



9. **Dispensation Request from Councillor Dadd** (Pages 27 - 34)
10. **Community Governance Review Dispensation Requests** (Pages 35 - 40)
11. **Complaints Update** (Pages 41 - 54)
12. **Standards Training Plan** (Pages 55 - 58)
13. **Standards Bulletin** (Pages 59 - 72)
14. **Work Programme** (Pages 73 - 80)
15. **Any Other Business**  
Any other items which the Chair agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances.
16. **Date of the Next Meeting**  
The date of the next scheduled Standards and Governance Committee meeting is Friday 19 June at 10am.  
There will however need to be an additional Committee meeting convened, at a date to be confirmed, in early July to consider the stage 2 results and final proposals of the Community Governance Review ahead of Full Council on 15 July 2026.

Members of the public are entitled to attend this meeting as observers for all those items taken in open session. You may be interested in [subscribing to updates](#) about this or any other North Yorkshire Council committee.

Recording is allowed at Council, committee and sub-committee meetings which are open to the public. Please give due regard to the Council's protocol on audio/visual recording and photography at public meetings. We ask that any recording is clearly visible to anyone at the meeting and that it is non-disruptive.

Anyone wishing to record is asked to contact the Democratic Services Officer (details below) prior to the start of the meeting.

#### **Contact Details**

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Barry Khan  
Assistant Chief Executive  
Legal and Democratic Services  
County Hall  
Northallerton

Thursday, 5 March 2026

## North Yorkshire Council

### Standards and Governance Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 11 February 2026 commencing at 10.00 am.

Councillor Clive Pearson in the Chair plus Councillors Philip Broadbank (as a substitute), Nick Brown, Liz Colling (as a substitute), David Ireton, Nigel Knapton, Heather Phillips and Peter Wilkinson.

Officers present: Christine Phillipson, Principal Democratic Services Officer, Jennifer Norton, Assistant Director Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer and Harriet Clarke, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Other Attendees: Independent Person Louise Holroyd.

Other Attendees virtually: Elizabeth Jackson, Principal Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies: Councillors Melanie Davis, Mike Schofield, Monika Slater, Andy Solloway and Independent Person Richinda Taylor.

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**Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book**

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#### **159 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Melanie Davis, Mike Schofield, Monika Slater, Andy Solloway and Independent Person Richinda Taylor.

Councillor Liz Colling attended as a substitute for Councillor Melanie Davis and Councillor Phillip Broadbank attended as a substitute for Councillor Monika Slater.

#### **160 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 17 September 2025**

Resolved

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2025 were agreed and signed as an accurate record.

#### **161 Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

#### **162 Public Questions and Statements**

There were none.

#### **163 Draft Recommendations Following the First Phase of the 2025/26 Community Governance Review**

Considered

A report of the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer which presented the draft recommendations for the second phase consultation of the 2025/26 Community Governance Reviews (CGRs).

The Principal Democratic Services Officer outlined that the review of parish governance arrangements had been refined to 19 CGRs. A summary and analysis of the first phase consultation responses, together with the draft recommendations for each review area, were set out in Appendices 1-19. Each individual survey was attached at Annexes 1-19 A and a summary of consultation responses was provided at Annexes 1-19 B of the report. The Committee were invited to consider the draft recommendations collectively.

Members were reminded that the draft Terms of Reference for the CGRs had been approved by Full Council in July 2025. The results of the first phase of consultation, summarised on page 10 of the report, had generated a low response rate, which was noted not unusual for this type of consultation.

Every property within the areas under review was sent an explanatory letter in the post advising of the CGR. It was reported that some residents had experienced difficulty accessing the online surveys via the QR code provided in the letter, and as a result alternative formats for completing the survey were made available on request.

The consultation methodology was summarised at paragraph 4 of the report and the timeline for the review was set out at paragraph 5.2.

Subject to approval by Full Council, the second phase consultation would run for 12 weeks from 19 March 2026, with a further report scheduled to return to the Standards and Governance Committee in July. The Principal Democratic Services Officer advised that the second phase consultation would be conducted online only, given the limited response rate in phase one.

Two CGRs (Dunsforths Parish Meeting and Welburn Parish Council) were recommended not to progress to a second phase consultation. The draft recommendations for Lillings Ambo Parish Council were dependent on confirmation from Sheriff Hutton Parish Council regarding a potential amalgamation with Lillings Ambo. If this support is not provided, the CGR will also not proceed to a second phase consultation.

It was also noted that since the publication of the consultation results, Spennithorne Parish Meeting had requested that the proposed name for the new parish and parish council be amended to Harmby with Spennithorne, which if the Committee were in agreement would be included in the recommendations.

In response to comments from Members, the below points were raised:

- Members thanked officers for the extensive work undertaken in producing the report and appendices.
- One Member commented that the low level of public engagement likely reflected a general lack of public awareness regarding parish governance arrangements, highlighting a need for broader education on parish responsibilities and election processes. Officers acknowledged these points and confirmed that work to raise awareness would continue.
- Officers reported that some consultation feedback related to matters outside the scope of the CGRs and would instead need to be addressed through the elections process.
- One Member, referring to Kirby Hill and District Parish Council, queried the use of 2024 electorate data for electorate forecasts, noting that significant population growth could arise from new developments. In response, officers advised that only

data available at the time could be used within the current review and that any substantial future changes would require a subsequent CGR. It was also confirmed that there are no statutory requirements governing the ratio of parish councillors to electorate numbers, unlike the rules applying to division boundaries.

It was moved by Councillor Nick Brown and seconded by Councillor David Ireton that the Committee endorse the below recommendations for submission to Full Council.

Resolved (unanimously)

- i. That the responses from the Stage 1 consultation process which took place following publication of the Terms of Reference in September 2025 be noted.
- ii. Subject to approval by Full Council that the draft recommendations as set out in Appendices 1-19 of the report be agreed and publicised as part of a second and final consultation commencing on 19 March 2026 for a further 12 weeks.
- iii. An additional recommendation was added that the draft recommendations in relation to Appendix 5 be amended so that the name of the parish is Harmby with Spennithorne and the parish council name is also Harmby with Spennithorne.

