

Contact Officer: Yolande Myers

**KIRKLEES COUNCIL**  
**STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday 12th March 2025**

Present: Councillor Bill Armer (Chair)  
Councillor Mohan Sokhal  
Councillor Martyn Bolt  
Councillor Alison Munro  
Councillor Musarrat Khan

In attendance: Craig Ainsworth (Independent Person)

Apologies: Councillor Harry McCarthy  
Councillor Imran Safdar

**1 Membership of the Committee**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Harry McCarthy and Imran Safdar, and Craig Ainsworth, (Independent Person).

**2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 October 2024 be approved as a correct record.

**3 Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared.

**4 Admission of the Public**

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

**5 Deputation/Petitions**

No deputation or petitions were received.

**6 Public Question Time**

No questions were asked.

**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 in October 2024.

The Committee noted that the report reviewed complaints from the period 1st of September 2024 to the end of February 2025, during which there were a total of 22 complaints, 17 of which relation to Kirklees councillors and four in relation to Town or Parish Councillors. The report advised that, of these complaints, one was not pursued and ten were not progressed after the initial assessment process. Two

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issues were resolved informally and the remaining nine complaints were currently being investigated, being considered currently under the initial assessment process.

The committee noted the report, and a discussion took place with regard to training for new Members when elected. It was noted that the recent Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge identified that the council needed to keep working on Member development programmes and Councillors' behaviours and the Committee was advised that a new Member Development Framework was being developed.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be received and noted.

### 8 **Cases and News Update**

The Committee received an update on recent developments in local government standards, including notable cases, legal updates, and national policy movements. Members were briefed on a series of incidents across various councils, including ministerial intervention at Tower Hamlets due to concerns over governance and political culture, and the conviction of a Councillor for harassment of senior officers at Torridge District Council.

The Committee also reviewed recent decisions published by standards bodies in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Notably, the Standards Commission for Scotland had issued suspensions in two cases involving disrespectful conduct towards council officers, while the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales reported on several cases concerning integrity, equality, and the declaration of interests.

Members were informed of the ongoing consultation by the UK Government on proposed reforms to the English standards framework. This included potential reintroduction of powers to suspend councillors, mandatory codes of conduct, and enhanced roles for standards committees. The Committee noted the significance of these proposals in light of the Committee on Standards in Public Life's recommendations and the broader context of local government reform. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that feedback from the consultation would be monitored and reported back in due course.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.