

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## STANDARDS COMMITTEE

18 September 2020

**Complaints Update****1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update the Committee regarding ethical framework complaint activity.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 A standing report regarding complaint activity under the ethical framework is brought to each meeting of the Standards Committee.

**3.0 COMPLAINTS****New Complaints**

- 3.1 There have been two new complaints received since the last Complaints Update report to the Committee.

**NYCC/SC/76**

The complaint concerned a Facebook post by the Subject Member, prior to formal lockdown on 23 March 2020, during social distancing for the current Covid-19 pandemic, showing photographs of the Member in close proximity to other people at a pub the previous evening. against the specific request and guidance from the Government for the public not to do so after it had decided to close all pubs, clubs, cafes and restaurants with effect from the following evening. The complaint was assessed by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Independent Person for Standards when it was concluded that there was no potential breach of the Code as the Subject Member was not acting in his/her official capacity as a county councillor at the relevant time and therefore no action should be taken in relation to the complaint.

**NYCC/SC/77**

This complaint is currently under consideration by the Monitoring Officer and has been referred for investigation. Further details will be reported to the Committee at a future meeting.

**Outcome of previous complaints**

- 3.2 The receipt of complaints NYCC/SC/74 & 75 was reported to the last meeting of the Committee. This concerned two potential complaints against a county councillor by different complainants re the same matter which had been intimated to the Monitoring Officer. The complaints were dealt with under informal resolution whereby the Monitoring Officer gave words of advice to the Subject Member.

#### **4.0 STATISTICS**

- 4.1 For the year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, the Council received ten standards complaints, however four of the complaints were in relation to same subject Member and matter. None of the ten complaints was referred for investigation, however one complaint was dealt with by local settlement under informal resolution, namely that the subject Member should issue a formal apology, undergo suitable diversity training as directed by the Monitoring Officer and that the assessment record should be published on the Council website.
- 4.2 For the year 1 April 2020 to date, the Council has received one standards complaint (NYCC/SC/77 referred to above).
- 4.3 Members will be kept updated.

#### **5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 That the Committee notes the current position on complaints received.

BARRY KHAN  
Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) and Monitoring Officer

#### Background Documents:

None

County Hall  
NORTHALLERTON

9 September 2020