx at *Town/Parish Council*. *They* constantly crises kirklees employees through *their* fiefdom at *Town/Parish* council. *They* is incapable of giving positive praise to employees and masks *their* criticism by pretending it is at the executive. *They* plays a game in the local media where nothing is *their* fault and everything is somebody else's. If *they* could be removed from office it would be a good send.."
- "Not dong thief job fobbing people off"
- "Poor parking and lack of response, having to chase this up."
- "Councillor xxxxxxxx never replies to email."
- "A basic failure to respond to reasonable email questions and requests concerning local issues."
- "Not personally but not overly impressed with how planning applications and the like are dealth with"
- "Deliberate misrepresentation of facts"
- "Cllr xxxxxxxx refused to help me as I don't vote xxxxxxxx acted unprofessional by shouting and blocked me on social media for asking a question xxxxxxxx refused to engage with my work place"
- "Past experience where councillors used their position to block investment and development of Park Mill as a cycling venue. A £10,000 grant was rejected and returned to the funder. The Bike project then collapsed."
- "As an employee of the council, I had an enquiry from a councillor on behalf of a constituent. I gave

my professional opinion on the matter which was not the same as the councillors. The councillor was very patronising and told me that because I was only an officer and *they* was a councillor, I should concur with *their* opinion. When I refused *they* asked to escalate the matter to my manager (who backed me). I considered raising a formal complaint but at the time I wasn't confident enough to do so."

- "Certain Councillors can be very demeaning in their responses. On a certain occasion I brought this up with my Manager when a Councillor spoke down to me but it didn't go anywhere."
- "Rude, opinionated, demanding, not listening properly, not acting on facts, belittling, treating as if dirt (not high enough up the power chain to warrant listening to)"
- "My partner works for the Council and has had to suffer bullying from the local Councillor doing *their* Don't you know who I am"
- *It was not possible to anonymise this comment.*
- "Distribution of leaflets on a planning matter requesting people objects based on false claims."
- "Lack of response to emails asking for help."
- " xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx lying at anything they think they can get away with."
- "I complained about the current state of the road surfaces in my locality. Fobbed off with " I will get round to it " and " Your not of interest to me " attitude. To be blunt, can't be arsed comes to mind."
- "My local councilors do nothing they shouldn't be payed the wage they receive. You've got local councillors that have done nothing through this pandemic but other like xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx working their backsides off I wish I was in their ward instead I'm in xxxxxxxx you see no actions from the xxxxxxxx councilors it a sham they shouldn't get payed. You've got a xxxxxxxx that advertises Muslim businesses I thought they wasn't allowed to do that? The councilors need a good shake up they should make it so the ward that they serve decide weather or not they get a pay rise."
- "Not replied to emails"
- "I don't vote xxxxxxxx and it is well known. But when I need help, I was basically told to get stuffed"
- "I have contacted *local MP* on a number of occasions about various things and been totally ignored or a pointless response 3 months late"
- "I have made contact with all 3 local Cllrs in my area and only one of them bothered to reply and offer any help"
- "No my experience with councillors has been amazing they really do care for the community."
- "Invisibility. Lack of openness. Vested interests."
- "After initial response to correspondence no further action or follow up ."
- "Not at the moment but i will fill another survey in, in the months coming"
- "Lack of information and accountability from xxxxxxxx councillors on serious issues regarding planning permission in housing. Also complete disregard for number of takeaway outlets in middle of town, causing shocking litter and vermin infestation on a daily/nightly basis."
- "Not been listened to along with my neighbours on the erection of a park behind my house which years after still promotes plenty of antisocial behaviour as we knew it would ,and recently the erection of a covid testing tent at the side and behind my house which has effected my buisness from home childminding ."
- "Not ever seen or heard our councillor only on lamp post when voting for them"
- "The one on our area xxxxxxxx may as well jot be a councillor, nonone has seen *them* since she was elected."
- "*Local MP* hasstling parents outside schools to win votes"
- "they appear to not do much for the money they are paid and tend to never be available"
- "Nil"
- "3 emails.sent to *Local MP* regarding a subject i and many feel Stronly about, but no reply to any of them"
- "When meetings are arranged to oppose certain proposals in the local area which are unpopular. And then the meeting times are changed at the last minute in order to prevent people attending to oppose any such proposals is an example of foul play should not be part of our society."

- "Putting up council tax roll on elections you will be removed people can't afford it"
- "Since xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx left the council I have not seen ANY councillors come into xxxxxxxx except during election times."
- "Cllr xxxxxxxx and Cllr xxxxxxxx both xxxxxxxx "
- "No"
- "I use to work in Huddersfield Town Hall and saw first hand how arrogant and ignorant some counsellors can be."
- "Two current xxxxxxxx councillors (xxxxxxx Party) who refuse to engage with their local constituents. One previous xxxxxxxx councillor from the xxxxxxxx who was overtly racist towards local residents."
- "Unprofessional manner at meetings, Displaying arrogance and lack of respect to residents and their views in planning meetings which is reflected in decisions. Behaviour that actually confirms their own ignorance and lack of respect for the electorate."
- "Difficult to get responses to concerns/queries from local councillors. As a community group we feel our concerns are often not taken seriously"
- " xxxxxxxx Councillors are not interested in there area, they can't return emails or show up for events in the area, when asked to help with any issues it is passed off as not important. There are other councillors outside the xxxxxxxx area that are helpful & even them councillors have said the xxxxxxxx ones are useless."
- "Either no response or reluctance to engage or deal with the issue in question . Find it easy to pass the complaint or help requested to another body that miraculously gets lost without trace ."
- "Turning up for a photo opportunity with a celebrity but ignoring the needs of the local community."
- "Voted in and not available when required! Not easily available, doesn't visit the area to see what needs actioning, doesn't take action to queries or concerns. Kirklees dismiss it!"
- "As a past Kirklees council employee, some of the councillor's attitudes to employees was less than acceptable. This was not the majority, but was quite a number."
- "No"
- "Lack of support from xxxxxxxx Councillors when reporting anti social behaviour .Hadh't the decency to reply."
- *It was not possible to anonymise this comment.*
- "When you complain about the state of xxxxxxxx rubbish on streets .too many take aways .too many businesses in small areas .the council ignore you . xxxxxxxx used to be great place to live .now third world dump."
- "Trying to contact councillors with regards issues but they never answer the phone . On several occasions have contacted Cllr xxxxxxxx but never answers the phone or replies to messages."
- "do not respond"
- *It was not possible to anonymise this comment.*
- "Don't listen to reasoned advice. Totally political rather than for the good of the neighbourhood they represent."
- "Laughing off genuine concerns."
- "Hopefully all our counsellors act and behave appropriately"
- " xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx being rude and verbally aggressive to several members of public at a meeting in xxxxxxxx. I complained but was pointless."
- "No"
- "None."
- "not replying to a communication with a request for the councillor to consider taking a certain action"
- "a Councillor nominated to serve a local organisation as as Council Representative who has never attended a meeting or even acknowledged their appointment ... except in their on-line council profile"
- "I followed procedure to request resident parking arrangements with local support. I submitted a plan for consideration. Eventually a Councillor came to sire to discuss proposals and: Said they would not go forward for discussion as *they* was against them Refused to look at the side saying *they* knew it

well Refused to watch me measure comparative road width when he made a wrong assertion Said he would put yellow lines in extensively as parked cars hindered his daily homeward journey."

- "Yes they have not listened to things I have said previously only partially hearing what was said only by chance I think things happened"
- "Certain *Town/Parish* councillors are practising nepotism"
- "Not being available when there are genuine concerns. Putting private enterprises above the well-being of residents."
- "You just need to watch the online council meetings to witness this. I am fed up of political point-scoring wrangling between councillors - specifically xxxxxxxx v xxxxxxxx. This needs to stop - it's like watching nursery children sometimes and does absolutely nothing for anyone living in the borough. I understand that you have differing views but find a way to be more constructive (and that goes for xxxxxxxx also)!"
- "Berating council staff disrespectfully and refusing to listen to reasoning or going through the proper channels."
- "Inappropriate sexist remark.(Councillor 1) Using information provided in confidence in a work situation as political point scoring in the local press. Taking personal /party credit for events they have been involved in but not responsible for creating or running. Using a community event being held on council premises as an opportunity to invite his party MP to personally canvass the attendants on the run up to the last General Election.(Councillor 2)"
- "I had a lot of problems, over a three year period, with the councillors who sit on the planning committee. They even went as far as to ignore the kirklees council planning regulations and only backed down when I told the then council leader that I would take kirklees to court. xxxxxxxx and the planning committee at Kirsten a disgrace."
- "Racist comments made by a local xxxxxxxx councillor.....(not to me personally). *It was not possible to anonymise the remainder of this comment.*"
- "No never met a councillor"
- "None in Kirklees - the example happened in Rochdale 12 years ago and was a totally false allegation made by a xxxxxxxx councillor that the local UNISON branch had donated money directly to the xxxxxxxx party - such donations by branches are expressly forbidden under UNISON rules."
- "Ignoring complaints and phone calls"
- "Poor response in respect of matter raised"
- "Sometimes too mainstream political then at local elections preaches it's not about national politics,."
- "bullying"
- "contacted *Local MP* and was ignored, contacted kirklees councillors and was ignored by most and fobbed off by the one who did at least bother to respond"
- *It was not possible to anonymise this part of the comment*, shouting at other councillors in web cast council meeting. Not allowing everyone to have their say"
- "Failure to reply to e-mails and no examples of what they are doing for the community"
- "Being ""frosty""; defensive and resistant when asked to pursue a justifiable and evidence based request for a change to be made to the inappropriate wording of a Council Tax letter relating to the single person household discount. I needed to ""stand my ground"" - in order to achieve the outcome that I was seeking on behalf of myself but also from a ""bigger picture"" perspective too - since other Kirklees residents were receiving the same style of letter. I was not at all impressed by the lengths I had to go to, in this instance!!"
- "Never see anything about our local councillors , dont know what they are doing , planning who they are not a dickie bird."
- "I asked a councillor what could be done (over two years ago) about the appalling amount of dog faeces on the street (and it is now so much worse during the Pandemic). I asked if notices could be put up reminding dog owners of their responsibilities and was told there was no point, they take no notice. Is this really Kirklees' response to poor citizenship?"
- "Non attendance at meetings as requested by a new business owner"

- "Not paying council tax Too friendly with developers Not strong enough to do the right thing for residents so block things just for votes"
- "Bullying by a cllr in a phone call some years ago. I was left extremely upset by the things *they* accused me of and then *they* asked me to keep the call secret. I discovered later *they* had done this to other staff."
- "No"
- "Failing to act by not listening to people's concerns therefore costing the council more expense"
- "Multiple promises to call back but no call received"
- "Hi I'm a Tech entrepreneur and own three companies, the councillors that run our towns couldn't be trusted to run a bath, we need people with exceptional business acumen to manage our kids futures, not someone who gets block votes from corrupt people."
- "Attacking of fellow councillors over social media. Continually publicising only negative opinions and updates about current labour council. Widely encouraging citizens to spam council leaders and xxxxxxxx Party councillors over minor local issues through publicising personal email addresses. General and constant lack of any collaborative effort to work with the wider council or represent the council in a professional manner."
- "Exploiting good police/ neighbourhood work and taking credit for it Making claims on social media that they personally secured funding for new xxxxxxxx A cllr lying about being abused by members of public whilst attending and promoting a xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx in xxxxxxxx, this was observed not to be the fact by council staff and WYP"
- "complaint about council employees riding round with up to FOUR employees in vehicles : refuse vehicles: highways vehicles during covid. apart from the dangers not a good example to the public who are complying."
- "I had arranged a meeting with xxxxxxxx once to discuss a number of issues on behalf of some business networking events and as a citizen. *They* missed the first meeting, was late for the second and during it was so dismissive and condescending, including statements like ""why would I care about any cyclist or improving anything for them, they are a menace"". Funny now since COVID pedestrians and cyclists are at the forefront of the Govn agenda regarding healthier living. *They* was so rude about many issues and insinuated the eneral public knew nothing about suggestions that *they* didn't already know."
- "No."
- "no"
- "emails asking the same questions again and again, though already answered. rude and angry emails criticising pieces of work as ""woke"" as they refer to current movements such as black lives matter. answers to public complaints or press enquiries which are not well informed and counter to council or service strategy, with no check with officers first, leading to reputational damage for the council"
- "Lack of visibility and support in certain areas within Kirklees"
- "As a committee member of a charitable organisation in the xxxxxxxx Area we have experienced their total lack of interest and help with anti social behaviour around our club that has been going on for at least 3-4 years. Despite numerous emails and pleas for help from us they have only responded a couple of times with no real offer of support whatsoever to safeguard our junior and adult members."
- "Cllr xxxxxxxx who during the change for children moving out of xxxxxxxx attended some of the parent meetings and gave evidence that was used by the scrutiny used figures that were in correct and despite many emails that I sent to *them* asking for further information promised lots and delivered NOTHING"
- "There is a point of view that some councillors look to secure the role of councillor to protect / benefit their own interests over those of the community they are in place to serve"
- "Failure to respond to correspondence addressed to a councillor of a ward in which I used to live, despite the fact that the local party of the councillor concerned expressed in its literature a commitment to replying promptly to constituents' complaints, problems or suggestions."
- "A lack of transparency - not telling local citizens how their funding is being utilised."

- "Reporting a need to clear a path and drive for a lady so her carers could call only to find that there were family members in the property who were fit and able to do the task request by a councillor this is a misuse of council staffs time"
- "yes *they* would not come to the public meetings..and councillors of Asian cultures looking after Asian people so they get what they want looking after number one to make sure they get Elected. disgusting this day and age"
- "People ignoring parking laws no action taken"
- "No specific Councillor but as a citizen of xxxxxxxx we are all continuously ignored in our needs, all along the high street there is always takeaway boxes and rubbish thrown around. As well as a whole host of other problems which Councillors do not care about."
- "When they are pushing for things to be resolved for local residents regardless of policies and procedures."
- "1: Rudeness, questioning professionalism and bullying by telephone 2: Discriminatory language and questioning of political bias used in email 3: Unreasonable pressure to carry out tasks within a very short timeframe, while not understanding existing workload/priorities 4: Pressure to respond to things in a certain way, based on personal interest or prejudice, rather than evidence of need from communities"
- "Unresponsive"
- "1. The xxxxxxxx councilors say they do not have enough time to deal with my complaint and I need to contact Kirklees Council. 2. The councilors are not available to working xxxxxxxx i.e. having a second job. 3. The councilors do not want to talk about local matters and problems affecting the town."
- "A Council not communicating effectively and residents having to chase for information. It could be that council policy allows for bad behaviour. For example submitting forms and having no response. There appears to be no time lines and no accountability. The councillor blames officers!!"
- " xxxxxxxx & xxxxxxxx "
- "Bullying behaviour towards council staff, which was shrugged off as unimportant."
- "Bullying"
- "At Committee's, Cabinet and Council as well as complaining about council services in the media. Accelerating case work by dramatic claims which are subsequently regurgitated by the echo chamber by the opposition members to the administration"
- "A councillor altering minutes of a community meeting to suit their views, rather than the decision agreed at the meeting. This subsequently had to be corrected at the next meeting."
- "I have been harassed and bullied by Parish Councillors, who come under the same Code of Conduct as Kirklees Councillors."
- "No response to an email query."
- "councillors not responding to queries/messages etc. councillors lying about council policy"
- "Local councillor supporting demolition of historic building. *They* had been approached by the owner and despite lots of objections from locals to the destruction of a local landmark *they* supported the owners and ignored communications from local people. Local opinion was that *they* was a friend of the owners and supported them rather than the community *they* represented."
- "after complaints about illegal parking causing a dangerous hazard to road users local councillors completely ignore the safety and legal issues involved"
- "Where to start! I used to work for the council and was responsible for training them. I have witnessed rude bullying behaviour, a don't you know who I am attitude, racism, ignorance, petty partisan squabbling and pointscoring, apathy and my personal favourite as a resident was the council tax scandal with several councillors not paying!!!"
- "terrible planning application decisions"
- "Bad language and intimidation during election campaign from one candidate towards another."
- *It was not possible to anonymise this comment.*
- "Being witness to the appalling behaviour by xxxxxxxx, a parish councillor who *it was not possible to anonymise this part of the comment.* *They* has not been dealt with by Kirklees Council. *They* should

have immediately been dismissed and the seat should have been put up for another election."

- "shouting at officers, blame, asking officers to work outside of policy"
- "In my work there have been a couple of councillors who have been undermining, rude and exceeding their authority to influence an outcome. Fortunately these are quite old and recent behaviour is much improved. Councillors are human and fallible but there are some who find it hard to apologise, recognise their error and move on."
- "more neglectful or not fulfilling their role by not replying to letters & e mails sent to them re local & national issues which affect us in Kirklees."
- "only by hearsay and what is reported in the papers"
- "Failure to respond to issues that are clearly council matters: drainage and gully - road collapses road surfacing/road collapse traffic calming and changing speed limits on narrow rural roads highways diversion routes and processes"
- "lots of times"
- "Yes"
- "A ward councillor shouting and belittling. A ward councillor ridiculing The Council"
- "Our town centre is a disgrace we are supposed to be represented by *Local MP* and nothing is being done to improve the centre of town it's absolutely disgraceful especially the New Street area all the benches are broken all the paving is uneven uneven somebody could trip and fall nothing is being done about it the area around the Kingsgate centre including King Street has been spruced up why do we have to wait so long for New Street to receive the same treatment?"
- "Bad attitude - e.g. interrupting conversations (work conversations) Poor communication - e.g. poorly written emails Sense of entitlement - e.g. little flexibility but huge expectations of flexibility from others"
- "Comments on social media not helpful, rather than supporting communities this is often attached with the pushing the party political line. Some councillors can't serve the community in a fair way and favour people who support their views and political alignment."
- "I have not interacted with councillors yet as part of my role so cannot express such opinions."
- "Council xxxxxxxx, associating Kirklees Council with the Black Lives Matter campaign for own person political gain and in doing so causing a larger divide amongst Kirklees residents/neighbourhoods."
- "at committee's through the way that Officers are treated by Councillor, through correspondence with officers"
- "I find the attitude of some councillors on committees that are now shown online in a live stream to come across as unprofessional, lazy, uncaring. This might not be a behaviour, just they don't know how to present themselves online."
- "use their influence to override waiting lists"
- "Placing personal, and rather offensive, beliefs and comments above corporate responsibility in Scrutiny Panels"
- "A cllr has been demanding and argumentative on the phone"
- "I haven't experienced anything first hand, but do hear about the way some councillors speak to officers which doesn't feel appropriate."
- "Negative and Rude tone in phonecalls and emails - going behind your back and asking others when they dont get the response they like - not agreeing with framework we have in place to do jobs so then try and get it done another way to make themselves look good after they have made promises without speaking to staff first."
- "They are often rude and arrogant in their approach when dealing with Council employees and think they are more important than everyone"
- "when councillors tell officers the decision they think an officer should make in relation to a particular resident rather than simply raise the issue that needs to be explored, that can put officers in a very difficult position particularly where they have no power to make the decision that is being suggested and the resident has been copied into the communication."
- "Rude behaviour towards officers; treating officers like their own personal staff and having no respect for officers - either in terms of the information offered or in terms of the treatment towards officers."