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Councillor Philip Broadbank arrived at 10.11 am

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## **164 Government Response to Standards Regime Consultation**

Considered

A report of the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer which provided an update on the consultation results and Government's response regarding the "Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England" consultation.

The Assistant Director Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer reminded Members that the Committee had previously considered and responded to the Government consultation on strengthening the standards regime. The Government had since published a statement of intention for whole system reform of the current regime. The Committee was informed that any reforms would require legislation and that no parliamentary timetable or draft legislation had yet been published.

The key areas of proposed reform included the introduction of a mandatory code of conduct for councillors, a requirement for principal authorities to have a Standards Committee, and new powers allowing authorities to suspend councillors for up to 6 months. Additional intended reforms included strengthened sanctions for serious breaches, new disqualification criteria, and the creation of a national appeals mechanism for suspended councillors and for complainants.

In response to the report, the following comments were raised:

- Independent Person Louise Holroyd welcomed the proposed strengthened sanctions and expressed hope that clearer consequences would support improved Member conduct. Members endorsed this view, commenting that sanctions had long lacked effectiveness and that the Government's direction of travel was encouraging, even if immediate legislative action seemed unlikely.
- One Member noted the importance of cross-party support as all councillors would

be affected by the proposed reforms and expressed concern about the limited national attention dedicated to standards issues. The need to ensure that complainants, as well as subject members, receive fair and transparent treatment was also highlighted. Officers reflected on the role of complainants and noted that parish councillors were often the subject of vexatious complaints, which required careful handling.

- Officers noted the frequency and nature of complaints within North Yorkshire Council, attributed partly to the large number of parish councils.
- One Member observed that the rise in complaints and the challenges faced by councillors could deter people from standing for election.

Resolved (unanimously)

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

## **165 Investigations' Update**

Considered

A report of the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer which provided an update on completed investigations since the Committee's last meeting.

The Assistant Director Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer advised that two investigations concerning a North Yorkshire Councillor had been completed since the last meeting.

In the first case, the Investigating Officer had found a breach of the Code of Conduct relating to the use of Council pool cars and mileage claims. This case had proceeded to a Hearings Panel and the decision notice has been published on the Council's website. The Hearings Panel decided that the Subject Member should repay mileage claims claimed in error and for personal use of pool cars at weekends and should be invited to return their Council mobile phone to the Council. The Panel also recommended that all Members with Council mobile phones should return them.

The second investigation had been determined without the need for a hearing, with the Investigating Officer agreeing that the matter could be resolved informally. Details of the decision notice were provided within Exempt Appendix 1.

Members were informed that a full complaints update report would be brought to the Committee's March meeting.

In response to the report, Members raised the below comments:

- The Committee held a detailed discussion on councillor use of pool cars and mobile phones. One Member expressed surprise that pool cars were available for councillors and sought clarity on the policy and visibility of information. In response, it was confirmed that the pool car policy did not preclude Members from using the pool cars but they were primarily for use by staff, and in both instances were available for Council business as set out in internal policy documents. The Hearings Panel had since recommended that councillors should not use pool cars without express permission from the Monitoring Officer.
- One Member added that some councillors had previously been issued with mobile phones to address poor connectivity. It was confirmed that the Hearings Panel had recommended that all Members with Council mobile phones should return them.
- Members raised concerns about the awareness of policies on Member resources. The Committee was assured that there were clear policies on what resources can

or cannot be used by Members and that any issues brought to the Monitoring Officer's attention were addressed promptly.

Resolved (unanimously)

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

## **166 Dispensation Requests**

Considered

An urgent report of the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer on dispensation requests relating to the upcoming Full Council meeting on Friday 13 February. Members were provided with paper copies of the urgent report at the meeting.

The Assistant Director Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer introduced the report and explained that a motion was expected at Friday's Full Council meeting concerning funding for the North Yorkshire Citizens Advice and Law Centre.

A number of councillors held Other Registrable Interests (ORIs) relating to their involvement with the organisation and while these were not Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs), they would prevent affected Members from participating in debate or voting.

Written requests for dispensations had been received from Councillors Carl Les, Caroline Goodrick and John Ritchie. The Monitoring Officer also sought delegated authority to grant similar dispensations, in consultation with the Chair of Full Council, to any other councillors who might disclose relevant ORIs for the same meeting, to avoid the risk of Members being unfairly excluded from participating in a key budget decision.

During the discussion of this item, Members noted that failing to grant the dispensations could result in a significant number of Members being unable to vote on the overall budget.

Officers clarified that dispensation requests must be made in writing to the Monitoring Officer under the Localism Act 2011 and that the proposed delegation to grant similar dispensations related solely to the Full Council meeting on 13 February 2026. Members sought clarification regarding financial benefit, and it was confirmed that none of the interests concerned DPIs.

It was moved by Councillor Nigel Knapton and seconded by Councillor Peter Wilkinson that the Committee resolves the below recommendations.

Resolved (unanimously)

- i. That Members consider and determine:
  - a. The dispensation request submitted by Councillor Les as set out at Appendix 1 for a dispensation, until the next local government elections in 2027, to enable him to speak, vote and be included in the quorum in meetings of full Council when debating and approving the Council's budget and any associated motions;
  - b. The dispensation requested by Councillor Ritchie as set out in Appendix 2 received by the Monitoring Officer and any other such dispensation requests from Councillors who are trustees of North Yorkshire Citizens Advice and Law Centre, by the date of the Committee's meeting, for a

dispensation until the next local government elections in 2027 to enable him/them to speak, vote and be included in the quorum in meetings of full Council when debating and approving the Council's budget and any associated motions; and

- c. If minded to grant the dispensation(s) as set out above, that the Committee authorises the granting of similar dispensations for any further requests received by the Monitoring Officer after the Committee's meeting but prior to the Council meeting on 13 February 2026.
- ii. That the Committee delegates to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of full Council, the power to grant similar analogous dispensations, on similar terms, as may be requested by Members (and confirmed by them in writing), who are also members of other registered organisations whose financial interests may directly relate to the budget setting process, at the meeting of full Council on 13 February 2026.

