

<b>MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL</b>	
------------------------------	--

<b>Report of:</b>	Corporate Director of Legal and Corporate Services - Charlotte Benjamin
-------------------	---

<b>Relevant Executive Member:</b>	Mayor Chris Cooke
-----------------------------------	-------------------

<b>Submitted to:</b>	Standards Committee
----------------------	---------------------

<b>Date:</b>	20 April 2026
--------------	---------------

<b>Title:</b>	Quarterly Update Report to Standards Committee
---------------	--

<b>Report for:</b>	Information
--------------------	-------------

<b>Status:</b>	Public
----------------	--------

<b>Council Plan priority:</b>	Delivering Best Value
-------------------------------	-----------------------

<b>Key decision:</b>	Not applicable
----------------------	----------------

<b>Why:</b>	Report is for information only
-------------	--------------------------------

<b>Subject to call in?</b>	Not applicable
----------------------------	----------------

<b>Why:</b>	This report is for information to the Standards Committee
-------------	---

<b>Proposed decision(s)</b>	<p>That the Standards Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notes the content of this report.</li> </ul>
-----------------------------	---

<b>Executive summary</b>	<p>This report provides a quarterly update to the Standards Committee regarding the current position concerning Code of Conduct Complaints, and to identify any trends or patterns in the type of complaints being received.</p>
--------------------------	--

## 1. Purpose of this report and its contribution to the achievement of the Council Plan ambitions

1.1 To provide information by way of a quarterly update to the Standards Committee regarding the previous years and the current position concerning Code of Conduct Complaints.

1.2 In addition, that the Committee considers the information to discuss possible areas of member development and improvements.

Our ambitions	Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims
<b>A successful and ambitious town</b>	<p>This report supports all the ambitions as Councillors represent local residents, work to develop better services, and deliver local change.</p> <p>The public have high expectations of them and entrust them to represent their local area, taking decisions fairly, openly, and transparently. There is 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.</p> <p>This report provides the Standards Committee with the information providing the current position to create and maintain public confidence in the role of councillor and local government.</p> <p>Maintaining that confidence will support the delivery of all of the ambitions and the underpinning aims.</p>
<b>A healthy Place</b>	
<b>Safe and resilient communities</b>	
<b>Delivering best value</b>	

## 2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Standards Committee

- Notes the content of this report.

## 3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

3.1 Not applicable as report is for information only.

## 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	Member on Member	Other non Member (i.e. member of public / officer)	ONGOING	No. withdrawn/ discontinued due to not re-elected	CONCLUDED				
						No. rejected	No. resolved informally	Accepted – No further action	No. to investigation	No. to standards Committee after investigation
2021	33	13	20	0	7	5	19	0	2	1
2022	12	3	9	0	4	4	2	0	2	2
2023	59	10	49	0	9	30	14	0	6	0
2024	21	7	14	0	0	8	13	0	0	0
2025	37	16	21	4	2	17	10	4	0	0
2026	6	0	6	3	0	2	1	0	0	0

4.2 The shaded columns show the breakdown of the ongoing and complaints outcomes and will add up to the total number for the year.

4.3 An additional column has been added to show those where they have been accepted, but no further action is required. See para 4.7 below for an example.

4.4 The outstanding complaints as at 26th March 2026 are as follows:

Year	Total Number Received	Total Number Ongoing	Number of Cllrs	Number currently 'stayed'
2025	37	4	2	0
2026	6	3	3	0
TOTALS	43	7	5	0

4.5 For clarification, the information shows each separate complaint. In some cases, we may receive a number of complaints in regard to the same incident which can inflate the total number. We may also have the same complaint against a number of Councillors, which can again inflate the total number.

4.6 The 'Stayed' column has been included in the report as per the committee request. This is for any complaints that are awaiting information from external bodies i.e. police/another authority or body.

4.7 There have been 13 complaints concluded since the report to the committee of 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026 as follows:

*10 complaints from 2025:*

3 complaints which had been previously stayed awaiting information from external bodies have been concluded by way of No Further Action by the Monitoring Officer, further to consultation with the Independent Person.

6 complaints were rejected the Monitoring Officer, further to consultation with the Independent Person. This related to two separate complaints, but each complaint was in respect of 3 councillors.

1 complaint was accepted and informal advice and guidance given by the Monitoring Officer, further to consultation with the Independent Person.

*3 complaints from 2026:*

2 were rejected by the Monitoring Officer, further to consultation with the Independent Person.

1 was accepted and informal advice and guidance given by the Monitoring Officer, further to consultation with the Independent Person.

4.8 Of the 7 ongoing complaints:

- The 4 complaints for 2025 are subject to investigation, 2 are internal investigations, 2 are external investigations.
- 1 has been considered by the Independent Person and Monitoring Officer and a decision has been made on whether to accept or reject and/or the next steps. This decision is to be communicated to the Subject Member and Complaint.
- 2 received in March are with the Independent Person/Monitoring Officer for consideration on whether to accept or reject and/or the next steps.

4.9 The theme of complaints will be continued to be monitored to consider what additional support is required. No particular themes have been identified for those complaints submitted in the last quarter.

4.10 It is worth noting that there have not been any member-on-member complaints to date in 2026.

4.11 By way of update further to the last report, we have now appointed a permanent governance solicitor to assist and support in standards matters following a successful growth bid.

**4.12 Relevant discussion points:**

- **Review of monthly updates**
- **Engagement with training**
  - o Is there any specific training the Committee would like to see for standards issues?

**5. Ward Member Engagement if relevant and appropriate**

5.1 Not applicable.

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

6.1 Not applicable as report is for information only.

**7. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Impact</b>
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	There is no financial impact as the report is for information and discussion only.
Legal	There is no legal impact as the report is for information and discussion only.
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.
Reducing Poverty	There is no impact on reducing poverty as the report is for information and discussion only.
Climate Change / Environmental	There is no impact on the Council's climate change or environmental aspirations as the report is for information and discussion only.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	There is no impact on children and young people cared for by the Authority and care leavers as the report is for information and discussion only.
Data Protection	There are no issues of data protection as the report is for information and discussion only.

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

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
None		

**Appendices**

1	None
---	------

**Background papers**

Body	Report title	Date
None		

**Contact:** Ann-Marie Wilson – Head of Legal Services (People)

**Email:** [annmarie\\_wilson@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:annmarie_wilson@middlesbrough.gov.uk)