Cllr treated officers with contempt and were extremely dismissive (especially if officers did not say what Cllrs wanted to hear) The treatment of officers was not acceptable. I would like to add, this has been the small minority. Most Cllrs are respectful, courteous and demonstrate positive behaviour"

- "Whilst carrying out my role I put safeguarding before the wishes of the individual councillor. I explained myself in detail but the councillor was unhappy with my practice and hasn't really engaged with me since the incident."
- "Overheard in a local pub discussing private matters about local residents."
- "Yes at a parish zoom meeting when one councillor used rude language, and another made inappropriate gestures."
- "unruly and disruptive behaviour of councillors in public meetings, on social media and also in parish councils." *It was not possible to anonymise this comment.*
- "Cannot give any examples however I have been told second-hand information by a colleague who sits on a children's social care panel that a councillor attending often seems to have not read the paperwork."
- "Being ignored on arrival to give a presentation Being wrongly accused of presenting 'biased' data on inequalities between Kirklees wards following a change to locality boundaries Having a Cllr roll their eyes at me when responding to a question from another meeting participant"
- "These matters are historic and have been dealt with and I have no wish to raise them further."
- "Not respectful to residents."
- *It was not possible to anonymise this comment.*
- *It was not possible to anonymise this comment.*
- "I have been in public service for 20 years and my opinion of Cllrs is as low as it has ever been. Announcements made in the press without reference to staff involved or even making them aware, inaccurate information that causes difficulties for frontline staff. Repeated demands to deal with minor issues when we are in the midst of a pandemic, even when we make it clear what can / cannot be done. Zero accountability and points scoring in the public arena and on social media with no thought for the impact on staff. Officers have had to adapt massively over the last year to deliver services but for Cllrs it is 'business as usual' with no apparent consideration or grasp of how the situation has changed."
- *It was not possible to anonymise this comment.*
- "Parish Councillor"
- "Talking down members of the public, also not dealing with issues in their areas"
- "Many years ago when carrying out my role as a learning & development officer - supporting councillors with basic IT training. some councillors were rude and made inappropriate gestures and comments such as patting my leg & at times swearing plus one was particularly rude and blaming and judgemental about the IT equipment and support - *they* clearly didn't realise I was also in *their* constituent and as a result *they* did not get my vote and I didn't then have the confidence to confront *them*."
- "aggressive language in emails; accusing officers of not being able to do their jobs; inappropriate behaviour in public meetings - particularly virtual meetings where they've had images in the background when they've been putting their representation forward (car registrations clearly visible - GDPR issues) and inappropriate use of 'chat' function; some members emailed a number of different officers the same question to try and ascertain different responses which takes up significant officer time when they could be concentrating on other matters; contacting and speaking on matters in virtual public meetings on matters outside of their wards."
- "Inciting anger at the council via Facebook groups."
- "Shouting at officers and being rude to officers. Humiliating officers in public and in private. Trying to get round the rules/law. Not understanding how their behaviour influences other people."
- "Lack of communication with the community. Not commenting on local issues that affect the community. Unfairness in the community. Local councillors not having a presence in the community and not fulfilling their role but happy to receive an income."

- "They have completely failed to protect the people from an immoral and inhumane policy of house arrest, business annihilation and destruction of our children's futures based non scientific lockdown policy driven by a campaign of fear and manipulation."
- "Never hear from them or get to know them except when they want electing. Have previously contacted all of my councillors (xxxxxxx Ward) on a matter that was very important to me (housing) and was an urgent matter. None had the courtesy to respond back to me or even send me an email to say they'd received my email. After emailing Cllr xxxxxxx, *they* emailed my councillors and then one responded to *them*, and cc'd me in. The other two didn't bother responding yet again. Shocking, very disrespectful, and has only left me with even more negative views of councillors than I previously had. Eventually had to contact my MP whose office then dealt with my issue, Should get rid of the lot of these councillors, and I don't say that lightly, as they don't do anything to help you when you need it most."
- "Bullying officers, threatening to sack officers, inappropriate behaviour in meetings, including telling people to shut up and swearing, telling lies and misrepresenting the truth to fit their purposes. Giving instructions to officers that contradict agreed policies. Aggressive and unacceptable language and behaviour. Refusal of councillors to meet to discuss issues with fellow Ward Councillors"
- "Political infighting in front of officers and inappropriate behaviour."
- "Being personal to junior members of staff in email correspondence when unhappy with an outcome. Rudeness in email correspondence, telephone correspondence. Sometimes expecting a 'political' response from an officer when this is not appropriate. Factual inaccuracies in communications without checking the facts"
- "Bullying language and behaviour reducing a colleague to tears. Bullying where I and colleagues made to feel 'useless' and unable to do our jobs."
- "Disrespect to the Council as a whole shown through emails"
- "How rude councillors can be in their emails."
- "Speaking disrespectfully and aggressively to a junior council employee"
- "Spoken to in a derogatory manner because they are a Councillor and made it plainly clear they hold a position of status much greater than mine."
- "They are often rude to council employees"
- "Some Councillors fail to respond to completed jobs or requests. They will quite happily put in a request to services (from themselves or on behalf of their constituents) but fail to respond to the Officer and don't always acknowledge the completed job/final email. It is a matter of courtesy, some jobs can be time consuming, responses to Councillors are carefully worded - then not acknowledged."
- "1 Suggestion from a councillor that enforcement action should be dropped because person concerned was known to *them*. 2 Refusal as chair of a committee to take on board legal advice as to powers of the committee. ""Nobody's going to tell me what to do"". Both examples were a very long time ago."
- "criticising middle managers or more junior officers unfairly, by email, ccing the chief executive and relevant strategic director and on occasion other senior management, into the criticism. Cllrs trying to tell experienced and knowledgeable officers how to do their job inappropriately."
- "Most councillors are professional & pleasant to deal with. Cllr xxxxxxx stands out as being abrasive and confrontational and therefore difficult to deal with."
- "Some Councillors can be combative in their approach. Whilst we completely understand that they are there to represent residents/businesses in Kirklees, their approach, tone and attitudes can sometimes be very difficult and not constructive to working with us to resolve the issue they have contacted us about. These same councillors tend never to acknowledge when good work has been carried out to resolve an issue and at times they treat officers with contempt. Officers are working very hard, especially during COVID to provide the best support and services for our local people. Councillors who will not acknowledge this really negatively affect morale."
- "disrespectful emails towards staff and conversations over the telephone - being rude and dismissive when staff trying to help"

- "Poor attitude in email response, using capital letters as if shouting and just not acceptable."
- "I was once sexually assaulted in the workplace. There was a witness who was another councillor. They both found it funny. I was once asked to do something illegal. I pointed out it was illegal and refused. These individuals are not current members and I will not talk about this further. I have been intimidated on a number of occasions."
- "Rudeness, no basic manners when I waited for them to go past me at the count. Arrogant and rude."
- "A councillor who made a complaint of behalf of a constituent seemed to be try to tell council staff what action to take. It is down to the local authority to investigate and then decide what action is available. The complaint in question had a good response time and all information was communicated to the councillor but that seemed to lead to aggressive emails being sent to council staff."
- "I was once locked in a meeting room by some councillors when I attended to deliver training who wanted to engage in discussions about issues connected to other matters that I deemed inappropriate to discuss in an open meeting, their response was to lock the door. I have experienced elected members making loud ""stage whispers"" while I have been delivering training or replying to a question, which whilst off-putting when trying to address a group, was also rude and the comment personally insulting. My staff have been shouted out and threatened with losing their jobs on some occasions when they have not been able to supply or provide the answers the elected member wanted or had to properly refuse to discuss certain matters with them. When investigating complaints I have had my integrity questioned and on two occasions been the subject of derogatory comments relating to my gender and professional ability."
- "Some councillors becoming personally involved with residents who may be experiencing difficulties. There is a tendency to try and use influence by 'scattergun' e-mailing the CE/Strategic Directors and others in order to seek a desired outcome. However, this can be in breach of confidentiality if consent to share third party information is not explicit and quite often, the person is being supported by services and the various pathways are in place. Places a burden on officers and partners which can feel like they are not doing their job properly when in fact, lots of support may have been offered."
- "Historical issue in pressure around Freedom of Information responses. Inappropriate behaviour towards employees - non-inclusive."
- "rude to staff members, unwilling to listen to officers advice, going to press to belittle what good work is being carried out."
- "They don't listen"
- "Bullying, being shouted at, being undermined and humiliated publicly at public events in front of people within and outside the Council, publicly at a large civic event), divisive behaviour with other staff members in my team, Councillors giving backward at the last minute having made an arrangement to meet with someone external to the Council, Councillors swearing to members of staff and to external parties, being pushed by a Councillor at an event."
- "Cllr's not displaying professional behaviours e.g. getting visibly annoyed if a decision has to be taken that they do not agree with or, suggesting preferential intervention for a constituent(s) even if this means bypassing standard procedures or policies."
- "prefer not to say"
- "Disrespect. Thinking they are above staff. Bullying. Intimidating behaviour."
- "I was a parish councillor for a term and saw verbal abuse, foul language, bullying."
- "One Kirklees Cllr appears to pursue campaigning via prolonged and continued correspondence with council officers on matters whether they are simple or complex. The correspondence is almost always copied to a wider audience of the Cllrs choosing. The correspondence often seeks to place blame and has an unfortunate tendency to resort to personal criticism of officers as well as seeking reputational damage for Kirklees Council. Whilst there are often relevant issues that need redress, the method adopted is questionable. The Cllr's approach often leads to an inefficient use of all resources, and more importantly does not appear to place residents at the heart of the matter. The benefits that would otherwise flow from the tenacity and passion of the Cllr are lost as a result of the modus operandi employed."

- "Rude and abusive behaviour with absolute no concern for the affect and consequences to the person on the receiving end."
- "Cllrs using Cllr email address for private or personal enquiries"
- "an example, phone call around Christmas Cllr could not get in touch with anyone in the required team, as many were on leave, got through to my team and spoke to me very disrespectively to vent frustration."
- "Aggressive responses to emails, no acknowledgment of replies"
- "Misleading , not understanding diversity and different views. Biased in approach"
- "Rude to officers. Not listening, just wanting to make a political point. Not seeing the bigger picture. Unsupportive. Unfriendly."
- "Not replying once to any emails/contacts"
- "Making unreasonable demands in response to public requests or complaints without bothering to check out the full story or pointing the member of public in the appropriate direction. eg: a member of the public requested a service. They were sent info about council approved standard fess and charges, and possible exemptions and asked to supply more info. Next thing I get an abrupt, aggressive email from a councillor: 'why are you charging X for this? They are doing this for us, there should be no fee. etc'."
- "One Cllr in particular doesn't engage well, has a campaign against me and uses the assumed power to belittle myself and others"
- "The wording of their emails when responding, they are sometimes very rude. We as council employees are expected to word our emails respectfully, this cannot be said for the majority of councillors i have dealt with."
- "Poor behaviour in meetings although this is not the normal. Overly concerned with linked individuals and not following procedures when issues are raised by constituents. E.g parental complaints to schools."
- "Where in a planning meeting the councillor wrongly challenged a senior officer, who was right, over a matter that cost the council many thousands of pounds."
- "Cllr not listening to what other people were trying to contribute to a meeting; talking over them; being selective on who they acknowledged in the meeting; not being inclusive"
- "A cllr shouting at a Kirklees officer in a meeting where both council employees and external attendees were present. A cllr leaving a recorded answerphone message to a colleague, very angry and unacceptable language, although they did apologise afterwards, it was still upsetting for my colleague to receive. A Cllr repeatedly citing a historical example where a developer went into administration quite some time ago now, and as the company didn't fulfil payment obligations citing it, in public, as directly a Kirklees officers fault. Cllrs stating officers are ""hiding behind policy"" when they do not like a response and then emailing the Chief Exec. Cllrs emailing JG directly to try to influence a change of answer. Cllrs refusing to attend meetings as a Ward group and requesting separate meetings be held. Cllrs not attending their ward update meetings."
- "Not without breaching anonymity."
- "Making decisions before knowing all the facts and not consulting the officers involved."
- "Nasty emails sent to me as an officer - calling me incompetent and lazy because I wasn't able to follow their instructions. I have received emails from a number of xxxxxxxx councillors who seem to feel they should be able to tell me what to do and I will have to do it, and if I don't they can insult me and complain about me. Councillor correspondence and items in the local press where they present officers as the enemy to be overcome rather than people there to deliver their job as best they can. Failure of some councillors to actually see themselves as Kirklees Council and a determination to damage the council's reputation for their own political gain"
- "To be very honest there are too many examples over many years. In particular my experiences over 15 years as a Manager (mainly xxxxxxxx) I could have written several books."
- "I attended a planning committee meeting, as a resident, and was appalled by the behaviour of a number of the Councillors in the room. They were rude to each other, shouting over one another,

shouting at members of the public(!) and dismissive of the Council Officers who were in attendance. When things didn't go the way they wanted with a particular application they slammed their documents onto the table and refused to speak for the rest of the meeting. Given they are supposed to role model behaviours I was appalled that they were behaving worse than children in a playground."

- "Many examples of a lack of professional respect or understanding of officer opinions from a number of elected members. Frustrating these members appear to be able to openly express disrespectfulness without re-course or challenge."
- "I stress that I have a good relationship with the vast majority of Councillors who I find are capable and managing the right balance between supporting individual residents or interest groups on one hand and the community aims of the Council on the other. There however a very small number of vocal and media prominent Councillors who value being seen as the 'Peoples' Champion' in all respects. They have a fixed and unwavering opinion that Officers are trying to run the Council and subvert the elected members' and local residents' rights to make decisions. Thus Officer decisions which their constituents have lobbied them on is challenged. Challenge is not a problem but the unwavering and sometimes irrational manner in which those Members doggedly refuse to review their opinion in the light of evidence can be frustrating and stressful. 2. As an Officer I do not mind criticism - it goes with the job and helps decision making. However, in public debate some Councillors (again a minority) will go beyond elaborating their opposition to a recommendation onto questioning Officers' values and professionalism. At times it seems that those Councillors are sacrificing the importance of their role and its important contribution to the value of the District for popularity and survival at the next election. There are a few Councillors who take this 'us and them' attitude as a matter of course. In such cases my enthusiasm to respond as an Officer wanes as I am resigned to it being a waste of time. The danger of that is that integrity and the ability to contribute to the Council's aims suffers. Criticism and complaints can be productive but continued nuanced complaints about the same subject can be a waste of resources. Councillors need to stop re-iterating the same point for political points. Instead they need to ask themselves is this response appropriate in the context of the Council's aims and policies even if I do not agree with it. It is also appreciated when, if appropriate, having accepted the Officer's view Councillors go back to their constituents and support it rather than a simple 'this is the response from officers'."
- "Dismissive and abusive language, belittling and bullying behaviour. Not willing to listen, demanding action, regardless of the consequences"
- "Before lock down while attending a full Parish meeting in person. I had to sit at one end of the meeting and listen to 3 xxxxxxxx councillors mutter to each other 'arseholes,' 'child abusers' and 'fucking idiots.' As a new councillor I was shocked at the level of disrespect and xxxxxxxx it felt intimidating and put me off speaking in the meeting. In the work world I have never come across such rude disrespectful behaviour. I enjoy my working life and was surprised that this sort of behaviour went on in Parish council meetings. It made me understand why people would not want to get involved with their local council."
- "Receiving rude and abrupt e-mails. Disregarding proper council procedures. Not following protocols - making a complaint directly to strategic directors then the following day submitting a piece in the press before giving the department in question a chance to respond. Not taking on board the council's reason for decisions and conveying them correctly to constituents."
- "Every time Cllr xxxxxxxx responds to a question in cabinet meetings they are ill informed, dismissive, argumentative, or in a raised voice."
- "My example doesn't relate to a Kirklees Councillor (it relates to a councillor from another local authority). I experienced bullying behaviour when phoned by a councillor. They spoke forcibly about my failure to do my job properly (in their eyes) and I felt pressure to take actions which didn't feel in line with the previously agreed plan."
- "1. Councillors from one political party refusing to have meetings with councillors from another party to discuss a project, insisting that they are consulted separately at all times making it very difficult to progress the project. When escalated to senior management it appeared to me that this behaviour was not challenged but was pandered to and accommodated with officers expected to do considerably

more work in order to accommodate it. 2. Councillors using the work officers are doing to score points against other councillors. 3. Councillors insisting on making decisions at what I would consider to be an operational level and interfering with officer level work. 4. Councillors communicating in a rude and disrespectful way towards me as an officer."

- "Sometimes may make comments which could be construed as interfering with an Officer's independence on decision making although this is only occasionally"
- "rudeness"
- "I have not personally experienced poor behaviour but I believe councillors are largely ineffective and incompetent in my borough. There should be more accountability and an opportunity for constituents to remove underperforming councillors."
- "Offensive language to fellow councillors during meetings questioning their integrity, implying they are personally benefitting from a decision, suggesting they have ulterior motives etc. Comments regarding a coopted member not having the same 'rights' as an elected one. There are several cllrs who use degrading language, interrupt continuously and speak with arrogance and have no courtesy for others, talking over them and using demeaning terms to belittle the contribution of others. Obscene language has also been heard although never admitted by the people involved. In addition, social media can be challenging with over recent years, one cllr choosing to make personal complaints about the parish council spreading incorrect information. More recently the use of a social media account caused numerous public complaints when a range of allegations, personal smears and comments were made about public bodies."
- "Complete disregard for genuine concerns"
- "Bullying of council officers, using officer resources inappropriately. Looking to protect their own position as a councillor rather than protecting their residents and improving the lives of the residents of the whole of Kirklees."
- "The xxxxxxxx was very aggressive at a community venue with myself and another facilitator, wanting *their* views on what *they* thought *their* community was not what the group were saying about the area. I was shaken for days afterwards and to show *their* power *they* did not let the council workers who had worked collaboratively with us attend our culmination event. *They* used *their* power to stop other councillors attending including the council leader. It left me emotionally damaged for months afterward."
- "N/A"
- "Rude, interfering. Unprofessional. Lacking in knowledge."
- "Shouted at a young lady who works for Kirklees council when she was only doing her job. Other councillors i work with never reply to emails and are lethargic in their attitude to the area they represent."
- "I work in Planning. Poor Councillor behaviour is a very regular, almost daily, occurrence. This increases in the run up to elections. This involves all forms of communication: aggressive telephone conversations, emails, belittling behaviour in planning committee meetings - when there is no recourse. If you listen to any webcast of a committee you will see and hear this. I am unclear of any sanctions for poor behaviour as this doesn't appear to have made any difference to the ways in which some cllrs treat officers."
- "As an employee I have found some Cllrs to be extremely rude, derogatory and self entitled but there is no recourse as they are not staff so can't be held to account. As a member of the public - *it was not possible to anonymise this part of the comment.*"
- "I spoke to a local councillor about my PIP application & *they* said *they* would help me but it may take a while, this was in April 2018/19, I'm not sure now as it was so long ago. *They* still has not got back to me. It was regarding the fact that you automatically come under the Disability rule where if you were and still are disabled you qualify automatically for PIP instead of going through hell when you are ill but the person who did the assessment had put a load of rubbish down.so I was trying to get help as CAB wouldn't help me. I cant remember what you call the Act."
- "I have complained about xxxxxxxx in the past using personal social media accounts to make

derogatory comments on social media, and then privately, and *their* ongoing patronising and bullying behaviour, as well as the fact that *they* outright lied on several occasions. The system was a complete waste of time. I have also found Councillor xxxxxxxx to be aggressive, bullying and rude. I did not complain at the time as I didn't know how, but have been in several local meetings since where others have addressed *their* behaviour directly with *them*. Given my experience with xxxxxxxx, I wouldn't complain again because it was a waste of time."