#### **167 Any Other Business**

There was no urgent business.

#### **168 Date of the Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting of the Committee is 13 March 2026.

The meeting concluded at 10.52 am.

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

### STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

13 March 2026

#### **Annual Report of Standards and Governance Committee**

##### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present Members with a draft Annual Report of the work of the Standards and Governance Committee for the municipal year commencing 1 April 2025.

##### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Standards and Governance Committee previously agreed that it would be helpful to publish an Annual Report on its work to full Council in order to raise the profile of the Committee and strengthen awareness of its work and ethical standards generally. An Annual Report also assists in discharging the Council's statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct and also ensures that the Council has an overview of work undertaken by the Committee in discharging the Council's standards responsibilities.
- 2.2 The Committee previously resolved that each Annual Report should be 'light touch' and as brief as possible.

##### **3.0 DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT**

- 3.1 A draft Annual Report of the NYC Standards and Governance Committee, for the year commencing 1 April 2025, is attached for Members' consideration and approval at **Appendix 1**. The Report, if approved by the Committee, will be presented to a future meeting of the Council.
- 3.2 Members' views are welcomed.

##### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.

##### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no significant legal implications arising from this report.

##### **6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no significant environmental/climate change implications arising from this report.

##### **7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no significant equalities implications arising from this report.

**8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 That, subject to any comments Members may have, the Committee approves the draft Annual Report for presentation to a future meeting of full Council.

BARRY KHAN

Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer

Background Papers:

- The Localism Act 2011
- Minutes of NYC Standards and Governance Committee meetings

County Hall  
NORTHALLERTON

2 March 2026

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

20 May 2026

**Annual Report of the Standards and Governance Committee****1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide the Council with an Annual Report on the work of the Standards and Governance Committee for the period 1 April 2025 to 27 February 2026.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Standards and Governance Committee is part of the Council's ethical framework under the Localism Act 2011 ("the Act").
- 2.2 The Committee has agreed that it would be helpful to publish an Annual Report on its work to the Council in order to raise the profile of the Committee and strengthen awareness of its work and ethical standards generally. An Annual Report also assists in discharging the Council's statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct and also ensures that the Council has an overview of work undertaken by the Committee in discharging the Council's standards responsibilities.

**3.0 THE ETHICAL FRAMEWORK**

- 3.1 The ethical framework introduced under the Act includes:
- i. **The Standards and Governance Committee:** The Committee has three scheduled ordinary meetings per annum, but other meetings have been convened as required given the Committee's expanded role. During the period in question, the Committee met four times on 20 June 2025, 17 September 2025, 11 February 2026 and at the time of writing this report is scheduled to meet on 13 March 2026. The Committee is responsible for:
- Standards Functions:
    - All functions of the Council under the Act relating to ethical standards (save as delegated to the Monitoring Officer) including the granting of dispensations and certain elements of standards complaint handling as appropriate under the standards complaints procedure;
    - The Committee also has a role in relation to issues raised by or in relation to persistent and/or vexatious complainants.
  - Governance Functions:
    - making temporary appointments to parish councils under section 91 Local Government Act 1972;
    - making recommendations to Council in relation to Community Governance reviews;
    - all functions of the Council relating to elections (save as may be delegated elsewhere through the Constitution and statute) including:
      - ❖ recommending to Council the appointment of an Electoral Registration Officer and the appointment of a Returning Officer for

- local government elections under the Representation of the People Act 1983;
  - ❖ dividing Parliamentary constituencies into polling districts and dividing electoral divisions into polling districts at local government elections under the Representation of the People Act 1983;
  - recommending to Council the conferring of the title of Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman;
  - recommending to Council the opposition or approval of local or personal Bills under Section 239 of the Local Government Act 1972 (save as may be delegated elsewhere).
  
- ii. **Standards and Governance Committee Hearings Panel:** During the period in question, the Hearings Panel met once on 6 November 2025. The Hearings Panel is responsible for undertaking all functions of the Standards and Governance Committee, in consultation with the Independent Person for standards, in relation to the consideration of complaint investigation reports and the holding of complaint determination hearings regarding matters referred by the Monitoring Officer, including (but not limited to) the making of findings and the imposition of sanctions (if appropriate) in respect of complaints that Members have breached the relevant Code of Conduct for Members. Further details of hearings' outcomes are set out later in the Complaints' section of this report.
  
- iii. **Independent Persons for Standards:** Each relevant authority must appoint at least one "Independent Person" under the Act. At its meeting on 19 July 2023, full Council agreed to extend, for four years, the terms of office of the predecessor authority NYCC's two Independent Persons for Standards, Hilary Gilbertson MBE and Louise Holroyd (whose terms of office automatically continued post Vesting Day); and further approved the appointments, for four years, of Gillian Baker, Roy Martin (who has since resigned with effect from 31 December 2024), James Nelson and Richinda Taylor as additional Independent Persons for Standards for North Yorkshire Council. Full Council also delegated power to the Monitoring Officer to extend the Independent Persons' terms of office, in consultation with the Chair of the Standards and Governance Committee. Hilary Gilbertson MBE, one of the longest serving Independent Persons, resigned in 2025. Her considerable contribution both to the predecessor and successor authorities is acknowledged, and sincere thanks are recorded for all her hard work over many years. The Independent Persons are invited to all meetings of the Standards and Governance Committee and are consulted on all key standards matters including at all stages of standards complaints' handling.
  
- iv. **Principal authority for parish and town councils regarding the Act's standards provisions**
- v. **A statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct**
- vi. **Members' Code of Conduct** - parish and town councils may adopt the Council's Code or their own. The Monitoring Officer has encouraged them to adopt North Yorkshire Council's Code (based on the voluntary LGA model code) in an aim to have standardised provisions across North Yorkshire for consistency and clarity;
- vii. **Register of NYC Members' Interests and gifts and hospitality** and the publication on the Council's website of parish and town councils' registers of members' interests;
- viii. **Complaint handling process** for Members and voting co-opted Members of North Yorkshire Council and parish and town councils in North Yorkshire;
- ix. **Ethical Statements**
- x. **Standards Bulletins**
- xi. **Protocol re the role of the Leader and Chief Executive Officer in the Ethical Framework**
- xii. **Protocol for Member/Officer Relations**

- 3.2 The **Monitoring Officer** and **Deputy Monitoring Officer** support the Committee in its work, including handling complaints that Members may have breached the relevant Code of Conduct for Members.

