

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL	
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Report of:	Director of Legal and Governance Services
Relevant Executive Member:	The Mayor
Submitted to:	Standards Committee
Date:	7 April 2025
Title:	Quarterly Update Report to Standards Committee
Report for:	Discussion
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	Delivering Best Value
Key decision:	Not applicable
Why:	Not applicable
Subject to call in?:	No
Why:	The report is for information to the Standards Committee

Executive summary	
This report provides a quarterly update to the Standards Committee regarding previous years and the current years position concerning Code of Conduct Complaints.	

1. Purpose

To provide information only by way of a quarterly update to the Standards Committee regarding the previous years and the current position concerning Code of Conduct Complaints. In addition that the Committee considers the information to discuss possible areas of member development and improvements.

2. Recommendations

That the Standards Committee notes the contents of this report, which will act as a basis for further discussion in the committee meeting.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

Not applicable as no decision is being made

4. Background and relevant information

4.1 This report is provided to committee members to give an overview of the current, and recent position with regards to the Code of Conduct complaints received

Year (Jan-Dec)	Total complaints	Member on Member	Other non Member (ie member of public / officer)	No. withdrawn/ not progressed by complainant/ discontinued due to not re-elected	No. rejected	No. resolved informally	No. to investigation	No. to standards Committee after investigation
2019	27	9	18	4	9	10	4	3
2020	31	4	27	16	12	1	2	1
2021	33	13	20	7	5	19	2	1
2022	12	3	9	4	4	2	2	2
2023	59	10	49	9	30	14	6	0
2024	21 (11 are ongoing as to what action to take)	7	14	0	9	0	0	0
2025	9 (2 are ongoing)	4	5	0	6	1	0	0

4.2 There are no outstanding complains from 2020, 2021 and 2022.

4.3 There were 59 complaints in 2023. Of those complaints 9 were withdrawn or discontinued, 30 were advised to be rejected based on the assessment criteria, 14 were resolved informally by way of advice and guidance. 6 complaints which have

been accepted are ongoing, 5 of those complaints relate to the same member and are linked with similar ongoing complaints made in 2024.

- 4.4 There were 21 complaints in 2024. Of those complaints 9 were rejected, 10 have been accepted and 1 is ongoing. The 11 complaints that have not been rejected are currently being considered as to how they should proceed.
- 4.5 There have been 9 complaints so far in 2025, 2 are ongoing, 6 have been rejected and 1 complaint was accepted but resolved informally by advice and guidance.
- 4.6 The statistics and information can show how separate complaints may relate to the same incident or subject matter, which has caused concern to several Councillors and / or members of the public, rather than the numbers reflecting wholly separate incidents.
- 4.7 The common prevalent theme of the complaints is inappropriate use of social media. Training was therefore identified and carried out by the Local Government Association to Members on the 4 February 2025. Ten Members attended the training. The theme of complaints will be continued to be monitored to consider whether the training should be repeated.
- 4.8 It is acknowledged there are a number of outstanding complaints from 2023 and 2024 to resolve which require prioritisation. An update on the progress of the outstanding complaints will be provided at Standards Committee. The Monitoring Officer has secured growth in the budget to employ a full-time, permanent governance solicitor to assist and support in standards matters. The recruitment process is underway.

5. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

Not applicable as no decision is being made

6. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	There is no financial input
Legal	There is no legal impact, the report is for information and discussion
Risk	The report contributes to the Council demonstrating its approach to monitoring and maintaining standards of behaviour and ethical governance
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	There are no issues affecting human rights, the public sector equality duty or community cohesion.
Climate Change / Environmental	There is no impact on the Council's climate change or environmental aspirations.
Children and Young People Cared for by	There is no impact on children and young people cared for by the Authority and care leavers

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Data Protection	There are no issues of data protection

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

The report is for information.

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline

Appendices

Not applicable

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2	
3	

Background papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Body	Report title	Date

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