- "Planning Committees"
 - "misleading information for political gain, bullying"
 - "Councillor using confrontational and intimidating language in a public place."
-
- "I dealt with matter by speaking directly to the Cllr *themselves* with another Cllr present and it resolved the issue."
 - "Lying . Bullying. Drunken posts on Facebook including misogynistic jokes about women"
 - "I personally wouldn't say its poor behaviour however, I have dealt with a councillor where they have expected special treatment for householders and for us to ignore our policy's that we use for every other household in order to appease the householder, this particular householder didn't not meet requirements for a certain service we had explained this to them however a councillor wanted us to bypass this, which puts us in a difficult position."
 - "I've often seen heated debates of councillors on the counting floor during Kirklees local and national elections. I have also seen Councillors take credit for work that Kirklees Employees have done on their behalf."
 - "Failing to pay council tax. Delaying freedom of information requests. Misleading public regarding planning decisions. Failing to challenge council employees when they have been proved to have failed to follow guidelines on freedom of information processes."
 - "It was Councillor xxxxx many years ago."
 - "My councillor has never ever contacted me. It's like the voter does not exist once the councillor is elected."
 - "There is a lot of local councillors in xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx that only show their faces when they are up for election. They don't care about their community enough. *Comment made about a Councillor* has used his position xxxxxxxx to promote his friends and families businesses over the last 2 years you can see this on his Facebook page I'd say 80% of the public don't even know who their councillors are or what they do"
 - "A Councillor became a keyboard warrior and expressed their frustration and dislike to comments made. They were being argumentative for the sake of it and in reality we're playing politics and not representing the interests of their residents. Objecting to something because you know the opposition supports it but yet if your friends are involved you see not objection raised. Further to this, I disagree that Cllrs should be permitted to become independent if they are voted in as a specific party. The moment they became independent because of internal factions is when they should run for elections again"
 - "Last year, I watched the councillors feeding back to the Mayor about what they had done during the pandemic. As an active community volunteer, I had first hand experience of what some of the councillors were and were not doing. I watched at least one of them bare face lie about how they had supposedly, supported their community."
 - "Only in a collective group. Bias to local areas over others is a gripe of mine."
 - "Yes. Persistent emails (which are time consuming to respond to) and a lack of acceptance when the service is unable to deliver upon request (either due to legal reasons or lack of resources). The service is always wanting to deliver excellent services to residents, but often Officers are technically and physically unable to deliver. A structured process is required to evaluate such requests (which are often wholesale changes to delivered services), not persistence, which only puts pressure on the few middle managers who deal with such requests."

- "n/a"
- "Not caring one jot about the communities they are supposed to be representing"
- "I have personally experienced senior Councillors coming across as aggressive in meetings, senior Councillors calling for a review of the service just because they do not agree with a decision that has been made inline with adopted policies. Councillors sitting on a decision making committee replying to emails from trade representatives stating categorically that a policy should be changed - which could be construed as bias, especially when the councillor also works with the trade to which the policy relates which could also be seen as conflict of interest, (albeit they work in a different authority area). I have experienced Senior Councillors attempting to interfering with officer decisions both directly and indirectly for no other reason than political motivation. My experience of some Councillors is they expect officers to abide by the Council's behaviours and expectations but at the same time their conduct towards officers rides roughshod over those same behaviours and expectations. I am aware that the behaviour of some Councillors has contributed towards and increased levels of stress with in staff, resulting in periods of sickness. Emails from Councillors can and do come across as bullying both in their content and tone, and have on several occasions been derogatory towards officers. My experiences with Councillors behaving in this way has been reported on a number of occasions, but the hands of Senior Management seem to be tied when it comes to imposing any sanctions, and there is an appearance this lack of recourse is compounded the more senior the Councillor involved."
- "Throughout the past 12 months enforcement of draconian measures based on false data which ultimately has killed thousands of businesses"
- "Promises were made by the then chairman of the xxxxxxxx committee which were not kept and the result was that my company was closed down. I have also made a complaint to the ombudsman and the person who was expected to reply used a totally different set of points to the complaint this person has been promoted since this happened"
- "Aggression, Bad language, Racism, Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination, Fighting, defamatory statements, refusal to engage in standards processes"
- "n/a"
- "N/A"
- " xxxxxxxx promoting family and friends business"
- "Disrespectful behaviour towards others in my presence including at council meetings Sharing of exempt information bullying"
- "I understand that Cllr xxxxxxxx, who is a councillor in my ward (xxxxxxx) expressed grossly offensive and inappropriate views about certain minority groups in various tweets. The tweets were rapidly taken down, but the views were clearly meant at the time they were originally posted. No apology has been made as far as I know."
- "Cannot find any thing they do in my local area"
- "Being told I was not allowed to speak in a meeting."

Are you able to give any examples of good councillor behaviour?

328 comments:

- "Positive response to the concerns I raised."
- "Acting quickly to sort out missed refuse collection when the Council's procedures for dealing with such an event are inadequate."
- "Helping with planning issues and my garden bin"
- "Only at election time when after your vote."
- "Taking up an individual issue even though the outcome was not satisfactory"
- "Ward councillors who actively engage in and support ward committees by attending meetings AND following through on what they promise to do."
- "Always responded very well in the past to advice"

- "Getting things done when a complaint has been made."
- "I find the vast majority of members that I work with are polite, kind and caring."
- "Cross party working and support from cross party colleagues"
- "see above comments"
- "Cllr xxxxxxxx giving *their* first speech and paying tribute to the xxxxxxxx who had to step down because of *their* ill health."
- "The xxxxxxxx councillors in xxxxxxxx are extremely hard working for the local community and are always there to help with any problems. I lived there for nearly 20 years and couldnt faault them for alll they did fore the local community as well as Kirklees. I dont even know the councillors here in xxxxxxxx"
- "Yes Councillor who listened and signposted me for help."
- "Only had to contact my local Councillor once and they were very responsive and helpful and are very active in the community"
- "Always feel councillors in my area xxxxxxxx act for the good of people in xxxxxxxx."
- "When xxxxxxxx was Mayor *they* was exemplary in the way *they* conducted *themselves* in execution of both council and ward duties."
- "They think they are a cut above the rest the councillors of old were very polite and professional but this new breed need to get manners and training on being human and kind and considerate and be in touch with us normal folk !"
- "Responding quickly to contact via emails and facebook and actioning problems to get them sorted"
- "No"
- "Listened to my issues and help resolve matters"
- "Yes helping us b. Coming to our house and write or phon on our behalf"
- "Councillors xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx are really great! One of them always replies and even follows up reporting updates on their efforts. They are very limited in what they can do though, largely due to national government not getting a grip to keep legislation anywhere near what it should be. E.g. Limits/taxing/banning wood burners to reduce damaging particulate pollution."
- "Making him/herself available when clearly occupied with family and friends."
- "Explaining issues and background details"
- " xxxxxxxx was very good xxxxxxxx was also good to me"
- "Getting back to me in a prompt time with answers to any questions I've had. Keeps the local population up to date and informed about local issues ie gritting, bin collections etc"
- "I have known councillors to help directly and indirectly in supporting local projects, sometimes pulling strings to make things happen, and sometimes rolling up their sleeves and geting the job done in person."
- "Responding quickly to enquiry Politeness and respect"
- " xxxxxxxx is very proactive and available to local residents whilst being respectful and standing *their* ground over certain issues and attitudes."
- "Do what a Councillor should do. Serve the people and do their duty not self interest."
- "As a Kirklees employee I've worked with councillors on several occasions with no problems and for the benefit of customers/constituents. As a private citizen, every time I've contacted my local councillor on something they have been responsive and helpful."
- "Certain Councillors are very agreeable and approachable and want to work with you."
- "Fair, considered approach. Listening to facts and acknowledging the work conducted. Being kind and considerate. Clearly caring for their local area and not trying to make themselves look important/better or generally raise their own profile."
- "The xxxxxxxx councillors are greatly respected for their approachable, hands -on approach."
- "Our local councillors acting very quickly to sort out issues raised by residents in their area."
- "Got my garden waist bins sorted after not having them delivered when I'd paid upfront,"
- "Cllr xxxxxxxx I have found to be very helpful on many occasions"

- "My Councillor xxxxxxxx drove to xxxxxxxx Hospital to collect an emergency prescription for my wife during the 1st Covid lockdown. We were totally stuck and in desperate need."
- "Yes, by a independent councillor, who is honest, not bias, and does not have the attitude of " what's in it for me ""
- " xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx they have been brilliant through this last 12 months if every counciler had done what they have kirklees would be a better place some of them should be ashamed"
- "Acted on information about rubbish, acted quickly"
- "None"
- "The one Cllr out of the 3 for my area replied to my concerns and also helped get them solved when the council department I initially contacted failed to do anything"
- "I am a friend of xxxxxxxx and *they* has shown full support towards our community of xxxxxxxx *they* is extremely kind, really friendly, great to talk too for any advice or help and is an absolute honour to know *them*."
- "Hardworking"
- "No"
- "No n/a"
- "allways there when needed"
- "Residents in xxxxxxxx are frequently updated on social media"
- "Listening to views instead of their own agenda ."
- "Not represented at all never seen the xxxxxxxx in *their* area of constituency"
- "1 of our local councillors is excellent, we know how to get in touch with *them*! Not that we have needed to"
- "Never seen one, not even sure what they do they are so invisible and have no presence locally. They are pinching a wage."
- "dealt with a problem I had with the council successfully"
- "Nil"
- "Local councillor xxxxxxxx visiting my home to Help sort a local issue"
- "None"
- "Many times. They've been around to help out and join in with many things, eg. Helped preserve trees that I care about, help out at local events and clean ups."
- "I contacted my local councillor and *they* acted swiftly to help resolve the issue"
- "Councillors xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx played a major role in saving the Post Office in xxxxxxxx from closing down."
- "I use to work in Huddersfield Town Hall and saw first hand how polite and considerate some counsellors can be."
- "One sadly deceased xxxxxxxx Party councillor (xxxxxxx) plus a xxxxxxxx who engage, consult and respond with their local constituents."
- "Councillors that I have interacted with have always been positive"
- "No specific examples but some councillors work tirelessly to help residents of their ward, whatever their political allegiance eg Councillor xxxxxxxx in xxxxxxxx."
- "We only ever see one councillor in xxxxxxxx and he is xxxxxxxx who is a fantastic councillor for the area."
- "When we do get a response it is professional if not often helpful"
- "Rapid respectful response to e-mail question I had regarding local roadworks. It was greatly appreciated by me."
- "Cnclr xxxxxxxx helped appeal for me to get a house near my mum when the council said no. We were in a tiny 1 bedroom private house with 2 children, I have Arthritis and I struggled to walk up the steep victorian stairs. The council said I needed a bungalow or ground floor flat. I have lived in my house over 6years and not struggled with these stairs."
- "Yes but sadly not from my area xxxxxxxx, the other Councillor has taken time to visit, meet & listen to

the many issues in xxxxxxxx, advising accordingly. We can report it till we are blue in the face but they are not fit for porpoise. Sadly they can't fight our corner as it steps on the toes of the useless ones"

- "I have written to xxxxxxxx on a couple of occasions. She always replies and looks into an issue."
- "Listens to needs and actions them!"
- " xxxxxxxx *they* always keeps *their* word...if *they* says *they* 'll come to look at something *they* does..Will say yes I can help you or no I can't.."
- "I contacted via Facebook regarding the road having potholes. I was given a phone number to call"
- "And some of the councillors were very pleasant, understanding that council employees were trying their best to help them."
- " xxxxxxxx at xxxxxxxx seems to be pretty much up to date with everything and regularly communicates on Facebook."
- "Goes extra mile. She always there when needed. Never talks down to people. Counsellor xxxxxxxx is polite listens."
- "Local councillors keeping residents up to date with issues raised at meetings which may affect them. Trying to better facilities for the community."
- "We had (and still have) an issue with drug dealers turning up in Shaw Cross during the day and night. Contacted the local councillor who worked with the police to help with the issue. The issue went away for a short time but is back now."
- "Pot holes & overgrown vegetation dealt with swiftly when reported to local councillor"
- " xxxxxxxx, xxxxxxxx. Very vocal and helpful on social media. Stood up to travellers single handedly until Police arrived"
- "Some are very courteous & go out of the way to help. During this pandemic some have been very visible helping in their communities others nowhere to be seen, no leaflets not even social media."
- "The late councillor xxxxxxxx "
- "Clear, concise and timely reply to a question about recycling in Kirklees"
- "Not for a long time"
- "Going out of *their* way to help with appropriate housing"
- "Unfortunately not"
- "No"
- "My local councillors respond promptly to various e-mail requests I make regarding local matters. They are friendly and I am able to discuss things with them. They are very visible at local events ."
- "Taking up a cause I drew to their attention"
- "As a Kirklees headteacher I met a couple of councillors who listened to my concerns carefully and asked useful questions"
- "Keeping people informed."
- " xxxxxxxx *they* was a good counsellor"
- "Many years ago, xxxxxxxx helped my daughter to get redress on her complaint against a Cafcass officer."
- "Quick response when contacted directly about a recycling issue affecting approximately 30 residents. Communicated well and arranged to me meet as well as arranging for a Council rep to also attend."
- "Going above and beyond and being respectful"
- "Always speak / say hello when seen in neighbourhood."
- "Cllrs willing to listen and work with departments in a passionate and informed way."
- "Responded to a query quickly even though it was not the answer I wanted but it was accurate"
- "Rapid, helpful response to issues raised. Promotion of the service in which I work. Actively involved in the local community"
- " xxxxxxxx "
- "One of my councillors is setting a good example of keeping fit during the pandemic."
- "Two local councillors (xxxxxxx) involve themselves in local projects such as litter-picking and planting wildflower verges. They are both very helpful and approachable."

- "No has never met a local councillor"
- "Again, several examples that happened in Rochdale 10-15 years ago - I worked for Rochdale Council at the time."
- "supporting local community projects"
- "None"
- "Councillor xxxxxxxx helped out to get gritters out even though xxxxxxxx is not *their* area"
- "Keeping everyone in their ward as up to date as possible through various means of contact ie post , social media"
- "Responding to an issue and following up on actions promised until matter was resolved"
- "Helping with inquiries and reacting to an issue quickly."
- "not all coumcillors are bullies"
- "Supportive when having difficulty in the local area"
- " xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx go out of their way to help people in all kinds of situations"
- "No"
- "The way in which the interests of local people are appropriately represented at the Kirklees Scrutiny Panel events."
- "Councillor xxxxxxxx seems to be a good councilor, you can seek openly to *them* and *they* will do *their* best to get back to to you on the issues that you have"
- "Very good communication from ours via Facebook , engages well with local community very calm"
- "Far too many to name we have had and continue to have great councillors"
- "Most cllr are polite and respectful of officers."
- " xxxxxxxx is our elected councillor and *they* is absolutely great. Any issues there are in *their* constituency are given *their* attention and *they* tries *their* absolute best to resolve them. *They* also keeps us fully informed, I cannot speak highly enough of *them*."
- "I was given excellent advise over an issue I could not deal with on my own"
- "Solving a very long standing problem by listening to local residents concerns"
- " xxxxxxxx has always responded quickly when I have raised issues of concern with *them*."
- "Personally carrying out cleaning that was not required of them."
- "As a local charity and Community Group - xxxxxxxx Community Centre our three xxxxxxxx Councillors have supported us in all ways possible. They regularly come to meetings (before the Pandemic), regularly use our venue for their meetings, attend our weekly Coffee shop and champion our organisation generally. They attend our annual Gala and events and even volunteer on occasions. We appreciate their input and advice."
- "As a voluntary co-optee (scrutiny) I recieved both support and and thanks from xxxxxxxx "
- "3 x specific cllrs in xxxxxxxx that open ,transparent and engage with all communities, and have no hidden agendas"
- "No"
- " xxxxxxxx is superb at getting things done when the useless council employers let us down"
- "Many times across the parties, including people like xxxxxxxx, but many, many others."
- "Prompt response to raising an issue"
- "Helped me find suitable accommodation and at a later date advised me how to maintain the garden due to a soil bank collapsing due to bad weather."
- "no"
- " xxxxxxxx gets involved and outside of normal working hours. High profile on social media, great visibility in the local community through that medium. xxxxxxxx also has a high profile and they both show genuine concern and care for their wards. They take ownership of issues and appear to get things done. Well done to them both."
- "Yes the majority of councillors I have dealt with are respectful and interested in the expertise of officers. Good questioning, listening and understanding the issues"
- "Contacting me about an issue I raised."

- "Yes xxxxxxxx is an outstanding councillor"
- "Responsive to query regarding speed calming measures and dog poo issues."
- "Another councillor from a different ward has offered practical ideas and support."
- "The local xxxxxxxx councillor for xxxxxxxx, xxxxxxxx, who many, many, hours helping the xxxxxxxx people"
- "Where a councillor has taken their time out to help develop / progress community driven projects which directly benefit the community they serve"
- "A senior councillor replied promptly and helpfully by letter to a concern I raised."
- "Prompt response from a different councillor to individual issues raised"
- "Being proactive in supporting unemployment initiatives and projects in and around the local area and communities"
- "no its too biased what goes on."
- "Had a problem with an horse tied up near a public footpath Councillor state dealt with it very effectively"
- "Fantastic for the local community. Approachable and kind. Always willing to help out. Easy to contact. Worked closely with youth groups supporting them."
- "Thanks and praise for work undertaken."
- "When i reported a problem is was resolved quickly."
- "Quick to respond to small issues raised eg hole in a pavement manhole cover, which was still not resolved several months after being reported, despite being re reported several times."
- "1: Supportive attendance and chairing of public meetings when service was undergoing significant cuts during austerity, explaining the situation openly and in a balanced way 2: An unexpected supportive visit and chocolates for the team when staff had experienced a very traumatic and dangerous incident 3: Just taking time to say 'thank you' when emails are sent for information 4: Taking time to thank teams after events - either in person or by email 5: Taking time to listen and understand what teams are trying to achieve and asking questions on operational and strategic issues which are constructive and supportive rather than expressed in a challenging, critical or even threatening manner 6: Being actively interested and involved in particular areas of work throughout the year - not just at election time 7: Having a strategic overview of what the council is trying to achieve and responding to evidence of need rather than being solely ward-centric and motivated by currying voter favour"
- "It seems that some councillors are visible but in selected parts of the borough. Lack of response is a big issue. No guidance as to when we, residence, should expect a response"
- " xxxxxxxx "
- "Afer having issues with planning I requested the support of xxxxxxxx "
 - "being a shoulder to cry on when being bullied *It was not possible to anonymise this part of the comment.*
- "Occasionally internal information for Councillors is leaked do the Examiner and the said Councillors is actually quoted as being complimentary to the work of the council or when Cllr colleagues agree, acknowledge your contributions, etc."
- "Plenty of examples, I have seen Councillors involved in helping the pandemic, seen them planting trees and helping organise community events, putting up bunting at community events, volunteering in libraries. Lots of examples."
- "The majority of the Parish Councillors present and past, are (have been) well behaved in terms of being courteous and polite in meetings, and outside of meetings to me and the general public."
- "Councillors supporting each other regardless of politics."
- "Councillor xxxxxxxx was excellent helping to get litter bins restored in our area when people started to dump rubbish where bins had been previously placed. *They* also was an enormous help when getting potential building permission rescinded and the land quite rightly put back as green belt."
- "Another local councillor has been very helpful with reports of anti social behaviour through lockdown."
- "A couple of the councillors have been engaged and 1 openly challenged the racist behaviour in the

training session."