#### **4.0 WORK UNDERTAKEN BY THE COMMITTEE**

- 4.1 The work undertaken by the Standards and Governance Committee during the period 1 April 2025 to 27 February 2026 is set out below:

- (a) **Review of national ethical framework developments:** the Committee has considered developments in the national standards regime and provided guidance to Members, for example in relation to:
- i. The Government consultation on strengthening the standards regime, to which the Committee responded. The Committee has also considered the Government's response to the consultation whereby the Government has stated that it now intends to "legislate for a whole system reform of the current regime as set out in Localism Act 2011" and that the necessary legislative changes will be brought forward "when parliamentary time allows";
  - ii. Documents and blogs published by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL), for example CSPL's continued reflection on the 30th anniversary of the Nolan Principles; its submission to the Speaker's Conference on security of public office holders on the security of candidates, MPs and elections; its report on "recognising and responding to early warning signs in public sector bodies"; its Annual Report 2024-2025
  - iii. Documents published by the Local Government Association (LGA), for example, in relation to Intimidation in Public Life; the LGA's Debate not Hate campaign and its guide to disinformation for local councillors;
  - iv. The establishment of a new Ethics and Integrity Commission to oversee the ethical standards of ministers and public officials and "drive up standards in public life";
  - v. Action by other authorities to combat abuse, intimidation and harassment of, and support to, councillors and consideration of the work of the NYC Member Liaison Group on Councillor Safety.
- (b) **Standards Training Plan:** The Committee maintains a Standards Training Plan which is reviewed at each ordinary meeting of the Committee.
- (c) **Standards training:** The Committee ensures that Members receive appropriate training to maintain their awareness of ethical standards. Standards training was last provided to Members at a Members' seminar at the end of the previous financial year on 5 March 2025. Related standards training concerning Member's use of social media was delivered at a Members' Seminar held on 4 February 2026. Training on any new Code of Conduct and standards regime will be undertaken once any new regime is introduced and implemented. Guidance on the Code and standards regime is also provided in the Standards Bulletins. External training opportunities are also offered to the Independent Persons. Refresher training regarding Hearings Panel procedures was provided to the Committee's Hearings Panel on 6 November 2025.
- (d) **Register of Members' Interests:** The NYC Register of Members' Interests is published on the Council's website. The Committee monitors the operation of the Register. The Council also publishes parish and town council registers of interests on the website.

- (e) **Review of other related matters:** The Committee has received briefing reports on matters such as Members' attendance at meetings of the Council and its committees for the period 1 May 2024 until 30 April 2025
- (f) **Dispensation requests:** the Committee has granted five connected dispensations to North Yorkshire Councillors. At the time of writing this report a further dispensation request is due to be considered at the Committee's meeting on 13 March 2026.
- (g) **Standards Bulletin:** The Committee has issued three Standards Bulletins during the period covered by this Report, aimed at keeping Members and officers up to date regarding developments in the standards regime. Copies of the Bulletin are published on the website, circulated to YLCA and parish and town councils in North Yorkshire.
- (h) **Work Programme:** The Committee has agreed a forward Work Programme which is reviewed at each ordinary meeting of the Committee.
- (i) **Standards complaints:** The Committee receives a Complaints Update report at each scheduled ordinary meeting. Standards and Governance Committee reports are published on the website here - [Browse meetings - Standards and Governance Committee | North Yorkshire Council](#). For the period 1 April 2025 to 27 February 2026 the Council has received **164** complaints that councillors may have breached the relevant authority's code of conduct for Members:

- a) **27** of those complaints are complaints about Members of North Yorkshire Council.

Of those **27** complaints:

- i. **2** were connected complaints from 1 NYC Councillor against two others;
- ii. **6** were complaints regarding the same NYC Councillor, four of which were anonymous;
- iii. **2** were connected complaints concerning the same NYC Councillor;
- iv. a further **2** connected complaints concerning a different NYC Councillor;
- v. **15** were separate unconnected complaints.

- b) The other **137** complaints relate to complaints about parish and town councils in the North Yorkshire area.

Of those **137** complaints:

- i. **24** were against parsh/town councillors which did not progress to an assessment as they were deemed to be outside the Monitoring Officer's jurisdiction as they related to matters of internal parish council governance and parish council employees;
- ii. **12** were against 6 councillors of one town council which did not progress to an assessment as they were deemed to be outside the Monitoring Officer's jurisdiction as they related to matters of internal town council governance;
- iii. **4** were against parish councillors where there was no evidence presented that the councillor was acting in their official capacity at the relevant times;

- iv. **2** were against town councillors where there was no evidence that comments on social media complained of were posted whilst the councillor was acting in their official capacity;
  - v. **1** was against a town councillor which fell outside the Monitoring Officer jurisdiction as the councillor was no longer serving;
  - vi. **3** were against 3 councillors of the same council which were not progressed;
  - vii. **20** were unspecified complaints concerning governance issues at a particular parish council.
- c) **70** of the **164** complaints pre-assessed by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer did not proceed to full assessment.
- d) A further **87** complaints have so far progressed to a full assessment by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Independent Person for Standards and of those:
- i. **83** cases did not merit referral for formal investigation, for example:
    - a parish councillor's failure to declare an interest, which had been addressed by them;
    - allegations of a parish councillor bullying and harassing the clerk where insufficient evidence was provided of a potential breach of the relevant code of conduct;
    - two concerned different NYC Councillors, one relating to levels of engagement with a parish council, and the other regarding alleged disrespect, whereby in both cases there was insufficient evidence presented of a potential breach of the Code of Conduct;
    - two concerned the same NYC Councillor from the same member of the public - in both cases there was insufficient evidence presented of a potential breach of the Code of Conduct;
    - an anonymous complaint regarding an NYC Councillor alleging illegal activity which was not evidenced;
    - self-referrals by two councillors of two different councils which did not merit further action;
    - nine complaints concerning four councillors belonging to the same Town Council – where mediation is being advocated by the Monitoring Officer to address the apparent ongoing dysfunctional working relationships between councillors and with members of the public.
  - ii. **1** complaint was recommended for informal resolution, with the parish councillor concerned being urged to consider apologising to the complainant;
  - iii. **3** complaints regarding 3 different councillors have been referred for investigation, 1 of which is still live. Of the other two investigations, one resulted in a breach of the code and the other found no evidence of a breach.
- e) the remainder of the complaints are in preparatory stages or awaiting assessment by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Independent Person for Standards.

Statistical information about complaints received and their outcomes, for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, and 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, have been published on the Council's website - [Councillors' code of conduct | North Yorkshire Council](#). Further years' statistics will be published in the future as they are finalised.

- (j) **Standards Committee Annual Report:** the consideration of an Annual Report of the Committee for the year commencing 1 April 2025 for presentation to full Council on 20 May 2026.
- (k) **Temporary appointments to Parish Councils:** The Committee has previously reviewed the arrangements for making temporary appointments to parish and town councils under Section 91 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 and delegated the power to make temporary appointments to parish and town councils to the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer. The Committee has received reports from the Monitoring Officer regarding temporary appointments made under such delegation.
- (l) **Community Governance Reviews:** the Committee considered final recommendations to full Council regarding the Kirby Grindalythe and Duggleby Community Governance Review (CGR); and considered a proposed community governance review for a defined number of parish areas, proposed Terms of Reference and draft recommendations for publication as part of a final consultation to commence in March 2026.
- (m) **Parish and Town Councils:** the Committee has previously received reports regarding the arrangements in place in the Democratic Services and Localities' teams to support parish and town councils in the North Yorkshire area. The Deputy Monitoring Officer and the Senior Governance Lawyer have previously undertaken online training sessions for parish and town councils as set out earlier. A recorded training session remains accessible to all. Further standards training will be provided by the Deputy Monitoring Officer to parish and town councils in North Yorkshire as and when the standards regime changes.

4.2 The Committee will continue its work in the promotion of high ethical standards and governance and in the training of officers and Members at an appropriate stage.

## 5.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

5.1 That the Council receives and notes the Annual Report of the Standards and Governance Committee.

COUNCILLOR CLIVE PEARSON  
Chair of NYC Standards and Governance Committee

### Background Papers:

Minutes of and reports to the Standards and Governance Committee meetings

3 March 2026

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

### STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

13 March 2026

**Temporary Appointments to Parish Councils**  
**by Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring**  
**Officer under delegated powers**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To report back to Members, for information, details of temporary appointments to parish and town councils made by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer under his delegated powers.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In order for a town/parish council to operate, they need to be quorate. There are occasions where, due to resignations or a lack of nominations for vacancies at elections, a town/parish is not able to operate for this reason. If a town/parish is no longer quorate, it cannot meet or conduct any business. The only option left is to invoke the power to make an appointment so that business can continue.
- 2.2 Section 91(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that where there are so many vacancies in the office of parish councillor that the parish council are unable to act, the principal authority (North Yorkshire Council) can make an order to appoint to a town/parish council until such time as the vacancies on it have been filled by either election or co-option.
- 2.3 The Standards and Governance Committee has delegated power to make temporary appointments to parish and town councils under section 91 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 2.4 On 6 September 2024, the Committee delegated the power to make such temporary appointments to the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer, in order to streamline the process.

**3.0 TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS MADE UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

- 3.1 Since the last report to Committee on 17 September 2025, the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer has made the following temporary appointments:
- a) appointment of Councillors Caroline Goodrick, divisional representative for Sheriff Hutton and Derwent, Nigel Knapton, divisional representative for Easingwold and Janet Sanderson, divisional representative for Thornton dale and Wolds to Whitwell on the Hill with Crambe Parish Council.
  - b) appointment of Councillors John McCartney, divisional representative for Osgoldcross, Cliff Lunn, divisional representative for Thorpe Willoughby and Hambleton and Mike Jordan, divisional representative for Camblesforth and Carlton to Eggborough Parish Council.

to allow the Parish Council to maintain quoracy in order to conduct business and co-opt additional members.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The legal implications are set out in the body of this report.

#### **6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no significant environmental implications arising from this report.

#### **7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no significant equalities implications arising from this report.

#### **8.0 CONCLUSION**

8.1 Members are requested to note this report.

8.2 Members will be kept informed future appointments.

#### **9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That Members note this report.

BARRY KHAN

Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer

Background Documents:

None

County Hall  
NORTHALLERTON

03 March 2026

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

### STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

13 March 2026

#### **Approach to sensitive interests under the Localism Act 2011**

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To review the approach taken to sensitive interests under the Localism Act 2011.

#### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Under the Localism Act 2011, if a Member has an interest, the nature of which is such that the Member and the Monitoring Officer consider that disclosure of the details of the interest could lead to the Member, or a person connected with them, being subject to violence or intimidation, then the Monitoring Officer can agree that the interest is a sensitive interest.
- 2.2 If an interest is agreed to be sensitive, this means that the Member must still disclose the **existence** of an interest to a meeting and in the public Register of Members' Interests, but the sensitive details themselves do not need to be disclosed/registered in the public Register (but will need to be provided to the Monitoring Officer confidentially).