- "too long ago to count"
- "Polite listening with respect to a concern re local work being done. Unfortunately was unable to help."
- "All the Kirklees Councillors I have come into contact with, in my role as Chairman of xxxxxxxx, have been helpful, encouraging and supportive."
- " xxxxxxxx of xxxxxxxx has worked very hard to cover the absence of her fellow councillors in the ward - for a considerable amount of time. and xxxxxxxx of xxxxxxxx worked well to respond to cross boundary problems"
- "Very good listener and supportive of issue raised and followed through with the issue"
- "praise when required, thanks and acceptance that there are usually 2 sides, stepping back where there is a potential conflict of interest, kindness"
- "Many councillors act as independent advisors, reviewing decisions and explain things for residents fairly. Most councillors work really hard for their residents and try and give a realistic expectation."
- "responding to enquiries when raised"
- " xxxxxxxx, xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx have all been very helpful to a group I volunteer with - The Friends of xxxxxxxx. They have helped us source funds and attended tree-planting etc sessions. xxxxxxxx also responded very quickly to an issue I had recently which I sent *them* an email about."
- "only from hearsay and what is reported in the papers"
- "I have been with councillors who have been needlessly abused by members of the public but have maintained their dignity and carried on answering questions politely. I have observed councillors sitting in interminably boring meetings with patience and a real sense of public duty."
- "Taking part in physical community work ."
- "lots of times"
- "Yes"
- "Cllr thankful of looking at problems and responds appropriately. Lead member listen to officer recommendation"
- "*Local MP* does not listen to local people *they* hardly ever visits our town and *they* makes sarcastic remarks when other Members of Parliament visit."
- "Yes, but not in this area. I used to live in the Wakefield council area and the councillors there serve all people in the community regardless of political views."
- "I have not interacted with councillors yet as part of my role so cannot express such opinions."
- "Cllr xxxxxxxx give very fair and balanced advice to residents"
- "by working with officers and members of the public to resolve issues"
- "My local councillors (xxxxxxx) do amazing work in our local community (xxxxxxx) they are part of community groups, campaign on local issues, volunteer in vaccination centres, run regular surgeries to hear the views of local people. A few years ago I had a dispute with Kirklees Music School which went on for nearly a year. I asked my xxxxxxxx councillor to attend a meeting with me and *they* helped to get the issue resolved and my money back within a couple of weeks."
- "Councillors are very appreciative of the work done by council employees which sets a good example and boosts moral in the Council workforce."
- "praised when a good job has been done"
- "Supportive comments and constructive feedback from portfolio holders."
- "Most cllrs are polite, grateful and understanding. Most of them do lots for communities, third sector organisations and for the council."
- "Very supportive portfolio leads providing support and guidance on politically charged projects. Being told thank you and being told their grateful for your hard work is a small thing but is highly valued by the team."
- "working together well with staff and members of the public with good communication and the ability to understand both points of a job even when the situation is difficult."
- "Being treated with respect, thanked sincerely for doing a good job, asking for thanks to be passed to

colleagues/other services. Good humour"

- "lots of examples but mainly around courtesy and respect however this is very often down to personality and of course there are exceptions"
- "Cllr xxxxxxxx assisted me with an issue with KNH and one of their council houses with drain issues affecting my property. Tenant refused to report it and when I tried to, Kirklees Direct claimed they could not take the details of the issue with the drain due to GDPR on the drain (however they refused to reveal why a drain is affected by GDPR)."
- "The opposite of the example above. Cllrs were ""human"" in the discussions, showed professional courtesy and respect during the discussion. Friendly and approachable in their interaction and knowledgeable, open and honest in their discussion. Any challenge, or questions, were raised in a respectful way ."
- "Far too many to list. Most councillors are respectful, reliable, hardworking and fun to work with in my experience."
- "Helping with ""hands on"" approach on community projects."
- "Most councillors do there very best to help wherever possible, listening to problems and trying to help correct that problem without a great deal of fuss"
- "polite and prompt response to correspondence. willing to listen and advise regardless of political affiliation."
- "Quick responses to emails"
- "Most of them display courtesy."
- "Cannot give any examples due to limited interaction with councillors"
- "Mainly positive encounters as an employee and a Kirklees citizen and excellent experience during my Cllr shadowing opportunity"
- "Prompt concise responses, respectful. Good partnership working."
- "Listening and having a reasoned discussion without bringing party politics into it."
- "My wife and I are both elderly and housebound. This particular as always been caring and kind to us and done some wonderful things for us, and many others."
- " xxxxxxxx goes above and beyond and has pride in *their* ward. xxxxxxxx is contactable and endeavours to do everything possible to ensure residents concerns are followed up."
- "Some good responses and action to improve issues in my local community. Some turn out for Local events and church services, engaging with people."
- "Going over and above what I would have expected when I asked the wrong councillor for help (different ward) in listening to our enquiry, and personally contacting the correct councillor, explaining the problem and asking them to contact us to discuss. Could have just given us their contact details and left us to it."
- " xxxxxxxx is a fine example of a great councillor. *They* responds to all queries, and investigates where possible."
- "Not in recent times. I can think of at least 2 Cllrs no longer with us who worked constructively with officers to arrive at solutions that balanced the needs of constituents with the realities and practicalities of what could be be achieved. Those people built rapport and mutual respect and clearly had the interests of residents at heart. Not so the current crop unfortunately."
- "Most councillors are courteous to each other and the public and respond to requests for information and support. A few work very hard indeed. Some will speak up for others councillors and staff against this bullying. We have a new chairman who manages the behaviour much better and the situation is improving."
- "Doing what they are elected to do"
- "Yes i have supported many councillors with IT support in the past who were extremely grateful and pleasant."
- "Having open and honest discussions; if there are different views, discuss and listen to both sides, ensuring a professional interaction at all times; not speaking badly of officers but supporting them, particularly in a public forum; being involved in meetings between officers and their constituents so all

perspectives are considered; polite and professional email correspondence."

- "Very visible presence on social media, responding to local concerns, taking action and providing updates and feedback"
- "The opposite of above! Showing respect for other councillors and officers even if hold different views. Holding themselves to account."
- "No"
- "See above"
- "Listening to the information being provided, taking measured and well balanced decisions having considered the information. Supporting officers in the challenges they face. Challenging officers constructively to influence outcomes for residents without compromising the authority."
- "Great support received from our Local councillors in xxxxxxxx - for the local football club."
- "Supportive portfolio holders that provide clarity on expectations."
- "Polite, respectful and professional behaviours in meetings, emails and telephone conversations. Passionate and proactive in the best interests of their communities/residents"
- "Good councillor behaviour to me are those that treat me and colleagues with respect."
- "Councillor thanking the Council through emails"
- "Working with members at hearings"
- "Every other interaction has been excellent and councillors have been superb to work with"
- "Odd Councillors give good feedback and acknowledgment."
- "Working with constituent and KMC employee to find mutually acceptable solution."
- "Praising staff for their good/hard work. Being respectful to staff with queries raised."
- "Almost all other experiences with councillors"
- "The vast majority of councillors I have dealt with have been incredibly supportive and helpful and generally very grateful for our assistance with whatever the issue was they contacted us about."
- "respectful and helpful communications and sharing of information where appropriate."
- "We have received excellent support through the bereavement forum from Cllr xxxxxxxx and now xxxxxxxx, I always receive excellent support from the xxxxxxxx Cllrs area with community activity. Also from a *it was not possible to anonymise the part of this comment* Cllr xxxxxxxx has been very supportive in the Pandemic."
- "I can't say exceptional but there is no n between answer available"
- "Extreme personal kindness from members of all parties."
- "Some Councillors do show that they are normal and are accountable to the people who voted for them."
- "There are several councillors who have praised good work that is done."
- "Yes I have had polite and appropriate questions and queries sent to me. Over the years many councillors have listened to advice or explanations and then asked further questions or challenged politely when they needed to to ensure they had carried out their duties properly and done all they can for their constituents. I have observed councillors reflect on information and training I have delivered and acknowledge gaps in their knowledge and ask for further help and assistance."
- "Worked very closely with one who was instrumental in moving a bid and subsequent funding forwards"
- "Many years of excellent working relationships with councillors. This is the norm rather than the exception. We have had many fine councillors in Kirklees who work well with officers in a respectful partnership."
- "Some years ago, when working on the xxxxxxxx, then-Councillor xxxxxxxx gave up literally hundreds of hours of *their* time to attend all the planning meetings and all five days of the Roadshows, offering jovial, friendly and unstinting support both to staff members taking part and customers attending. I realise Councillors can't always devote that much energy or time to one individual project, but *theirs* was a true example of going the extra mile."
- "councillor xxxxxxxx is very proactive, hands on, and approachable"

- "supporting officers"
- "As a counter-balance there are many examples of good Councillor behaviour. I work closely with Councillors and have seen many examples over my many years of civic-minded, community-spirited behaviour on the part of Councillors, giving generously of their time, getting into the spirit of community events and joining in, behaving with enormous gravitas when the occasion demands it. Many Councillors are openly appreciative of the good work done by the team I work in, and deal in a respectful manner with staff."
- "The majority of councillors are professional, polite and respectful of officers and, are keen to work collaboratively with officers to reach the best outcomes for their constituents and the Council."
- "A councillor has supported me by facilitating meetings with different teams to establish multidisciplinary work groups for a topic, Air Quality"
- "Kindness."
- "Most parish councillors were hard-working and gave lots of their time and effort for their parish"
- "Without doubt Cllr's exhibit good behaviour in almost all their engagements. They offer role models to the Kirklees community for community leadership. Cllr xxxxxxxx was very helpful in making contact with business leaders in Kirklees. *They* didn't need to do this but chose a constructive route to help address what *they* considers a long term lack of engagement with the business community."
- "My experience of good councillor behaviour as always been with regards to them actively supporting the sometimes difficult decisions that have to be made, such as going out to the public and promoting an issue that is not always fully supported in the communities."
- "Most Cllrs follow the correct protocols"
- "Cllrs supporting the work of my team, responding to emails, being helpful giving advice, friendly making me feel comfortable and welcome"
- "Positive and supportive feedback"
- "Supportive of projects and Council employees delivering projects"
- "Listen non judgmental , learns and open to new ideas."
- "Courteous, appreciative of officer knowledge, knowledgeable themselves about subject matter, friendly."
- "Local Councillor is very helpful on local issues which are ongoing."
- "They have never replied, so no have not expereinced this"
- "Showing an interest in the service we provide."
- "All bar one of my local councillors are brilliant and we have an excellent working relationship."
- "Some are very helpful and under standing."
- "Most Cllrs are friendly in communications eg telephone calls/emails."
- "Concerned and willing to give time . This is by far the most usual in my experience. Eager to resolve issues"
- "Meetings"
- "Many examples during the current pandemic. I am especially proud of many of my colleagues on our Town Council who have gone the extra mile. Covid support groups; shopping / medicines deliveries; supporting local businesses with inventive ideas."
- "Very flexible and respectful about other people's times and work commitments. Friendly through email on the phone."
- "Cllrs emailing a thank you when they receive reports from officers. Cllrs making reference to hard work undertaken by officers when we present at Portfolio briefing etc. Cllrs vocally supporting officer decisions when members of the public are unhappy about certain decisions which have to be made. Cllrs attending meetings to update them."
- "A different Councillor, xxxxxxxx has always behaved appropriately when I've engaged."
- "Listened and understood the legislation and relayed this to the citizen, i his own language."
- "Councillors who ask for information on a problem issue in their ward and then a willingness to work with officers to get to a solution - which isn't always the council stepping in to do something. It can also

be the community or local individuals doing something different which makes things better Councillors who are able to see the limitations of what officers and the council can do - even when there are strong feelings that we should be able to do more - Councillors who are supportive and respectful of the effort that officers and fellow councillors put into resolving issues or implementing new improved services and practices It is brilliant when councillors take time to thank me for the work I have done"

- "Hosting home security event when there was a series of burglaries in my area and residents were worried and upset. The event helped to allay concerns and gave lots of practical tips and advice. it was very well organised, at fairly short notice. The local police came, as did the local crime prevention officer. The local councillors came as did our local MP. It made me feel that the councillors cared"
- "Again as the above answer I have responded to many issues with Cllrs (in particular xxxxxxxx) where there is an understanding from Cllrs that we cannot always provide what their constituents may wish, however there is an appreciation of our responses in a timely manner There is often an appreciation also of sharing our knowledge to build the Cllrs confidence re policy/legislation."
- "In the past I found xxxxxxxx to be respectful of everyone *they* comes across."
- "Polite and respectful communications/enquiries and thanks received when assistance has been provided."
- "Most elected members have been courteous, reasonable and approachable."
- "Support received from Councillors for Officers expressed in the public arena either for the Officers' opinion or their right to express that opinion in the face of derogatory remarks from the public."
- "Polite courteous and reasonable - please and thank you. Will take all information and advise available and make decisions based on that"
- "The majority of Parish councillors are polite, good humoured and kind and just want to do their best for the the local community."
- "Polite, respectful and thankful e-mails showing an appreciation of decisions made and taking the time to understand why. Conveying correct messages back to the public."
- "Again my example doesn't relate to a Kirklees Councillor (it relates to a councillor from another local authority). I worked alongside a ward councillor who always took the time to connect with council officers on a human level and provide support when needed, not just deal in a transactional way with people who 'worked for them'."
- "1. Many councillors are extremely supportive of my projects and respect offices moving projects forward from an operational perspective, and express gratitude for projects being completed. When there are problems many councillors are sensitive and respectful in following these up. 2. A number of the councillors that I work with regularly have helped with aspects of project delivery in particular promotion of consultations etc. make the most of their community connections to get people involved."
- "Many councillors treat me with respect and understanding even if they disagree with my decision"
- "Cllrs xxxxxxxx & xxxxxxxx at their joint Portfolio Holder meetings openly praising staff for their response during a period of adverse weather."
- "When they say thank you for a piece of work you have produced for them. Two small words but they mean a lot."
- "Despite disagreements about policy decisions, many councillors adopt a positive and polite tone expressing concerns in an objective way, not lowering themselves to personal insults or shouting at others. They stick to facts and treat people with respect."
- "Looking to make improvements for individual residents and to make improvements for Kirklees residents as a whole ."
- "Quick response to a query regarding possible yellow lines being placed outside my house."
- " xxxxxxxx is a very good councillor. *They* answers any queries quickly. *They* keeps everyone informed about what is happening in the local area, and is quick to sort out any problems."
- "Polite and professional"
- "Engage with council staff to get work done that benefits the public."
- "Many times working with communities and partner agencies to resolve problems and creating a better environment for local people to live in."

- "No"
- "Listening to local residents complaints regarding planning issues"
- "Saying thank you - writing to the team to say thank you for the work that they do respectful chairing of meetings and listening during meetings"
- "Friendly approachable portfolio holders"
- "I generally find them to be hardworking people and dedicated to the communities they support. I've always found them to be respectful and polite to work with on a professional basis. This applies across the political spectrum."
- "No - I have no direct complaints about the local xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx Councillors, but I have experienced xxxxxxxx as part of the Red House closure where *they* said *they* was taking forward the bid to save the museum and it turned out all along that *they* was putting a different bid in. In general none of them have been a great help as they don't want to put themselves forward as they don't want to rock the boat. Or they are arrogant enough to assume they know better than everyone else, or just serving their own interests."
- "Being polite in requesting information in relation to certain planning applications"
- "Polite on the phone, easy to talk to and understood my advice."
- "I have seen examples of honesty and biding by the law"
- "Councillor helping out a resident in a kind and selfless way."
- "All the Cllrs I come into contact are respectful of officers and conduct themselves in a proper manner."
- "Councillor xxxxxxxx has been incredibly understanding and supportive on a number of issues in our neighbourhood. *Their* interest in and support for *their* local community is exemplary. I know *they* also gives alot of *their* own time for charitable causes such as local food banks. Well done and thank you so much Councillor xxxxxxxx "
- "Cllr's xxxxxxxx & xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx Ward having moved to the area some 18 mnths back I contacted both these Cllr's around Fly-tipping & littering around the area both responded politely & professionally and feed information out to public about been responsible .Cllr xxxxxxxx & I met (social distanced) and walked the area to highlight issues both Cllr's provided email updates to keep me informed on progress and actions they hoped to take, Both very professional willing to listen and assist and provided feedback which is what you would expect from Cllr's practicing good standards & behaviours"
- "I find most councillors are always fair when helping deal with complaints and enquires from the public, part of my role is working with customer service and when a constituent doesn't like a certain reply or answer to an enquiry and they take it to a councillor, I find they are fair to both parts and always help clean up misunderstanding or help us reinforce our actions/decisions when necessary."
- "Many Councillors that I have encountered have been well mannered individuals, regardless of their political stance or party."
- "Taking up issues raised by public"
- " xxxxxxxx, when I started a Mutual Aid Group"
- "Polite, professional and timely responses to emailed questions."
- "They are always polite and cheerful and always show an interest In what your saying."
- "During my volunteering, I have had a number of conversations with some councillors and I have asked for their support with some vulnerable people in the community, some councillors were eager to help"
- "Helping people and been able to sort out problems quickly"
- "Responded promptly to emails"
- "A thank you email goes a long way."
- "N/a"
- "They are all the same only want to be involved in things that show them in a good light, if i means getting their hands dirty they aint interested"
- "Thankfully a large number of Councillors want to work with officers and I have experienced

Councillors approach officers in the right way and respect the advice and guidance given by officers. I have also experienced Councillors who may not agree with a decision, but understand the reason behind it and will feed back correctly to their constituents. I have experienced Councillors who, through how they engage with officers, can effect change within a service and its policies."