#### **3.0 APPROACH TO SENSITIVE INTERESTS**

- 3.1 Currently the Monitoring Officer deals with applications from NYC councillors and town/parish councillors for interests to be treated as sensitive, on a case by case basis. Often, the type of interests requested to be withheld are employment/business details and home addresses/property interests.
- 3.2 Some other authorities have taken a different approach in terms of Members' addresses, adopting a default position that Members' addresses are to be treated as sensitive interests and are therefore not disclosed unless individual Members specifically 'opt in' and request their address to be published.
- 3.3 Under electoral law, candidates have to make the request for their address to be withheld when completing the home address form in their nomination papers; however if they are their own agent then their home address still appears on the published notice of election agent's addresses (unless they have an office address). For parish council candidates there is no election agent and therefore no published notice of election agent's addresses.
- 3.4 Regarding the statutory sensitive interests, the Monitoring Officer does have reservations that adopting an 'opt in' approach would not be consistent with the letter and spirit of sections 29 and 30 of the Localism Act and the general presumption of openness and transparency in authority governance.
- 3.5 Although an authority can choose what goes in the Register of Members' Interests, it is subject to the provisions of Chapter 7 (standards) which is drafted on the basis of sensitive withheld interests being the exception rather than the rule. It is an 'opt out' basis in the national legislation and guidance.

- 3.6 Legally, Disclosable Pecuniary Interests must be registered and published in the public Register and available for public inspection unless agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive and it is case specific. Agreed sensitive interests still need to be registered confidentially with the Monitoring Officer but the sensitive details will not be published in the public Register. There has to be specific agreement by the Monitoring Officer “that disclosure of the details of the interest could lead to the member or co-opted member, or a person connected with the member or co-opted member, being subject to violence or intimidation”.
- 3.7 The Monitoring Officer would have reservations about the Council adopting a blanket resolution that Members’ addresses are to be treated as sensitive interests unless they say otherwise as:
- a) not all 90 NYC councillors and almost 3000 parish councillors are necessarily likely to be subject to violence or intimidation (the legal grounds for a sensitive interest); and
  - b) it is a statutory function of the Monitoring Officer to agree an interest as sensitive, not the authority.
- 3.8 The Monitoring Officer is, however, keen to seek Members’ views on the approach to sensitive interests.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no significant legal implications arising from this report.

#### **6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no significant environmental/climate change implications arising from this report.

#### **7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no significant equalities implications arising from this report

#### **8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 That Members consider the approach to sensitive interests and whether any changes in approach would be appropriate.

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

Background Documents: None

County Hall  
NORTHALLERTON

4 March 2026

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

### STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

13 March 2026

#### **Local Ethical Framework Developments**

##### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update Members on developments in the national ethical framework under the Localism Act 2011.

##### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Members receive a report at each ordinary Standards and Governance Committee meeting setting out any recent developments in the national ethical framework.

##### **3.0 GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO STRENGTHENING THE STANDARDS REGIME**

- 3.1 The Committee was briefed at its last meeting in February regarding the Government's response to the consultation - [Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England – consultation results and government response - GOV.UK](#) with the Government intending to "legislate for a whole system reform of the current regime as set out in Localism Act 2011" when parliamentary time permits.

- 3.2 There is no further update on this matter yet. Members will be kept informed of developments.

##### **4.0 THE ETHICS AND INTEGRITY COMMISSION**

- 4.1 The Committee has previously been briefed regarding the intended establishment of a new Ethics and Integrity Commission, to oversee the ethical standards of ministers and public officials and "drive up standards in public life", change the ministerial severance arrangements and the business appointment rules.
- 4.2 The Commission was officially launched in October last year and the Committee on Standards in Public Life is now subsumed into the Commission.
- 4.3 The Commission will also have a role regarding the proposed public body professional duty of candour for staff which is anticipated will be set out in a code of ethics based on the general principles of public life.
- 4.4 A letter from the Prime Minister to the Chair of the Commission regarding the Commission's work is published online - [Letter from the Prime Minister | Ethics and Integrity Commission](#).
- 4.5 The Chair of the Commission's comments on the Government response to the 'Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England' consultation are published online - [Chair's statement on the government response to 'Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England' consultation. | Ethics and Integrity Commission](#)

- 4.6 The Commission has stated that it will review the public sector ombudsman system, with further information about the review to be published this month. The Chair of the Commission has written to the Prime Minister to set out the early work intended to be undertaken by the Commission - [EIC progress – Letter to Prime Minister | Ethics and Integrity Commission](#).
- 4.7 Further information about the work of the Commission is published on its website - [Ethics and Integrity Commission | The Ethics and Integrity Commission promotes the highest standards in public life, reports to the Prime Minister on matters concerning ethical standards, and advises public authorities on the development of clear codes of conduct with effective oversight arrangements](#).
- 4.8 Members will be briefed regarding future work of the Commission.

## **5.0 CIVILITY IN PUBLIC LIFE**

- 5.1 In October 2025, the UK's local government associations agreed a joint statement in support of the Civility in Public Life Programme. Information about the Civility in Public Life programme has previously been presented to the Committee and is published online - [Civility in public life | Local Government Association](#).
- 5.2 The joint statement is published online - [UK local government associations: Joint statement on Civility in Public Life | Local Government Association](#) – with the organisations stating that they are "increasingly troubled by threats and violence against councillors and officers".

## **6.0 BETTER MENTAL HEALTH FOR COUNCILLORS: LOOKING AFTER YOUR WELLBEING**

- 6.1 The LGA has published presentations regarding the 'Better mental health for councillors: Looking after your wellbeing' event held on 24 September 2025. The presentations can be found online - [Better mental health for councillors: Looking after your wellbeing, 24 September 2025 | Local Government Association](#).

## **7.0 INTIMIDATION IN PUBLIC LIFE**

- 7.1 The LGA has published presentations regarding:
- a) "Handling online abuse and intimidation for councillors" from its event on 11 December 2025. The slides are published here - [Handling online abuse and intimidation for councillors, 11 December 2025 | Local Government Association](#);
  - b) "Personal safety for councillors" from its event on 12 February 2026. The slides are published here - [Personal safety for councillors, 12 February 2026 | Local Government Association](#)

### **NYC Member Liaison Group on Councillor Safety**

- 7.2 North Yorkshire Council takes Member safety seriously. The Council's cross party Member Liaison Group on Councillor Safety was established in May 2024 and has met 8 times to date, next due to meet on 5 March 2026. It is supported by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer and the Head of Democratic Services and Scrutiny and is also attended by the Head of Health and Safety and two North Yorkshire Police Officers.

7.3 The Group has undertaken a number of practical steps to promote Member safety, including:

- Consideration of the Local Government Association's 'Debate Not Hate' campaign and supporting toolkit action points and work undertaken by other authorities to promote councillor safety, to provide a framework against which progress locally can be assessed; and an audit of the Council's approach to supporting councillors has been undertaken, based upon key aspects of the toolkit;
- An all-councillor survey on member safety completed and the results analysed and responded to in November/December 2024. This is to be repeated on an annual basis;
- A system for the reporting, collation and analysis of incidences where councillors have felt or been threatened or intimidated during the course of their duties has been in place since March 2025;
- The roll out of the PeopleSafe App to all councillors as of 31 March 2025. This is currently used by frontline council staff and enables access to a range of support (check-ins, alarms, times alerts) when visiting somewhere for the first time or where there are concerns;
- The roll out of councillor access to the Staff Warning Register, via Democratic Services, which enables addresses to be checked for any flagged concerns;
- Developing strong relationships with the Police to enhance coordination and foster mutual understanding of abuse affecting councillors and the role of the Police in addressing it, including the establishment of a named Police officer contact as Elected Officials Advisor, who is available to speak with and support councillors who have concerns regarding their safety;
- Cross council planning for the management of committee meetings where contentious issues are being considered and there are large numbers of people attending, planned protest and a risk of possible disruption;
- A standard, documented process for all committee chairs to adopt should there be any public disorder in a meeting;
- Councillors concerned about their physical safety can apply for funding for practical measures to increase security at their homes;
- Councillor addresses and phone numbers can be removed from the Council website where there are concerns around safety;
- Councillor access to wellbeing services can be enabled upon request;
- Training and awareness raising on a range of issues is periodically undertaken through the Member seminars and briefings. A member working group on training and development has been established that is leading on the induction package and first 12 months of development and support for newly elected councils post May 2027. Part of this will focus upon member safety.

7.4 The Group has identified further areas for consideration, including:

- An annual all-councillor survey;

- Training and/or briefings for councillors on the following: personal safety and risk assessment; social media training and digital citizenship; safer canvassing during the election period (March to May 2027) and conflict de-escalation;
- Provision of mentor support for councillors, made available following an incident, and how this would be done through the political groups;
- A review of the current level of support that is available to councillors through the employee wellbeing services.

7.5 Members will be kept informed of developments.

## **8.0 LGA GUIDE TO DISINFORMATION**

8.1 The LGA has published a Guide to disinformation for local councillors - [A guide to disinformation for local councillors | Local Government Association](#) - developed in response to interest from councillors seeking support in approaching and countering disinformation. The Guide sets out the key definitions and tangible actions councillors can taken to respond effectively.

8.2 There is a separate guide for officers – [A guide to disinformation affecting local authorities and their communities | Local Government Association](#).

8.3 There are other LGA resources to support councillors and candidates in their online communications which can also be used to try to curb and limit the spread of disinformation (false information shared with the intent to deceive) - [Digital citizenship: support and resources for councillors | Local Government Association](#).

## **9.0 UPDATING OF LGA GUIDANCE ON MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT**

9.1 It appears that LGA Guidance on Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct ([Guidance on Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct | Local Government Association](#)), now includes more hyperlinks to other guides and resources such as:

[Full word english version guide for councillors on handling intimidation FINAL.pdf](#)

[Social media guidance for councillors | Local Government Association](#)

[Civility in public life | Local Government Association](#)

which Members may find helpful.

## **10.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.

## **11.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 The legal implications are set out in the body of this report.

## **12.0 ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are no significant environmental implications arising from this report.

## **13.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 There are no significant equalities implications arising from this report.

**14.0**    **RECOMMENDATIONS**

14.1    That the Committee notes the contents of this report.

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

Background Papers: The Localism Act 2011

County Hall  
NORTHALLERTON

3 March 2026

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## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

### STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

13 March 2026

#### **Dispensation request by Councillor Dadd**

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present to the Committee, for consideration and determination, a request from Councillor Dadd for a further dispensation from the Standards and Governance Committee, to take effect from the expiry of his current dispensation until the date of the next local government elections in 2027.

#### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 provides that a relevant authority may, on a written request made to the proper officer of the authority by a Member or co-opted Member of the authority, grant a dispensation relieving the Member or co-opted Member from the restrictions regarding speaking and voting in relation to disclosable pecuniary interests. Any dispensation requests for parish and town councillors relieving them from the requirements of their authority's Code of Conduct must therefore be made to the Clerk of the relevant parish/town council.
- 2.2 The Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer was designated by the Council as Proper Officer to receive written requests by Members/voting Co-opted Members for a dispensation under section 33 Localism Act 2011 relieving them from either or both of the restrictions on participating in the discussion and vote on a matter where they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI).
- 2.3 Under North Yorkshire Council's standards regime, Members holding an Other Registrable Interest (ORI) or a Non-Registrable Interest (NRI) may also seek a dispensation in relation to that interest.
- 2.4 The power to grant dispensations to Members and voting co-opted Members under the new ethical framework was delegated by the Council to this Committee, after consultation with the Independent Persons.
- 2.5 Power was also delegated to the Monitoring Officer to grant dispensations (after consultation with the Independent Persons) where the timescales are such that a Standards and Governance Committee meeting cannot be convened and where the Monitoring Officer has consulted every available Member of the Standards and Governance Committee, all of whom consent to the granting of the dispensation.

#### **3.0 DISPENSATION PROCESS**

- 3.1 Under the Localism Act 2011 and delegated power from the Council, where a written request has been made to the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer as Proper Officer, the Standards and Governance Committee has power to grant a dispensation to a Member from non-

participation in relation to a disclosable pecuniary (and other) interest where the Committee concludes, after having had regard to all relevant circumstances, that:

- (a) without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;
- (b) without the dispensation the representation of different political groups on the body transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business;
- (c) granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area;
- (d) without the dispensation each Member of the Authority's Executive would be prohibited from participating in any particular business to be transacted by the Executive; or
- (e) it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

3.2 The Committee must decide whether the application fulfils any of the criteria set out in paragraph 3.1 and, if so, whether it is appropriate to grant the dispensation in the circumstances, after balancing the public interest in preventing a Member with an interest from taking part in Council business, against the public interest in the relevant constituents not being disenfranchised and their views being able to be put forward on the business in question.