- "clrs for xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx etc. Have great community presence & regular surgeries. They are not my local cllrs, who, apart from a newsletter through the letterbox, I have never seen or had an opportunity other than email to contact them. Cllr xxxxxxxx has helped me on many occasions. Thank you to all the xxxxxxxx Councillors. You deserve much praise."
- "Supporting the Government in the current situation and pushing the scaremongering propaganda"
- "Advice sought re: declarations of interest where doubt, courtesy and respect to professional officers, clear understanding of distinction between political role and professional officer roles, good knowledge of constitution and respect for political colleagues, good political group discipline and strong leadership."
- "n/a"
- "The few I have come across in my job have been friendly, supportive, understanding, co-operative and respectable."
- "Cllr xxxxxxxx and Cllr xxxxxxxx doing all they've done through this pandemic I wish they were my councillors the v ones have done nothing through this pandemic they should be ashamed of them selfs all councillors should of being supporting and helping feeding their community"
- "Cllrs xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx (also xxxxxxxx councillors) have always behaved impeccably, working long hours to support local groups, promoting the preservation of the environment, and 'green' projects such as wildflower planting, tree planting, a community orchard in xxxxxxxx, and the improvement of the former coal waste site between xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx."
- " xxxxxxxx instantly sorting out problems with missed bin collections, that the council bin service ignored."
- " xxxxxxxx has been a real positive force in xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx. *They* is quick to act, *they're* approachable and friendly. *They* knows *their* local people and local sites. *They're* willing to help whenever *they're* asked."
- "A councilor who was extremely well informed. Also , Ward councillors who are prepared to proactively seek out views from their constituents by going house to house and giving up their free time. I wouldn't be a councillor but I am respect very much those people who give up so much time and energy into making the difference they believe is required."

What sanction should be imposed if a councillor refuses to accept the outcome or actions required following a complaint:

455 comments:

- "Voters recall"
- "Remove from Committee and stop the stipend."
- "Power to remove them and force a by election which they could stand in"
- "Removal as elected member."
- "They should be disqualified from serving as a councillor now and in the future"
- "Being removed as a councillor"
- "depending on the severity, they should be required to stand down from any offices they hold and ultimately face the prospect of being sacked"
- "depends on the severity of the allegation, but I would think in serious cases some sort of recall and a by-election"
- "They should be allowed the right of appeal but if still refuse the sanction they should be required to stand down."
- "The difficulty is the disconnect between a standards approach and legal proceedings. I am not supportive of actions that remove the rights of individuals."
- "Removal"
- "There should be a power to suspend them or to penalise them financially"
- "By-election called"
- "Powers should be in place to deal with 'Parish Councillors' who go against code of conduct with unacceptable behaviour"
- "Resign from the council"
- "Formal hearing / disciplinary"
- "Suspension"
- "Dismissed"
- "Barred from serving as councillors"
- "Removal from office"
- "Disciplinary procedure as same would apply to a council employee. You cant have a different rules for members hence they get away with a lot."
- "They should be made to stand down as they are clearly not capable of fulfilling their role"
- "Should resign"
- "Be removed from the council and not allowed to stand again"
- "They should have to resign"
- "Suspension and naming and shaming would help including being put in front of a citizens jury for arbitration and for dignity and respect training etc Good Behaviour is required for this level of work and elected members need to go through independent Dignity and Respect training and spend time in the community shadowing community reps and local citizens"
- "Removal from office and barred from standing again"
- "Sacked"
- "Expelling a Cllr"
- "Forced to resign."
- "Suspension and fine"
- "Removal"
- "Removal"
- "Sacked, removed from committee roles and censored."
- "not really sure but something public so people are aware of what has happened as this may change voters minds."
- "Suspension pending investigation and report."

- "Sanctions need to be fully enforceable outside the political party structures. Additionally there needs to be the ability for Cllrs to be removed or subject to a recall in the most serious circumstances."
- "Removal from the post of elected Councillor with a full statement of the reasons."
- "Being expelled"
- "Formal censure"
- "If a sanction is imposed and a councillor refuses to accept the outcome, surely the sanction has no value. If I were sentenced in court, I might get chance to appeal, but I can't refuse to accept the outcome. Is there an appeals process? Can the councillor still refuse to accept the outcome? What happens if they do refuse? What is formal censure (this isn't clear) and does it have any power? What the levels of formal censure? If a councillor was accused and found guilty of racist behaviour or bullying, either of a constituent or staff member, what happens then? This needs to be made a lot clearer."
- "Suspension, ultimately leading to removal from office for serious, repeat offenders"
- "All councillors need to be accountable the xxxxxxxx Party are like a gang all parties are bad and good but this xxxxxxxx Party are bully everyone"
- "Withdrawal of their position and a bye-election to replace them."
- "Removal from office"
- "If serious enough they should be dismissed and in other less serious circumstances they should go through the normal disciplinary process."
- "If it is a Councillor of an political party (even in control of the council) do not meddle with the progress because that is in definition corruption."
- "Suspension from council or recall election (if legally possible) for the most serious complaints."
- "Suspend or remove from office. They are role models."
- "They should be removed ."
- "I feel the Kirklees council xxxxxxxx committee are not fit for purpose, they don't listen to local people ,all they do is blame the Conservative government, it's time Kirklees got some ball and started working for the people, most councillors work in their own interests, I'm sorry to say ,"
- "Councillors should be made to reverse damage caused to people reputations that they have caused through the distribution of false information."
- "Fined"
- "Something definitely stricter."
- "Removed from office. Investigated by the Police. And relatives / family subject to inspection."
- "Loose their seat and let someone do it that want to make a difference"
- "Sacked."
- "Undertake further training"
- "Sack the councillor and hold an by election of repeat offenders"
- "Barred from attending council meetings for a period of time"
- "They should be removed from their role"
- "Formally apologise and take immediate action."
- "Ability to remove from office"
- "Suspension until independent enquiry completed and if still refuse removal from post"
- "Redignation"
- "Sack"
- "dismissal in serious cases"
- "Dismissal from council activities and no access to claim expenses"
- "They should apologise and resign . In my case I was troubled by other residents over things I said in confidence to the councillor that also wasn't true ."
- "It's proven with our head of the council he walks out of meetings with the public or shuts them down by refusing to partake"
- "Not sure"

- "Sack them if they are doing nothing as most are."
- "taken off the council"
- "have the right to appeal"
- "Removal from office"
- "Being barred from acting as a Councillor"
- "Sacked"
- "Dismissed, loose Cllr status."
- "Should resign"
- "Remove the council"
- "Suspension"
- "Suspension"
- "Should stand down"
- "They no longer hold the position of elected councillor and a bi-election takes place"
- "He/she should be removed/resign from office immediately."
- "They should leave office"
- "Struck off from standing on the local council"
- "Formal censure"
- "Removal of councillors from office."
- "Disqualified"
- "Removal from office."
- "Instant dismissal"
- "Removed as councillor and stripped of all perks"
- "If a councillor is guilty of criminal behaviour he should lose his seat o the council."
- "No I believe they should go to prison, just like a Company director, at the end of the day they are in a position of power & through their neglect a lot of peoples life can & will be affected. Councillors should know & come from the area they live in, fight passionately about the good & the bad in the community, basically never out of the news in that area promoting that area both good & bad, to focus on the bad so that it can be removed."
- "If found to be negligent in their duty they should be made to resign"
- "Removal from office if the complaint is of a serious nature, is proven and upheld"
- "Removal from post as not fit for purpose"
- "Take into account everyone's religious beliefs not just their own"
- "Sacked"
- "Suspended without pay"
- "Be suspended for a period of time."
- "Complaint , facts and outcome published widely so that electorate can make up their own mind. May then stop some councillors who are out for glory and not for good of residents."
- "Should stand down"
- "Those stated below"
- "They should resign"
- "Deduct their allowance that is our money for them to actually do something bit hide in their houses"
- "Removal from council"
- "I have no knowledge of the current sanctions so cannot comment"
- "They should be required to re-submit themselves to election"
- "Removal from office and another councillor appointed, or a deputy councillor step-up from the same party."
- "Removal from their position."
- "Removal from post"
- "Sanctions should seek to modify behaviour, but should not prevent ward citizens from being represented. Should sanctions be required, councillors should be limited to presenting to council"

meetings via written means only, and continued inappropriate language be censored - thus limiting to a vote only. All councillors should be able to access an appeal process, made up of citizens, chaired by senior member of a neighbouring authority."

- "Removal of the councillor from office"
- "Dismissal and barring for standing"
- "Removed from the council"
- "By election"
- "Do not know"
- "Hold a disciplinary tribunal."
- "Allowing recall (providing a threshold of electors called for such action"
- "removed from the council; if MPs can be subject to recall, so local councillors should be too"
- "Dismissal"
- "Removed from committee roles"
- "Should be removed from the council and not be allowed to stand again."
- "Loose their position as councillor"
- "Resignation"
- "Removal from office"
- "Given the severity I believe in a more serious case Councillors should resign or if in a senior position be forced to resign"
- "Be able to remove them from there council role"
- "Should be made accountable and put a full report in writing in from of the resident and the council."
- "Deselected"
- "Independent arbitration/mediation by a public panel (from outside the councillor's Ward) to review the complaint to ensure the original outcome was fair. If the councillor still refuses after the panel have put forward the sanctions, the councillor shouldn't be allowed to represent the public based on the fact that their behaviour isn't appropriate for the position of trust."
- "Suspended from the Council until they do"
- "Removal from office"
- "Suspension"
- "Dismissed from office."
- "To be removed from the role."
- "Suspension or where necessary removed from office"
- "Publicising the details of the councillor's behaviour. Resignation"
- "Formal disciplinary action as would be expected of any 'employee' of the Council, ultimately removal from office."
- "More sanctions"
- "Remove from office and election called"
- "Sacked and new councillor elected."
- "Depends on what they did."
- "Should be disbarred from holding an elected position"
- "They should be removed or suspended from office"
- "Stand down"
- "Dismiss from the council"
- "To suspend the councillor for a period of time and if there is not satisfactory outcome at the end of that time , the councillor should be sacked ."
- "Remove from council and banned from standing for re-election for ten years"
- "It would depend upon the issue"
- "Suspension"
- "you can't do anything. they're elected members the council can't interfere with democracy"
- "do they every actually get held accountable or their actions audited"

- "They should either resign or be removed from the council"
- "Removed from office,"
- "He/she should be removed as a councillor"
- "The Councillor should be suspended."
- "Did not no it was in place, if they do that they need to be dismissed from office for good no ifs or buts, as long as you the majority says they have been no theft out you go, ,"
- "Dismissal"
- "They should be permanently removed from office and not be able to stand for election again in the future."
- "removed from the role"
- "Lose their council position. It would be interesting to know what preparation is given to councillors by Kirklees in terms of expected standards. Breaches of sanctions should be dealt with swiftly and fully."
- "The same as for any company employee. A disciplinary process, verbal and written warnings, followed by dismissal if not resolved"
- "They should be dismissed"
- "Their role of councillor should be taken away and they should not be allowed to have anything to do with council business again."
- "Sacking"
- "Cease to be councillor"
- "Independent tribunal"
- "Leave post and appeal"
- "Dismissed"
- "Suspended without pay."
- "There should be a process where they can be dismissed just as if they were employees"
- "They should be sacked"
- "Being removed now and in the future from any local government position or advisory capacity"
- "Definitely removed from post"
- "There should be an appeals process to be heard by independent people on the panel. Councillors should be made to sign up to sanctions / processes before standing for election."
- "I think they should resign"
- "Flag all references to the councilor on council website/literature with a marker - similar to Twitter flagging inappropriate messaging. The public will then be aware that the councilor's behaviour could be suspect."
- "Asked to stand down?"
- "We should be able to take them out of office if they're not performing to our expectations, if my employees were constantly failing I would find new ones so why don't we do the same in government?"
- "Review behaviour for potential illegality, if proved, prosecute."
- "Dismissed, same as any employee"
- "Suspended and a decision made as to suitability as a councillor."
- "It's never happened"
- *It was not possible to anonymise this comment.*
- "Don't know - depends on the issue"
- "Loss of pay if unable to accept mediation between the interested parties."
- "sack them"
- "should be asked to resign if the complaint is proved"
- "Appeal and conciliation."
- "If the complaint has been upheld and the councillor refuses to undertake the sanction they should be stripped of the seat"
- "Suspension by the Council"

- "The should be accountable in the same way most employees are under employment law"
- "A fine imposed and / or no allowance paid."
- "They should be dismissed from the council. Councillors should work together and engage in a positive manner with their Ward members. Non engagement, incompetence, choosing to ignore or neglect issues is not acceptable behaviour."
- "They should be removed from their position"
- "Being removed as an elected official"
- "Such a person should be barred from holding public office."
- "Public should be made aware. Temporary suspension. Not allowed to stand again as a councillor."
- "He should be suspended"
- "removed from office"
- "Suspension until objection is resolved"
- "Being removed from position"
- "not down to me I have retired I paid my dues and demands for 54 years"
- "I believe they should not only be kept to these standards but further standards in relation to job performance"
- "They should be removed from their role as a councillor"
- "I am not sure."
- "Being removed from there role as local councillor."
- "If what they have done is so bad they should be removed from office, especially if it's something we all have to do and they haven't done it."
- "I don't know what the Code of Conduct contains, but it seems reasonable that anyone standing to be elected as councillor should sign to confirm that they're aware of the need to abide by the Code. Also, I assume the above mentioned training is in relation to the Code. Something is needed to prevent repeat offending, not sure what that may be."
- "Similar route to those applied to staff; somewhere to direct an appeal"
- "Wasn't aware of any sanctions."
- "They should be sacked."
- "No because the sanctions are not well advertised. I am completely unaware of the processes and accountability. They're not accessible. Documents and processes shouldn't be 'hidden'. Everything should be obvious."
- "removal from position"
- "Immediate suspension from all offices and positions held, with the suspension (including all allowances) maintained until the matter is investigated, and resolved fully."
- "?"
- "Allowance should be withheld until appropriate behaviour becomes an experience"
- "It depends on what the actions required were. I was once asked to meet with someone who had complained about me, even though the committee found that I had not done anything wrong and it was suggested that it might be nice to be seen to meet with them. I declined to do this. If I am in the wrong I will always apologise, if I have done nothing wrong and been subject of an incorrect complaint by a political opponent there should be no action recommended at all."
- "It should be possible to suspend a Councillor if their behaviour warrants it. It should also be possible for the Parish Council to remove a Councillor from committee/s."
- "I would need more facts as to why the councillor refused to accept the sanctions."
- "It would depend on seriousness of event.... A higher level of investigation into the complaint
Suspension Removal of allowances including SRA roles But the appeals process for a Cllr to access to should be fair and easy to use as it is often a case that a complaint is brought for less than fair reasons"
- "meet with complainant and apologise in person"
- "Should be sacked"

- "Force by election"
- "Am unaware of available sanctions."
- "Being removed as a Councillor in serious cases"
- "The current sanctions appear to provide sufficient scope to escalate disciplinary action if required."
- "They should either be suspended or removed from their role."
- "It should not matter whether a councillor accepts something or not. *It was not possible to anonymise this part of the comment* should directly result in dismissal. Some things cannot be tolerated - ref Cllr xxxxxxxx of Town/Parish Council"
- "Removal from council and subsequent removal of ability to rejoin council. Monetary punishment, fines or stopping allowances."
- "Suspension"
- "Ideally they would be suspended from their party and like the Ombudsman a formal independent report published outlining the situation, if they are unable to recognise the advice and outcome they have been given. This should be given greater prominence and used more often. Likewise particular examples of good practice could be recognised in an annual report."
- "they can no longer be a councillor !"
- "I think it would depend on the particular issue."
- "The person becomes no longer fit for the job. As long as the complaint has been justified and appropriately upheld. If the complaint is simply targeting the person, that is not justifiable."
- "Loss of position"
- "Suspension"
- "They should be able to be sacked like anybody else."
- "Dismissal"
- "Financial penalties for a period of time. If they do not attend council meetings consideration should be given to removing them from office as they are clearly not representing the public who voted for them."
- "Barred and new councillor appointed."
- "The most important thing is that if 'poor behaviour' has taken place that someone else picks up the issues that the councillor has failed to act upon. Not just deleting social media comments or retraining - actually taking real action on behalf of Kirklees tax payers. No local area should be left with a councillor who doesn't listen and act. The workload of Councillors should be managed/overseen."
- "Warning first then disqualified if occurs again ."
- "they should step down from their post and they should no longer be allowed to represent their constituents or the Council"
- "They should be publically available in a register and a penalty imposed by way of the member's allowance"
- "Sanction should include not allowing Cllr to vote for a period of time"
- "They should be removed."
- "Severe cases should see the loss of vote and opinion in important discussions and/or decision making processes."
- "In cases of serious misconduct ,eg sexual misconduct , requirement to resign as councillor. This would require a councillor to give an undertaking asking to do as I understand it is not possible to dismiss an elected councillor"
- "Depend on what they have done"
- "No longer to be a councillor"
- "I believe that an appropriate sanction would be to be removed from committee duties and to undertake training."
- "I don't know. I suppose ultimately they should be removed from their post"
- "Ensuring councillors are aware that they are not to create divides or tensions between certain groups/neighbourhoods. Requiring a councillor to be held accountable for his/her actions when

posting false or inaccurate information on social media/local press."

- "these should be heard in front of their peers in a public meeting to determine if a Councillor should be removed from the Council."
- "See below."
- "Take away their role as a councillor."
- "Removed from the public eye and position"
- "requiring a councillor to undertake training."
- "They should cease to be a councillor"
- "Suspended or removed from position until corrective action is undertaken and seen to be effective."
- "should be removed from the council and a significant financial penalty should be imposed"
- "Removal from committee roles should be given a higher profile, not a distant 'possible/maybe'"
- "Appeal process. removal from post."
- "They should be sacked and not allowed to be a councillor again."
- "depending on nature of complain a financial penalty or suspension"
- "should be removed from duties for a period of time/fined/not able to engage with decisions"
- "have them removed from office"
- "Removal from office in the most extreme cases or persistent 'offending' Withdrawal of allowances and other privilege eg parking"
- "a financial penalty but only in severe cases"
- "If a councillor refuses to accept the outcome or actions required following a complaint they should be removed from the position."
- "Ideally a committee should determine whether or not failure to accept a specific performance related sanction constitutes a sufficiently large breach of duty/function that they should be forced to step down and a re-election held. Given the partisan nature of politics, it might be best if a panel of officers, rather than committee of members, exercised this decision."
- "They should loss their position as Councillor"
- "Depends on the severity of the action that prompted the complaint"
- "Financial Sanctions. Removing from a committe role is not enough. They need to be removed from being a councillor. Some behaviour by certain councillors is abhorrent and they seek only to serve themselves and not their electorate."
- "Being unable to contact officers directly, or without ""supervision"" (where it is shown that a Cllr has been rude to an officer, or where the behaviour towards officers is not acceptable)"
- "Perhaps using a restorative practice approach would help in some cases - all parties involved are supported to communicate with each other describing impact."
- "They should be removed from post immediately until pending further investigation if necessary. Also, any monies that they are paid should be frozen until the issue is resolved."
- "THEY SHOULD RESIGN."
- "Depending on the severity of the behaviour"
- "the sanctions should be binding to a code of conduct or they step down."
- "suspension and or financial penalty"
- "A severe warning"
- "There should be a right to appeal but with the sanction of losing seat if still doesn't accept outcome"
- "Banned from attending all meetings"
- "Suspension from councillor duties? Triggering a recall vote?"
- "It depends on the complaint and also whether this a 'first offence' and on what grounds the refusal to accept the outcome was made"
- "Require to stand down"
- "Dismissal from the position of Councillor"
- "dismissed"
- "Any councillor falling foul of rules. Should be stood down from position"

- "Depends on the severity of actions, but should be able to suspend or remove from office."
- "Struck off"
- "Suspension of appropriate period."
- "They should be made to step down"
- "These sanctions are completely unenforceable so the point is moot. Witness a recent case from 2019 where the Cllr who was sanctioned simply refused to comply with the sanctions to attend diversity training or apologise. There are no two ways about it - Cllrs are unaccountable."
- "Dismissal from their position should be an option and one that the council is prepared to invoke if necessary."
- "Our councillor has refused to cooperate with any sanctions that require him to change his behaviour. He refuses to apologise. The only progress has been in removing him from committees and removing his email address. The removal of the social media accounts has also helped but that is not something within the council's control. the best option would be that a councillor who refuses to apologise or change their behaviour is barred as a councillor for 6 months."
- "Removal from office for a specified period, with responsibilities given to another serving councillor"
- "? whatever is legally applicable"
- "Removed"
- "They should no longer be able to stand"
- "Removal of allowances. Suspend for at least 6 months."
- "Suspension"
- "Councillor should put themselves forward re-election at the earliest time.... a case of public trust."
- "Dismissal"
- "Suspension, fine, loss of allowances and for the most serious cases ban from office."
- "The above should be adhered to but in the real world is it actioned? They should be fined."
- "Dismissal"
- "Fired"
- "Withdrawal of access to council-owned resources and equipment including IT systems. Provide only the minimum required by law."
- "Sack em"
- "Not sure what the sanctions procedure is."
- "do not know"
- "Stand down for very severe issue."
- "removal from their seat either for a period of time or permanently Training and support to ensure councillors fully understand the expectations of them in their role Councillors and officers should be able to work together to deliver the best outcomes for Kirklees residents. Some Councillors aggressively pursue outcomes for individuals rather than their whole community - they need to understand the difference."
- "Some members are persistent complainants. This is ok if it is in the interest of their constituents but in some cases it is due to a dislike to an officer or a direct at a member of a different party. In some cases I have witnessed direct bullying towards officers in my directorate. If a member of the public behaved in this way they would have to go through a specified route to ask questions and not direct to an officer. Not all members follow the councillor enquiry route, although we always put enquiries through there if they come directly."
- "If the complaint is of such a serious nature then like an employee, perhaps suspension should occur."
- "Fines?"
- "Temporary ban in contacting the Council"
- "Official censure by elected colleagues; removal from boards or groups they may sit on; removal of allowances; suspension"
- "Work with all the Group leaders to agree a response led by all 68 other councillors. This should ultimately include deselection and a by-election."

- "A cross-party committee with senior officers should decide whether or not they should"
- "Sanctions as above, or in more severe cases removal as a Councillor"
- "Can councillors appeal the decision ? Maybe proceed to below suggestions."
- "There are some Councillors who just have a very negative attitude towards officers. I don't know if sanctions have been taken against them, but there has not been any change in their approach."
- "There should be an ability for MO's to suspend cllrs or fine them for a period of time if they refuse to carry out actions - the MO needs more powers so members comply"
- "removal from post"
- "Removed from post until the next election"
- "Fined."
- "financial penalty"
- "I think this is subjective, it really depends on the breach, I personally have not experienced bad behaviour or conduct but am aware of others who have"
- "Internal politics means I have no faith in the sanctions process."
 - "Should be sacked if found guilty. *It was not possible to anonymise this comment.*
Normal staff would have been dealt with more severely."
- "Dismissed from being a councillor"
- "their party should take sanctions but do not always take things as seriously as they should. There are issues in their approach if they are independents of course! The current sanctions are not really powerful enough in a few cases."
- "An appeals process that is investigated independently"
- "Not aware of what the sanctions would be and how and when they would be used"
- "If the outcome of any investigation is clear and upheld, then suspension from role, be it on a committee, or from office, must be an option."
- "Given that each Ward had three elected members, (so there should be no danger of constituents going unrepresented at Council,) I think the most egregious breaches of the Code, (say, perhaps, disclosing privileged information to the media or in the public domain,) could be sanctioned through a temporary suspension of the right to sit as a Councillor. Perhaps some more innovative remedial actions could be considered for some breaches - such as a process of "Community Service," whereby Councillors could be required to job-shadow, particularly where their behaviour has reflected badly on a particular service or department; that way, they may better understand that service or department's issues."
- "restorative conversation"
- "The same sanction which would be imposed on an officer of the Council. It should be possible in my opinion for a Councillor to be removed from Council - I don't believe this is possible as they are elected, but I think it should be. It should also be possible to suspend them without pay."
- "Legal prosecution and a jail term."
- "Councillors, like staff should be held accountable for their actions and subject to penalties where one refuses to accept the outcome or actions required following a complaint. This should include the option to remove a Councillor from committee roles, for a period of time or entirely dependent on how the individual circumstances and the seriousness of the situation including the impact this may have had on a third party including officers."
- "Depending upon the seriousness, maybe they should stand down or relinquish some of their responsibilities"
- "They should be able to be removed as a Councillor. If a member of staff bullied, intimidated, put up bad social media posts etc they would be sacked. Staff shouldn't have to continue working with Councillors who have done them wrong."
- "They should be subject to removal as a councillor"
- "this would always depend on severity of the poor behaviour."
- "removal and not able to stand again"

- "Sanctions should be put in place and behaviour monitored. If they are refusing then they should not be a Cllr as they need to set good examples"
- "not sure"
- "This is difficult as cllrs seem to be tried by opinions and rumours. There should be more protection. To cllrs"
- "Unable to re-stand for election."
- "being removed from roles. However, discussion should also happen to try & establish why they don't accept the outcome/actions."
- "Banned from re-applying at election times and removed from office, expulsion is the only way to drive good behaviour, as the others do not really do anything."
- "Can they be removed from office, or at least prevented from standing again? They should have the equivalent of the party whip removed - they should no longer be regarded as part of the local party. All the political parties should sign up to this."
- "SUSPENSION"
- "A list of upheld complaints should be published."
- "One idea would be to remove a Cllr from meetings unless they accept the actions required of them"
- "I don't know of examples where sanctions are imposed so am unsure."
- "They should lose their seat."
- "Removal"
- "Removal from office. The challenge is that national government sets a very poor standard of behaviour (why is American spell check being used?)"
- "He/She should be disciplined according to the council's disciplinary procedure"
- "If they refuse to accept the outcome then could this be reported back to their party - this would be difficult if they were independent. Being open and transparent with the people who voted them in would be fair so they can make a decision on voting for them again. If there has been a breach of conduct, any investigation and outcome should not be held behind closed doors."
- "-formal censure by the council"
- "I've never had a complaint progressed to a Council, it's always been muted before it got to that stage with a ""quiet word"" being had instead."
- "be removed from office if serious enough."
- "Councillors pay lip service to the sanctions and continue to repeat appalling behaviour because the sanctions are not significant enough. Councillors should face the same sanctions as an officer would for bullying and harassment, inappropriate behaviour and gross misconduct"
- "Removal from office if it's a serious complaint or there has been a number of complaints and a repetition of behaviour"
- "Term of suspension"
- "dismissal"
- "Cllrs are in effect employees of the council. They are the Council. They should have to go and seek a local by election. Party Leaders should be committed to this."
- "There is nothing there about criminal behaviour."
- "Removed from position"
- "Where a Councillor's behaviour or conduct directly incurs a cost to the organisation the Cllr should receive some kind of financial penalty."
- "Since the removal of sanctions under the Localism Act 2011 it is difficult to enforce the code of conduct for issues such as bullying, disrespect and unfounded accusations. However sanctions including an independent investigation (perhaps by the LGO) with abilities to suspend elected members from duties, committees and/or contacts with officers and a public register of all upheld investigations into conduct would at least provide some tangible sanction that is not currently in place. This could be supported by a mandatory annual reporting of a Public Register of upheld investigations into conduct along with written public apologies where appropriate."

- "I honestly think that there are some Councillors who would encourage such disciplinary action against them as a badge of honour. Suspending them would not be appropriate as in other aspects of their work they are good constituency representatives (although in a minority of cases for the wrong reasons and to cater for the vocal minority). However, for the majority I think that a reprimand by the party leader or Committee Chair would have some effect."
- "The councillor needs banning from being able to attend any committee meetings, land charity trust meetings and definitely ought not to be allowed to attend the full Parish council meetings. A full apology needs to be received before they are allowed back to attend meetings."
- "Answered no above as no category for don't know. Unaware of how the process works and if it has ever been used. Don't know enough about how the system works to comment on sanctions."
- "It may not be appropriate to jump straight to a sanction if a councillor refuses to accept the outcome or actions required following a complaint. A restorative approach of high support as well as high challenge should be adopted. For example, it would be worth considering what right of appeal does the councillor have, and have they been able to properly exercise this? If they have and still refuse to accept the outcome or actions, time should be taken to speak to the councillor to try to understand why they refuse to accept it and if there is a way to help them understand why the outcome has been reached, or action is required. If this doesn't work further sanctions could be considered e.g. right to vote in committee / council meetings, but this might just result in them taking a more entrenched position."
- "removal from office"
- "They should be banned from operating as a cllr including communicating with officers for a period of time commensurate with the nature of the complaint and the the level of non compliance or unacceptability of their behaviour."
- "They should be referred to the Monitoring Officer/Standards Cttee"
- "removed from committee roles and a formal censure and their party should deselect them for the next election"
- "Financial penalties proportionate to the misconduct. It would be a far better deterrent."
- "It should be possible to prompt a by-election if a councillor continually refuses to accept the sanctions so that the electorate can choose if the person should still represent them. Removal from committees is helpful but in the end, the parish council is less effective if it has one fewer active councillors to undertake key roles. Therefore, after a short time being restricted to Full Council meetings, it should be possible to give the electorate the opportunity to choose an alternative councillor if they wish, rather than continue with one who has a smaller voice for their area than would normally be the case."
- "Step down"
- "Dismissal without financial compensation"
- "In severe cases, councillors should be removed from office."
- "Poor behaviour dealt with and improvement plan put in place"
- "I don't know how much the sanctions will achieve simply because of the nepotism and power the Muslim councillors have in the community. They would still intimidate and bully with no real consequences."
- "They should be suspended from office for an agreed period . Further failures should require them to stand down from office with a possible election for a replacement councillor"
- "They should be removed from their position or suspended and not able to vote on council matters."
- "Rudeness to staff seems to be ok. IT IS NOT"
- "Removed from office."
- "Remove the councillor from office, and have another election, especially for those who dont pay council tax"
- "Remove income; withhold access to their council email accounts; publish on the Council's website the breach of the Code of Conduct and any disciplinary action taken (as set out below)."
- "Formal censure"
- "Removed from office - staff can be sacked but Cllr's can get away with doing what they like"

- "i don't know"
- "Should be treated like staff, written warnings, grievances, dismissal etc"
- "Dismissal/removal"
- "The sanctions would be fine if the Council/complaints system were willing to take them forward. I know of others who have also complained over valid issues and just been fobbed off."
- "Not sure."
- "I have very rarely seen a Councillor being removed from a committee because of poor behaviour. Some of the worst offenders appear to get away with things time and time again."
- "I would say all 3 top sanctions from the list above, and then if they still refuse to co-operate they should be removed from committee roles and then finally formal censure by the council"
- "Removal from position."
- "Sacked"
- "Removal from council"
- "Dismissal"
- "Disciplinary action, suspension or dismissal"
- "Removed from office"
- "Remove allowances"
- "I think in some cases where a councillor has proven repeat poor behaviour a select committee of joint independent & Party councillors should have the power to remove/suspend from office a councillor who has breached codes of conduct and is in direct dereliction of elected member duties without funds and undertake additional training before be allowed to a review of possible reinstatement to elected member duties"
- "Unsure of what sanctions can be placed on councillors or how and when this is triggered."
- "there should be a place we can take it too to overlook complaints, and look at the councillors claim and the person who is handling the complaint if an agreement cannot be reached for a 3rd party to make a overall final decision."
- "I don't know. I suppose it depends on whether it was a comment on social media that was racist or sexist etc towards a general group of people or to just one person."
- "Sack them"
- "Removal from the council"
- "Criminal sanction ie misconduct in public office"
- "I'm not sure what the sanctions are"
- "Jail."
- "Complaint should be looked at again by an impartial group. Councillor should be given a chance to accept the new outcome and if still refusing to carry out action required should be dismissed."
- "They are removed from office"
- "Removal from office"
- "The community that they serve should decide how much they get payed not their mate the leader of the council"
- "They should be removed but only if the complaint is justified and true."
- "They should be made to step down"
- "Termination"
- "There should always as a last resort , be the possibility of removing the councillor from office in exception circumstances"
- "Don't know. But I would expect that any sanctions that we currently have in place are not enforced. As officers we are not brave enough to challenge Councillors because of the current culture that exists. Staff are fearful that if they complain about a cllr they will be fired, sanctioned themselves, or seen as incompetent by directors and councillors. Currently Cllrs complain to Directors which put even more pressure on middle/senior managers."
- "n/a"

- "dismiss"
- "Councillors should be made to abide by the same Behaviours and Expectations as staff, financial penalties should be imposed on Council's whose behaviour falls short of those behaviours and expectations. Councillors who persistently behaviour inappropriately towards staff should have contact with officers stopped. Complaints about Councillors who receive a number of complaints should be dealt with by a cross party panel of peers, with the meetings about those complaints being public in their nature; with officers and residents able to put forward evidence in those hearings."
- "Withdrawn from office"
- "removed from role as councillor"
- "They should be held accountable and dismissed from there post"
- "Dependant on the complaint resignation should be used more widely to give the public confidence that the councillors are responsible"
- "suspension / fine"
- "formal investigation followed by dismissal if they are in the wrong."
- "Pay deduction, Suspension, Stripped of title and responsibilities if very severe"
- "This should be made public in a variety of different media."
- "They should step down"
- "I have never heard of any councillor having any of these sanctions someone with no political background should monitor their work and I force sanctions on them"
- "suspension"
- "Removal from the council - leading to a by-election."
- "Suspend"
- "Dismissal"
- "Working with the complainant to resolve the issue- having to be in their shoes and understand the implications of their behaviour / actions and then undergo more training"
- "Suspension from the Council - replacement ward election"
- "They should be removed from office."

In their review on Local Government Ethical Standards, the Committee on Standards in Public Life recommends some more serious sanctions be made available.

How much do you agree the following sanctions should be used in Kirklees, if legislation made them available to us?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Another sanction - please specify below:	151 (73%)	34 (16%)	19 (9%)	4 (2%)

222 comments:

- "Prohibited from holding post"
- "Prevent from standing again."
- "Removal"
- "Disqualification"
- "Remove as a councillor"
- "in serious cases some sort of recall and a by-election"
- "Dismissal"

- "be forbidden for election for 5 years"
- "Removal from office"
- "Formal disciplinary procedure"
- "Dismissal of a councillor"
- "Be removed from the council and not allowed to stand again"
- "Jail of found guilty of a crime"
- "The power to impose a Councillor to undertake training and voluntary / community work"
- "Unable to restand as councillor or invoke a bi-election"
- "To take appropriate training in racism sexism equal opportunities"
- "I'm not sure about the second question, but there's nowhere to choose this option."
- "Removed from all responsibilities."
- "ability to remove a councillors for certain serious discretions, probably would require a recall process where a fresh election was held."
- "As above, the Councillor should lose their position."
- "Expulsion"
- "If found guilty of bullying or racist behaviour, then the sanction should be the termination of their role as a councillor. They must be held to the same standards as any other individual."
- "For extreme cases with repeat offenders there should be a mechanism to remove them from office"
- "Dismissal - an abuse of power by someone in trust is gross misconduct. Time for them to go."
- "Stop sweeping things under the carpet , there is too much party politics, your not working for the people,"
- "As above."
- "Have a 3 stage disaplinary in place so you can ask them to improve or loose their seat"
- "Sacking."
- "Sack"
- "The power sack Cllrs and ban them from re-election"
- "If a councillor breaches the code of conduct they must be made to formally apologise and maybe review his/her work to make sure an incident of that nature doesn't happen again."
- "Removal"
- "As above removal from post"
- "Should have local elections and ban the postal vote to eliminate postal fraud"
- "complete removal of said councillor"
- "Removal from office immediately"
- "Loss of position"
- "If a counsellor has made a mistake that undermines the public interest then they should be made to account before the public and to do all they can to address the error. It should be made clear all concerned what changes need to be made if they continue to ignore issues then they should be given an opportunity to improveOr ultimately if they are not willing to change remove from office"
- "Stand down permanently"
- "Strike them off completely"
- "dismissal and not allowed to stand again"
- "remove from office"
- "Removal from office"
- "Removed from council and seat up for 're election"
- "Prison - it's negligent & harmful to the very area they are trusted with."
- "Total removal."
- "Like any penalty/fine means test give payment plan."
- "Removal and banning from reapplying anywhere else"
- "Remove from office or prison sentenance"
- "Removal from council and stop the ... ticking the boxes"

- "Compulsory re-election"
- "As above"
- "Removal from , post and disqualification from standing in future"
- "Compulsory mediation or for serious breaches Dismissed for repeat offences, and barred from standing for office for 3 years. Again appeal process essential"
- "Removal from office"
- "Barring from standing again"
- "Removal from the council and fines Financial penalties"
- "Help out at events"
- "Please see above."
- "if serious, sack them"
- "As above"
- "Removal from office"
- "Think their is to much on ethical standards just get on and do normal jobs etc fix street's roads you never fixed sort yourself s out ge"
- "As above, removal of role"
- "Deselected"
- "Financial penalty alone probably won't have an impact. Formal independent review/follow-up of public relations carried out by a 3rd party on a random basis over a set period of time to ensure that behaviours are being adhered to. Alternatively, no public relations/communication to be undertaken without independent 3rd party involvement for set period - reporting back to an independent panel to review findings."
- "Complete removal"
- "Dismissed from office."
- "Removal of public sector pension privileges"
- "Removal from office"
- "Removal from office"
- "As above"
- "Sacked"
- "Councillors should only be paid for what they do like attending meetings."
- "Instant dismissal from office for gross misconduct"
- "Councillors to made to make public apology and substantial fine."
- "Banned from being a councillor and removed from office"
- "Very public apology"
- "removal without notice or payment"
- "Remove permanently"
- "Permanent suspension"
- "Dismissal from the council"
- "Remove from office altogether on a permanent basis."
- "Lose their mandate."
- "Dismissal"
- "No longer being allowed to sit on the council"
- "Sacking"
- "Should be just like staff , suspend with it without pay and dismiss if the breach is serious"
- "Jail"
- "The power to make the councillor put him or herself up for re-election."
- "To remove from office"
- "Not able to stand for office again"
- "Power to suspend indefinitely"

- "We should be able to fire them!!!"
- "The power to remove a councillor from position permanently"
- "Prevent from ever standing again."
- "Dismissed, gross misconduct"
- "Removed from office."
- "Form of community reparation, ie volunteering for a charity or good cause"
- "A probationary period of supervision by a senior councillor."
- "Loss of seat"
- "Suspension should only be for the most serious offences."
- "Removal from post totally. Negligence from the very people they were voted to represent is totally unacceptable."
- "Giving a time limit on standing for further election, for example 1 term (4 yrs)"
- "Removal from office"
- "Removal from office"
- "Should not be allowed to serve again"
- "Power to bar election to any public office in Kirklees in serious cases."
- "Not allowed to stand as a future councillor for any wards."
- "Report to their party for their party to take disciplinary action too"
- "removal as a councillor"
- "A ban on standing for re-election for a period or even for life if necessary"
- "suspension for good"
- "Suspension with advisement against offence"
- "Removed from role and prevented from standing again"
- "Remove from office"
- "Who would be doing the suspending? a vote? if so then possibly ""agree""."
- "Similar processes as would be used for staff for very serious incidents"
- "They should be sacked from their job."
- "Persistent two offences must struck off for life during terms of office"
- "Immediate suspension from all offices and positions held, with the suspension (including all allowances) maintained until the matter is investigated, and resolved fully."
- "Completion of appropriate education and training - particularly how to source evidence based and factual information."
- "open apology"
- "Step down for a specified time or resign depending on what was the root cause."
- "To take away their committee place/s. This is particularly important if a complaint against a Councillor due to his behaviour to the Clerk. In the latter case, he/she should not be able to sit on the HR Committee."
- "It all really depends on the severity of the action of the Councillor."
- "Be banned from standing for re - election"
- "As above removed as a Councillor"
- "1) Outright dismissal if race/religion/ misogynistic speech has been performed via social media. 2) Councillors who do not reside in their local area MUST (regardless of sanctions - this should be an output of their work every week) SHOW that they have visited and been ACTIVE by PHYSICAL PRESENCE in their constituency at LEAST twice a week"
- "Publication of a formal report where lessons have not been accepted."
- "removal from office"
- "Remove from office immediately without benefits"
- "loss of position"
- "Suspension for short periods. 6 months is too long."
- "The ability to sack them."

- "Removal from office for severe breaches, i.e. failure to attend council meetings to represent the public who voted them in"
- "Barred from council AND WIDELY PUBLICISED."
- "Removal if investigations prove that it is justified - just as in any other public office."
- "Permanent disqualification"
- "Public register on internet"
- "Full removal"
- "Temporary or permanent ban on ability to join decision making processes or make votes that might be inappropriately biased."
- "As above"
- "I'm not sure I agree with removal of allowances (but I can't untick it). Would we impose a fine on staff who behave badly? If a Councillor was suspended with allowance, would their behaviour be just the same when they came back? I would be more interested in the organisation/political group working with the Councillor to address their behaviour and for the Councillor to understand why it is inappropriate and the effect it has had, there may be mitigating factors which come to light during these discussions which are impacting on the Councillor's behaviour and which the organisation can help support the Councillor with. I would also like to see a review date set with all parties agreeing to come back and discuss whether improvements in behaviour have been achieved and a plan of how to deal with repeated behaviour or recognition that there is no longer a problem."
- "Suspension is OK but it takes representation away from that councillor's constituency. He/she should be discharged from their councillor position and a by-election held."
- "As above, permanent or temporary removal from office."
- "remove from office and not allowed to stand again in any public office"
- "Removal from office , debarring"
- "To be removed permanently"
- "The power to prevent a councillor from standing for re-election for one or more terms."
- "For Councillors to be banned for life for working as a Councillor or within the Council as an employee"
- "Fire them"
- "A REQUIREMENT FOR THEM TO RESIGN."
- "trigger a byelection"
- "The ability to trigger a recall petition to remove that specific councillor from office"
- "permanent suspension if the complaint is extremely serious"
- "Naming and shaming publicly"
- "dismissal"
- "Suspended from holding a senior position"
- "Sack then for bad behaviour such as not paying their council tax and involved in securing jobs for certain members of their community when everyone else has to follow the recruitment process"
- "Compelled to issue a public apology - would demonstrate some genuine contrition and understanding of the impact of what they did"
- "As above, councillors should be forced to see re-election."
- "should not be allowed to stand for office again"
- "ban them ,there would be plenty more potetials out there"
- "Official censure by elected colleagues"
- "See above -should mirror arrangements for MPs including recall"
- "Suspension from standing for local elections in the Authority again"
- "a/a"
- "That they should not be able to contact officers directly for a period of time. Any complaints/enquiries may only go through Councillor Enquiries, where the tone etc. is monitored. Officers then reply via Councillor Enquiries only."
- "removal from post"

- "maybe a warning first"
- "Expulsion"
- "Lose their whip and loss of the above."
- "Removed from being a councillor if they have been found a fraud or serious breach of the ethical standards."
- "power to recharge cost to the public purse of the LA for wasted officer time/costs, power to impose a "fine" within defined circumstances similar to other professional regulatory bodies."
- "See above."
- "Some form of Restorative Justice to hopefully allow the Cllr to realise his/ hers error and hopefully learn from it."
- "Remove them from Council - hold a by-election."
- "Community service"
- "SACKED. REMOVED. BANNED."
- "Some form of recall"
- "Publication of any sanction imposed should be enough for most cases. Party discipline should be sufficient otherwise for those Cllrs who are members of responsible groups"
- "see above"
- "Removed from the position and banned from applying again"
- "The power to remove them from their seat."
- "For a very serious matter, the ability to remove them."
- "public apology/ permanent exclusion from public office/"
- "Removal from office - see above"
- "They would have to resign."
- "Removal from office and barred from re-election"
- "Mandatory annual publication of a Public Register of upheld investigations."
- "A full written apology by a councillor who does not meet the agreed code of conduct"
- "Getting them to understand the ramifications of their actions and the effect it can have on people"
- "Their Political Party should also be taking action such as expulsion from the party and deselection"
- "Criminal acts should be treated as such, they should not be above the law."
- "Facilitate a by-election if after 6 months, sanctions are not being complied with."
- "Power to remove from office"
- "Community work to be carried out in a ward which is not their own"
- "To have criminal proceedings in place too for intimidation and bullying."
- "Loss of job ultimately"
- "Removed from office"
- "Permanent suspension as unfit to hold public office"
- "For serious infractions removal from office and made ineligible to stand again"
- "Removed from office"
- "Asked to stand down"
- "Dismissal/removal"
- "I understand that it would be expensive but maybe open the post up for re election."
- "Sacked"
- "Prison"
- "Don't know"
- "Sack them"
- "Jail time"
- "Sack them whether their due to stand for election or 6 months into their role they know nothing will happen to them"
- "Remove if found to be to blame"

- "Termination"
- "Remove ability to report issues to Directors. Time consuming for Directors and puts undue pressure on middle/senior managers."
- "be forbidden for election for 5 years"
- "Dismissal"
- "Suspension/ stripped of their title and responsibilities depending on the severity of their actions"
- "Loose their seat and get someone in that works for their community"
- "requirement to undergo training or write an apology"
- "Dismissal"

Please share any suggestions you have on how to improve councillor behaviour:

201 comments:

- "Name and shame in public domain"
- "Disqualification"
- "Should be published in local paper/website"
- "Training on how not to become a meglamaniac!"
- "I have never met anyother councilot other than Coucilor xxxxxxxx."
- "Make the process more open to scrutiny."
- "Doing as asked by residents and coming back personally to inform of out come or not."
- "They should remember why they were voted on to the Council and represent the people in their area. Not as often happens go about their own agenda."
- "They must be "non political" in the way they relate to issues raised by constituents."
- "This information should also be available in the local media and all social and media formats etc"
- "They need to look after the people not themselves"
- "Be honest and open. Not always about towing the party line!"
- "Perhaps they should hear how their attacks on social media affect the staff on the ground trying their best in difficult circumstances"
- "Mandatory training in local history , commubies reyhnicity equality"
- "TShould no be-allowed to become cllr unless passes basic reading writing and comprehension skills"
- "All communications should be through IT systems so all communications can be monitored, just like those systems used in education."
- "Remove or reform "party politics" from local government."
- "The responsibilities relating to each elected Councillor could be shared with all constituents. A 360degree personal and leader assessment of performance to take place each year. Involving local voters in how to assess Councillor performance across a range of actions."
- "Greater publicity of wrongdoing"
- "Generally, my experience of councillor behaviour has been largely positive. Does it need to be improved? If we're talking about remedial action if found guilty through formal investigation, then appropriate training or coaching should be undertaken and evidenced when completed."
- "Where they have not done so, within the required timescales it should be raised and identified within a public forum."
- "All complain and sanctions make public and have public meeting to address a councillor accused"
- "More social media training"
- "As a citizen of Kirklees I've never experienced any instances of poor behaviour. I'm sad to say as an employee, this isn't the case. There have been occasions where some councillors feel that they are ""above"" officers and that we should concur to their view, despite in most cases the officer being professionally qualified and not a lay person. I think there should be more working together with councillors across the different services."
- "I think Councillors know that they are almost beyond reproach so behave accordingly."
- "Make the sanctions more widely know. Empower staff to speak up when they encounter poor behaviour."
- "Issue press releases praising examples of good behaviour and shaming councillors who offend against standards."
- "If you got honest, honourable people working as councillors you wouldn't be asking these questions"
- "Selected from more than one religion, race , colour and association. More independents needed. And not more just looking after one section of the community."
- "And prove that they have completed the sanctions."
- "Maybe bring council members to a room and make them take a survey of what they should do as

council members and help remind them why the people of the community voted for them."

- "WOW they need a new team altogether."
- "Regular accountability to local residents and regular reports of positive actions and how it has had positive impact on residents. Published short, medium and long term action plans with financial implications and time scales."
- "Just make them accountable"
- "Ban postal voting to eliminate postal fraud polling stations only"
- "Vet candidates more thoroughly."
- "make them accountable for the time and efforts they are putting in to their role"
- "Deal with serious concerns of the community and not just attend events that are high profile."
- "Nil"
- "Counsellors should have to account for their actions. The public should be able to see in an easy to find area What they are doing on a weekly basis to support their community. It's not just about what they do wrong but it's about what they are doing for the community and making the public more aware of what goes on on a daily basis so that ultimately they can make an informed decision when they go to the ballot box"
- "Stop lining your pockets with expenses stop being greedy"
- "Make all information about their behaviour and expenses easily available at all times"
- "The current crop of Kirklees Councillors is nothing more than a cabal. The Councils failure to look into issues arising from xxxxxxxx demonstrates an undercurrent of lies and deceit."
- "Better?more training."
- "Also all progress of investigations any sanctions impose, and if imposed sanctions are being met"
- "Get somebody in who is passionate about xxxxxxxx & with fight to make it the best it can be, it's not a job to further anyone's career, it's a job to fight for the voiceless undereducated community that need help, everybody want a nice & safe place to live, by they don't know how to get there!"
- "All correspondence should be thoroughly addressed and dealt with to a satisfactory level . If they are unable to deal with the matter in hand have the courtesy to say so , and if they are going to seek advice from elsewhere have the decency to communicate this to the individual as opposed to just doing NOTHING."
- "More accountability and more accessible by the public"
- "You can't improve behaviour the individual should know code of conduct and sign to agree to it.it should be embedded when they take office"
- "They should reply to all who have been in contact with them."
- "Reveal all interests and connections to companies etc prior to election."
- "The councillors should listen to all residents concerns .not just select few"
- "Its not a career its a vocation"
- "Reduce numbers so as those remaining will have a higher profile and be more accountable."
- "Regular feedback surveys for residents in wards"
- "I have seen councillors behave rudely towards one another in the meetings hosted in Teams. Councillors who exhibit such behaviour should be disconnected for the duration of the meeting, and votes on issues should be confined to email. An agenda item at the next meeting should allow for councillors to apologise to the public and each other."
- "Some formal training and relevant experience"
- "As a counsellor there must be held responsible and financially penalised for poor behaviour"
- "Training"
- "None."
- "When asking public to submit documentation: Acknowledge receipt and give time scale of consideration Supply copy of complaints procedure expectations of councillor diligence"
- "Get on with your jobs put people first and even yourselves . if you actually put your communities in order then. you can move on and be appreciated in the wider community for everything you have

done which is nothing much at all in xxxxxxxx never mind the wasted money on library fix the paths and roads where people work ."

- "They need to treat others with respect like they would want to be treated.. Not use their post to intimidate others and always liaise with others before making judgements."
- "Remind councillors that they are in post to represent the views of people living in Kirklees and to ensure that people are listened to properly and supported. Their wider national party affiliation should not affect their work and certainly not the ridiculous point-scoring squabbling that currently can be seen."
- "Is there a formal performance appraisal process in place?"
- "Power to remove them from office"
- "Training."
- "The controls are already in place but the xxxxxxxx committee chair and the legal department should not be biased in view of any party. The xxxxxxxx committee should be more fairly represented by the party's not placed on the xxxxxxxx committee due to the total number of one party elected councillors."
- "I don't have a complaint about my councillors."
- "By naming and shaming publicly"
- "Need to realise that their constituents are their bread and butter and must treat everyone fairly. Them listening would be a start."
- "That's a difficult one , really I wouldn't expect a councillor to behave inappropriately , in my opinion being elected as a councillor is a privilege and some councillors need to be reminded of this"
- "Complaints and performance scoring linked to their Social Media accounts."
- "All councillors should make honest declarations about any private links they have to local businesses/business people"
- "Explanation why they took the action"
- "The use of comprehensive guidelines that do not create scope for misunderstanding (code of practice). Make the code of practice readily available to local residents - to enable them to easily identify inappropriate councillor behaviour and know how to respond to it - including making a related report (always provide some element of feedback too - on a: ""You said - We did"" basis). Proactively seek councillor related feedback from local residents - such as when sending out new Council Tax bills or seeking electoral related information. Identify and share examples of related best practice at both local and national levels."
- "Make them accountable to the people they represent. let us know what they have done"
- "To be more in touch with the people in their area, the people they have been elected to represent. I have lived in Kirklees nearly three years and never see any communications from the local councillors."
- "Training and development to improve behaviour ."
- "Sadly, there are a few people who only stand for Council for their own personal gain and financial reward! They are elected to serve the residents in their ward together with the full residents of Kirklees - not their own financial reward or to obtain special perks!"
- "Training should be made compulsory as part of an induction process. References should be taken up."
- "I have lived in Kirklees for 5 years and I have yet to have any interaction with a councillor. I'm not sure if that is a good or a bad thing. Probably good as I have had nothing to complain about."
- "Reduce their workload. They are frequently overburdened by detailed case work to rectify problems experienced by the public that should have been dealt with by council staff."
- "I can only go by my personal experience and have found our representatives to be helpful and supportive."
- "Personally I would make an api database and allow people to put their views into it on a weekly basis, we need to move into the 21st century and stop allowing people to get away with poor work standards. If we made a database to see how councillors are performing with heat maps we could break the data

down and then see where needs work and where doesn't, meaning funds will be free to go to the places that need it most."

- "Annual attendance at meetings they are scheduled for to be published on the Kirklees website"
- "Make the role again community and the good of ""EVERYONE "" not for financial, political gain,"
- "more management control over what influence they have on council employees decisions."
- "It strikes me some councillors are far far better than others however xxxxxxxx is a laughing stock"
- "the council committee should always be overseeing councillor standards to nip in the bud anything improper in the outset."
- "Restorative practice training as part of their induction, not allowed to take part in panels until this training is complete. If a member of some committees eg planning, scrutiny they should have full training in a range of cross council areas including community, heritage, culture, regeneration to inform their decision making."
- "Certainly in xxxxxxxx we need people who are passionate about the area and willing to engage with everyone and not just who they select.. Despite video and photographic evidence of anti social behaviour in the area of our club, the lack of help and support is amazingly silent.. Equality for everyone should be paramount. Our community and children deserve better."
- "Some form of assessment / insight about what impact a councillor has on the community they serve where this is transparent and they can be measured about the impact they have in assisting their communities would be very good."
- "If not already the case, councillors, both new and experienced, should be obliged to undertake training (Including updating) in relation to observance of the Council's code of conduct. This process should involve an obligation to contribute actively to improvement of the Council's code of conduct. Councillors should be obliged to keep a detailed record of their replies to matters raised (whether orally or in writing) by constituents and this record should be regularly inspected by members of an appropriate committee."
- "They should be encouraged to be more transparent & open. Thier annual reports can be vague with very little substance"
- "the sack after the first outcome employ somebody who is fair and not just after the block voting which happens"
- "Reports on investigations into the conduct of councillors should be made publicly available on the council website."
- "Make them more accountable for their actions."
- "On the My Kirklees residents portal, where the local councillors are pictured, with their contact details etc, you could publicise there that what that particular councillor has done wrong, the sanctions imposed and at what point they have wiped the slate clean. Re: putting anything on the councils website, no-one would ever find it. An absolutely awful website and impossible to find anything. ""Business"" tab particularly bad unless you're looking for anything to do with Planning as 5 of the 8 featured buttons are to do with that."
- "More opportunities for councillors and officers to meet on a more informal basis in order to understand and empathise with the pressures of each role; a more user friendly code of conduct which gives examples of acceptable/unacceptable behaviour; making councillors and officers all part of one team of public servants by having a joint code of conduct - it can feel like we are on opposing sides rather than the same one!"
- "The following are my suggestions:- 1. The councilors should be passionate about their local areas and should not do the job just to increase their earnings from a second job. Many councilors have second jobs and are unable to concentrate on being a councilor. I suggest a councilor should only be a councilor if he or she can dedicate their time and effort for the job. 2. The councilors should be more transparent we should see what type of work they do and how they are helping their constituents. A list of cases that they're dealing with should be listed in the local paper like it is down south so locals can see what they are doing. 3. There has been claims that councilors help families and friends. This needs to stop and since the lockdown i know of several cases where people have

had a push through the local restrictions and discretionary grant payments through because they know the councilors. This is unfair. One example is the xxxxxxxx Post Office owner xxxxxxxx knew the councilors and they helped him receive a large payment. *They* has told myself and others that its who you know in the council who will help with the grants and this is wrong. 4. The councilors should be more visible and be readily available to be contactable by members of the general public that they represent."

- "Record sessions and play back to individuals so they have to review and consider their actual behaviour rather than their perception of how they behaved. Ask a cross-section of citizens to review recordings and comment on behaviours, then feed this back to councillors. Or review recordings with councillor and citizens present to discuss behaviour vs expectations or elected representatives."
- "stop the internal bullying"
- "I usually model good behaviour, write down what I think is the root cause of what is happening and then leave it and see what happens. It usually stops the bad behaviour or use it as example in another meeting to demonstrate what you thought of their behaviour and this usually knocks it on the head. But you shouldn't have to be strong to overcoming colleagues behaving badly and the code of conduct needs to figure much more ."
- "More code of conduct training at induction & refresher training"
- "There should be mandatory training for all Councillors and especially Parish Councillors. If they don't undertake the training, then their roles in the Council should be legally restricted, in terms of not being able to have a place on committees with specific knowledge needs, eg HR."
- "Maybe people need to realise that Councillors are only human at the end of the day, and that sometimes Council constraints means that we cannot give the constituent what they are asking for. I also believe that councillors need more protection from harassment and stalking. All parties whether constituent or councillor should treat each other as they would wish to be treated. It come down to respect from both parties."
- "Some Cllrs won't change and sadly have got into bad habits of being controversial and actively seeking excitement of the wrong kind. You will have to wait for them to leave But I think that the Council needs to accept how difficult the role is We are often working long hours, it is a constant issue of high work load that has no limits and then trying to hold down another job too. So rather than looking to improve Cllr behavior, how about considering supporting them more so their behavior is never as a result of unreasonable pressures Exhausted and stressed people make mistakes and do things that are out of character Decent casework software and officers who have an understanding of the actual role we have would put it on a more professional footing. People who have been plunged into remote working because of Covid are saying how hard it is. Well now they see what we always have to do. If it's a blatant case of breaking the rules for no good reason, then fine, investigate and go through procedure. But before that is decided, ask if the Cllr is ok In fact, how about regularly asking if they are ok. People who are cared for, usually behave better. And don't ever forget that some members of the public and other Cllrs sometimes deliberately do things to try and get us into trouble by trying to provoke a particular reaction. So don't just look at the Councillor, look at the complainant too. The complainant has little to lose."
- "make sure they have an intelligence at least better than a fly"
- "Talking to the parties and raising it further with them. It reflects badly in them as a national party"
- "to be unbiased"
- "Provide a means of feedback to the arbiters of good behaviour after attending a councillors surgery with an issue."
- "As mentioned above; minimum standards of physical attendance should be imposed on Councillors who do not reside within the area they represent. They need to show outputs in terms of physical visits on constituency business at least TWICE a week in DIFFERENT sections of their ward area. Right now many of them are simply coasting (this was the case long before lockdown) - just responding to the odd enquiry via email and having no physical presence within an area, no real stakehold or regular attendance or visits to anything within the area they are meant to represent."

- "Clear and unambiguous records of any wrong doings. Strong incentives to adhere to guidelines. Monetary repercussions of councillors do not uphold behaviour standards."
- "Kirklees complaints procedure re councillors & the code of conduct for them should be very much in the public domain eg displayed in places where council services / business are conducted, such as libraries. Raising an issue should be easy & human based - not confined to the internet. Merely saying that information or pro-formas are 'on the website' is not good enough. Access to all procedures & information should not be restricted. All those elected should sign up to a contract & if they break that contract, as in most spheres of employment, they lose their job as a councillor."
- "Ensure more public visibility for eg meetings. Not good enough to hold meetings behind closed doors and then have newspaper reposrts about 'bad behaviour'. I do not mean loads of public present!! Ensure that councillors obey the rules that the rest of us have to follow! - eg parking, paying of rates Ensure that councillors are chosen on merit and not because they belong to a particular community, no matter what colour or belief. Ensure that councillors are representative of ALL, not just whatever is perceived to be 'their own'. Once elected - councillors should be apolitical."
- "Poor behaviour is intolerable from our elected reps.If guilty they should be barred and denied any further public office and records should show this for all to see."
- "The standards need to be visible - where are these on the Kirklees website? There is a code of conduct that makes no reference to the role of the community - or local voters or local tax payers. Standards should be community facing - for example - what do Kirklees voters want from their councillors? These issues should be researched and should be the basis of any standards - its not difficult. But it does require Kirklees to take its local democracy role seriously. The standards should then be policed - or they are pointless."
- "Although I haven't seen one is there a news sheet showing what is occurring in their world ."
- "to respect and accept responses rather than challenge them, acknowledge that the majority of officers who deal with them are doing their best to support and help them as best they can within the limits that set policy / services work to"
- "Our town centre is an eyesore it needs investment."
- "More support to those who work for them. It is much more challenging in this position. 'Volatile political environments' shouldn't continue to be areas where poor behaviour is overlooked. If circumstances were flipped, the sanctions would come faster and heavier on an employee, partner or partner employee."
- "Well as I see the councilor from xxxxxxxx is on Facebook and getting lots of stuff done.but the councilors from xxxxxxxx is not right helpfully or dose not go to see the people and talk to them or up date them on thing happening"
- "By ensuring that they are fully aware that they are elected by local residents and as such should always act in the best interests of those resident not necessarily their own agendas/political gain."
- "the use of the strong sanctions listed above to ensure Cllrs have a clear penalty if they do not follow appropriate behaviour."
- "Due to the behaviour and reputation of a few Councillors, some people are afraid to work with Councillors as a whole. Sometimes they are all tarred with the same brush but this shouldn't be the case. I know that people have complained about Councillor behaviour and the view is that nothing ever gets done so there is no point in complaining about it. The problem, which in my opinion, is only in a few cases is not only the organisations problem to solve through Standards. The political groups - GBMs and Group Leaders - should take more responsibility in this area. Time limit question on page 3. Sometimes there will be an issue and you let it go, after all it is a Councillor and you don't want to complain about a Councillor or rock the boat, especially if you work closely with them. If the bad behaviour is prolonged or escalating then a complaint may be made after an initial incident."
- "councillors should be held to account for all actions and any comment in any media, they should never be allowed to use a form of words to avoid responsibility for their actions or comments they have made ."
- "Make them more visible to the general public. Go hard on sanctions from the very beginning. Allow

general public to have input on what sanctions councillors face."

- "learn the basics where possible, before making promises to members of the public find the relevant team/staff member and find out the process and reasoning behind jobs before making promises that we cant deliver."
- "Stronger sanctions that are made public so that it hopefully puts off people from behaving this way and voters are then in receipt of all the facts about who they are voting for."
- "The use of sanctions should implemented more often and made more public."
- "Supporting citizens to provide constructive feedback on the performance of councillors"
- "Ensure that inappropriate behaviour is challenged from the start. The councillors are elected by the community so no-one should be afraid to challenge them."
- "They should be allocated a booklet / training on procedures in the council chambers ,and procedures in day to day life, we have to remember that we aRe representing our constituents therefore we should be seen to be helpful , understanding , tidy and smart in appearance."
- "make all elected members sign up to a code of conduct and publish this on a page that relates to their membership of committees and other public bodies along with their declaration of interests."
- "induction programme is probably helpful but long-standing Cllrs may have more entrenched behaviours. The same training and support opportunities should be made available to Cllrs as to staff e.g. via MiPodXtra, Restorative Practice Action Learning Sets, shadowing opportunities in different services and different roles/ grades, regular 'appraisals'/ 'peer review', 360 degree appraisals with a focus on perceived behaviours, etc."
- "Many Councillors feel they above public accountability once they are voted in. This promotes ingrained partisan and boorish behaviour."
- "One person from each ward should be allowed to sit in at full council meetings, and submit a written"
- "Sadly being a councillor has become a job just like any other where they dictate their salaries and do absolutely nothing in their community!! I wonder if other KMC staff has the same privilege!!"
- "A far higher degree of challenge from officers when repeated demands are made on the same issue, for example, to indicate that there will be no further discussion on the matter. I cannot fathom why this does not happen when we are in the midst of a national emergency, nor where this perception comes from that Cllrs are sacrosanct. The post should be respected, yes. We should work constructively with them and assist where possible, yes. But we should not be bullied or harassed and if we give a view with evidence and explanation to back it up that should be the end of it."
- "Name and shame bad behaviour when they speak offensively and rude to officers or in a public meeting. For example a councillor was rude to an officer at the start of council meeting only last week."
- "Higher management need to use the sanctions available more firmly and particularly when they hear frequent concerns being raised by their officers. At present, even though a number of concerns are raised by various officers from different sections, nothing appears to be actioned. Officers don't want to necessarily put themselves in the firing line of being the one who makes a formal complaint. I had an experience as a more junior member of the team when a councillor (no longer an elected member) made a passing comment about me to another officer. When this was raised by the Monitoring officer at the time with the member, there was no apology ever made direct to me and after that event, he and one of his fellow ward members (who is still a ward member) would make snide comments - fortunately i was thick skinned but, this clearly demonstrated that the councillors didn't take the situation seriously."
- "Clear and consistent expectations of good behaviour from all quarters - Council, officers, peers, public, parties etc. Incentive and deterrent. Does anyone comment or praise (without sounding condescending), in public or in private, councillors who demonstrate good behaviour? Everyone usually concentrates on poor behaviour and there is little or less recognition of good behaviour."
- "To be there for all people in the community and listen. Issues to not be treated as an advertising campaign and to show that they work hard, are trustworthy and live in the local community."
- "The process dealing with complaints against councillors is too slow."

- "I've never been in the council chamber , but if resembles Westminster with its deliberations then I would have plenty to say no doubt, that is unless all forgiveness is granted by the famous words 'My right honourable friend, which is the passport for anything that follows.'"
- "Be more courteous and respond to the people who you are supposed to be helping. That means being available, being approachable, and actually responding to communication when contacted."
- "On-going training and support to help old and new councillors understand their role and responsibilities and their impact on officers and residents what they behave inappropriately. Use real scenarios to demonstrate the impact of negative behaviour - unfortunately some Cllrs believe they can instruct officers to do anything and the officers have to implement the instruction. Cllrs need to understand the statutory, financial and policy limitations on what officers can do and not 'blame officers' when they are unable to implement the instruction."
- "sign up to a set of behaviours as we do as officers and one of those should be Respect (to each other)."
- "My previous experience is that no management/director level have stood up for officers who are being bullied, nobody wants to confront councillors about this. I hope this code of conduct will change things but as long as officers are scared to confront councillors it will continue."
- "Update Code of Conduct giving examples of what is not acceptable"
- "All the councillors I have worked with have been superb and I have enjoyed working with them, however there have been some councillors who have made posts on social media in the past that were very worrying and would have resulted in formal action had they been council employees. I think training on social media and more accountability for posting is in everyone's interests."
- "see previous"
- "Councillors should only be allowed to go through official channels to deal with an issue. E.g. if there is a problem with a road, then they make the request through the normal channels - not call/email senior management to get it done quicker. Often officers are already dealing with an issue and then jobs get duplicated as a councillor has come through the back door and it creates more work and confusion. Their issue should be prioritised in the normal way, not be moved to the top of the list because they've contacted a senior member of staff."
- "Improve their use of technology, some still use feather and quill. Most of the councillors I/T skills are atrocious.."
- "Greater emphasis on personal behaviour and awareness in training and highlight this on the website. Appraisals by an independent person that allows for feedback from professional colleagues like officers/ fellow councillors to be fed back in a safe space and allows the councillor a safe reflective space. Development plans for elected members to support their role."
- "I actually think that the majority of the general public are not very engaged with the democratic process and the activities of Council. In my experience many vote, (if at all,) strictly along party lines and have little knowledge of their own Councillor and his or her activities on their behalf. Better publicity, wider understanding and greater engagement in the Council's work among the public would have the inevitable side-effect of improving accountability at the ballot-box and therefore Councillor standards and behaviour."
- "For the question above, compliance with a sanction should be a given! Although there are sanctions available to sufficiently address poor behaviour on the part of Councillors, these are only effective if embedded within the ethos of the Council. Dignity at work should apply to everyone - Officer or Councillor - but it doesn't. Councillors often show little respect for each other publicly in the Council Chamber. The sanctions just need using, following through, and upholding. So many times I hear ""you know what Cllr X is like"". It's not appropriate that that should excuse bad behaviour, but it often seems to. Councillors behave badly because they can, they are allowed to."
- "Nothing else to add."
- "Sanctions aren't strong enough. Cllr's know they can do what they want and will only get a smack on the wrist. There are no real punishments. It should be published on social media/ in the newspapers etc when Cllr's have done something wrong so the people who are electing these Cllr's know who they

are really electing. It shouldn't get swept under the carpet."

- "Cllr's need to set a good example for the public they serve and expected behaviours need to be set out clearly. Monitoring should take place right from the beginning with mentors in place for new Cllrs."
- "Empowering and supporting council officers to call out bad behaviour."
- "Make them accountable"
- "A clearer code of conduct"
- "they should follow the council behaviours like everyone else and remember we are all working for the same goals"
- "Training in Restorative practice and an expectation that they work in this way Councillors need to recognise officers as real people and respect them - even if they don't agree with them - a few councillors currently show very little if any respect for officers and continue to get away with appalling behaviour - behaviour that would not be accepted anywhere else - but because they are elected they feel they have the permission to treat people like rubbish"
- "Refresher courses - particularly if they have been in the role a long time"
- "I have come across a number of appalling Cllrs and some excellent Cllrs and yes no doubt there are other in the middle who are effective but are not necessarily appreciate council employees, in particular if they do not achieve their desired outcomes. For all Cllrs to say thankyou for any responses they receive . I suggest an induction, with the Leaders of the Parties advising the shadowing with those Cllrs who have a good reputation."
- "Mandatory behaviours/expectations training for all Councillors prior to starting role."
- "Provide training and awareness to officers on how to report poor behaviour with assurances any investigation will not result in repercussions. A regular quarterly monitoring exercise by service areas will also ensure all complaints/concerns are captured particularly where officers may be fearful of reporting the behaviour of elected members. The monitoring officer should also have discretion to take ""out of time"" complains in certain circumstances - see next questions."
- "If we go down the reprimand route then Officers need the support of senior managers and party Chairs to come out publically to support Officers where extreme and unfair criticism has been made ."
- "The Council needs to take Councillors behaviours seriously and not sweep them under the carpet - sanctions are only of any use, if Cllrs are investigated and taken to task in the first place. There are far too many instances of behaviours from Cllrs that, if displayed by an officer, would warrant disciplinary action - Cllrs appear to be ""above reproachj"""
- "Maybe all councillors are allowed to interrupt proceedings just once in a meeting. Once is reasonable but it is just time wasting and created a negative omnipresence when a councillor feels they need to continually interrupt meetings. It is disruptive, unnecessary and is not creating an atmosphere of positive mutual regard. It serves no purpose and completely hinders the flow of the meeting."
- "This is tricky as it appears to be a personality issue. I would say training on the basics of what powers are available to the council/officers and how the council are able or unable to exercise those powers provided by the governing legislation. This may assist with understanding how some decisions are arrived at."
- "Full training given to Councillors although I think this is in place"
- "All cllrs need to display a respect for officers in the way they act, speak and communicate with them. There appears to be a lack of understanding by some of the pressures that some staff are under at work. They should treat cllrs in the same way that you would expect them to treat a member of their own family ie show kindness, courtesy and respect and be realistic with their expectations."
- "A lot of Councillors I come into contact with a generally nice people doing a difficult job on behalf of their ward so i havent really encountered any bad behaviour - i'd had angry councillors but i personally think that this is just their passion for what they do spilling over when officers don't do what they say they will do or they do things in their ward but done let the councillor know."
- "Councillors should not be serving where there are clear conflict of interest, or they cannot fulfil the role due to other interests such as full time employment"
- "Look at requirements for standing for election. Public office, so outcome should be made public"

- "Webcast should be reviewed of meetings and poor behaviour pointed out."
- "Less influence on senior officers to do their jobs as they want to make a change but because councillors have so much power that really has a debilitating effect on outcomes for communities that that council officers serve. Less acceptance of misogyny within the members."
- "Challenged in all cases when unprofessional rather than just letting it go which is my experience"
- "Swift action by the monitoring officer regarding alleged breaches of poor behaviour."
- "They need to treat council staff with dignity and respect which from experience is not always the case. There are a handful of Cllrs who treat staff in an appalling way and are too full of their own self importance"
- "They could actually get back to you even if they can't help you. just to let you know."
- "Some basic training on how to communicate, do their jobs, and deal with other genders/races/LGBTQ would be useful. Also how to handle conflict when the Council can't handle the finances, actively wastes money, and then decides they have to close museums, libraries, other services."
- "More accountability"
- "The introduction of an electoral system that gives the public a greater choice in the people who are selected to represent them."
- "more mandatory training"
- "Flog them"
- "To be reminded that they are elected officials and are there to serve the public NOT their own agenda"
- "To work with us when we ask them for assistance, or not kick up a fuss when we are only providing them with information on a decision that we are not in a position to reverse?"
- "Occasional contact via, text, tweet, Whatsapp, email etc. to let us know what's going on."
- "Ensure a councillor is a signatory to the code upon appointment rather than just being allowed to accept there is a code."
- "Put a code of conduct in place not just you have to attend so many meeting like doing community work visiting their residents making a difference to the community they serve"
- "Mandatory full restorative practice training, as completed by Directors, Heads of Service and Senior Managers."
- "Councillors are a representative of their community but unfortunately this is no longer the case as only interested in themselves"
- "Actually carry out the promises made"
- "I think there needs to be a level of transparency at all times and that outcomes should be displayed to ensure the public are confident with the Council's management of a Councillor actions"
- "Make their role more community based. We want to see our councillors in our communities working with us and helping us. Not sitting in Huddersfield or cut off from the community they are serving."
- "Councillors should understand that officers are bound by policy and legislation as well as financial constraints. But above all we must act fairly and impartially with integrity and honesty towards all citizens. We cannot "" bend the rules "" to suit a councillor's constituent."

Please make any comments or suggestions about how Town and Parish councils could be involved in Standards:

12 comments:

- "One councillor could represent them on the Standards Committee"
- "T&P should be represented in the standards panel, which should apply to all forms of councillor"
- "It is important for Town & Parish Councillors to be involved in complaints relating to those Councils, as they operate slightly differently to Kirklees Council. But if the complaint is against a member of a Town Council, the representation should be from a different Town Council to avoid conflict of interest - connections with the Councillor or even due to embarrassment in going against the Councillor who is being investigated."
- "Please consult with Town and Parishes, and collate all of the responses."
- "They shouldn't have any involvement."
- "Standards are standards that we as an individual would like ourselves to be treated, and shown respect"
- "Although we as a Parish have adopted the Kirklees Code of Conduct and complaints are investigated by the Monitoring Officer and referred to the standards committee,, we have always been happy for this separation. The Parish council is still able to decide what sanctions it imposes from the ones recommended. It is very helpful to have this separation and 'higher authority' as it gives more credibility to the decision making process and gives a breathing space between the councillor concerned and the other councillors."
- "Being involved through the District/County should give them a better understanding of what is expected/required if they are not already involved at a broader level. Need to help them be part of that broader picture - training, surgeries, support for clerks, networking, other support organisations. Can be very time consuming for MOs."
- "maybe their clerk should be involved in training and perhaps a representative town or parish councillor on the standards/scrutiny work to try and engage them?"
- "Councillors need to come to a common consensus and discernment regarding any councillor who has broken the code of conduct. I think most councillors are generous hearted and will consider situations with a level of fairness and they will collectively come to a decision that is not mean spirited but considered in a level headed way."
- "The Parish should be able to express its views on the impact of the complaints on their business. I.e. submit an 'impact statement' which could be written by the Chair (or Vice-Chair if the Chair was the subject of the complaints)."
- "Town and Parish Councils should sort out their own complaints, rather than Kirklees."

Using your experience as a Group Business Manager, Independent Person or Monitoring Officer, please make any final comments or suggestions on maintaining councillor standards, the Code of Conduct, or complaints process:

1 comment:

- "There is a general culture of standards and the sanctions not being generally respected and need to be enforced by the political parties, perhaps the parties also being fined or having sanctions if their members are found to be in breach?"

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