3.3 If the Standards and Governance Committee is minded to grant a dispensation, it must consider the scope (for example whether the dispensation will allow the Member to speak, discuss and vote on the item or speak and discuss only) and the duration of it. Dispensations may be granted for a maximum period of 4 years.

3.4 Any dispensation granted will be recorded in writing.

#### **4.0 DISPENSATION REQUEST BY COUNCILLOR DADD**

4.1 On 17 October 2022, North Yorkshire County Council's Standards Committee granted a dispensation to Councillor Gareth Dadd to enable him to speak, vote and be included within the quorum at meetings of the Council, Executive and committees when they are considering business relating to the Second Homes Premium Policy. The dispensation was granted as the dispensation was in the interests of persons living in the authority's area and it was appropriate to grant the dispensation. The dispensation was granted for four years and therefore expires on 17 October 2026.

4.2 In a spirit of openness and transparency, Councillor Dadd wishes to seek a renewal of the dispensation, on the same grounds, from its expiry until the local government elections in 2027. He has submitted a dispensation request form, which is attached at **Appendix 1**, which sets out full details of the request.

4.3 Subject to any comments Members may have, it is recommended that it would be appropriate for the Committee to renew Councillor Dadd's dispensation from its expiry in October 2026 until the date of the next local government elections in 2027.

#### **5.0 PARTICIPATION WITH A DISPENSATION**

5.1 Any councillor who has a dispensation from the Committee, must still declare their interest to the meeting and state that they are relying on a dispensation to participate.

#### **6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.

#### **7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The legal implications are set out in the body of this report.

#### **8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no environmental/climate change implications arising from this report.

#### **9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report

#### **10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 That Members consider and determine the request submitted by Councillor Dadd as set out at **Appendix 1** for a further dispensation to commence on the expiry of his current dispensation on 17 October 2026 and to last until the next local government elections in 2027, to enable him to speak, vote and be included within the quorum at meetings of the Council, Executive and committees when they are considering business relating to the Second Homes Premium Policy.

BARRY KHAN

Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer

#### Background Documents:

None

County Hall  
NORTHALLERTON

26 February 2026

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**NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL**  
**STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**Request for a Dispensation**

**Name of Member seeking dispensation:** Councillor Gareth Dadd

**In respect of which meeting(s)?** *(Include dates, where possible)*

Meetings of the Council, Executive and committees when they are considering business relating to the Second Homes Premium Policy.

**In respect of what business?** *(If applicable, include full details of the agenda item or other matter)*

Business relating to the Second Homes Premium Policy.

**Name of the Relevant Officer:** *(Please indicate the name of the officer who usually presents reports on the matter for which a dispensation is sought).*

Corporate Director of Resources and Chief Finance Officer.

**Desired length of dispensation:** *(Please note the maximum length of a dispensation is four years)*

Until the date of the next local government elections in 2027.

**Ground(s) for application:** *(Please tick the relevant box(es))*

- (a) without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;
- (b) without the dispensation the representation of different political groups on the body transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business;
- (c) granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area;
- (d) without the dispensation each Member of the Authority's Executive would be prohibited from participating in any particular business to be transacted by the Executive; or
- (e) it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

**Details of your interest:**

*Please set out full details of your interest in the business concerned. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary:*

In a spirit of openness and transparency, I am seeking a dispensation to enable me to fully participate in meetings of the Council, Executive and committees when they are considering business relating to the Second Homes Premium Policy.

I have registered on my interests form, as Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, my directorships of Wedgwood Alexander Properties Ltd and Bradley Bell (Staithe) Ltd, both of which are stated on the register to be property holiday lettings.

I am the Deputy Leader of the Council and responsible for the executive portfolio including Finance.

The legislation and therefore decision regarding the second home council tax premium does not cover holiday lettings and therefore as the Council business does not directly relate to or affect my registered interests (which operate holiday lettings), I do not have a Disclosable Pecuniary or Other Registrable Interest in business relating to the decision on the council tax premium on second homes.

However, during formal meetings, discussions on the Second Homes Premium Policy may touch on the wider debate regarding holiday lets. I am mindful of my business interests and the perception this might give and I am therefore seeking a dispensation to enable me to fully participate and vote, in view of potential public perception.

The former North Yorkshire County Council previously granted me a dispensation to enable me to fully participate in meetings of the Council, Executive and committees when they are considering business relating to the Second Homes Premium Policy for a period of four years. The dispensation therefore expires on 17 October 2026 and I am seeking a renewal of the dispensation from its expiry until the next local government elections in 2027.

**Reasons for seeking a dispensation:**

*Please set out full reasons why it is desirable for the Standards and Governance Committee to grant you a dispensation in respect of the above interest. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary:*

I am seeking a dispensation on the grounds that it is in the interests of persons living in the area and it is otherwise appropriate to grant the dispensation.

The nature of my business interests is such that it would not affect my objectivity in considering the wider public interest in business relating to the Second Homes Premium Policy.

***PLEASE REMEMBER THAT WHEN ACTING UNDER A DISPENSATION, MEMBERS MUST AT ALL TIMES ACT, AND APPEAR TO ACT, IN THE AUTHORITY'S BEST INTERESTS.***

Signed: **Councillor Gareth Dadd**

Dated: **18 February 2026**

TO: **BARRY KHAN**, Monitoring Officer, North Yorkshire Council

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## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

### STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

13 March 2026

#### **Dispensation request by dual-hatted councillors sitting on/clerking parish and town councils regarding Community Governance Review reports to full Council**

##### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present to the Committee, for consideration and determination, request(s) from dual-hatted NYC councillors who also sit on and/or clerk potentially affected parish/town councils for a dispensation from the Committee, to enable them to fully participate in meetings of full Council when considering reports regarding the 2025/26 Community Governance Reviews.
- 1.2 If any such dispensations are granted, to seek:
- a) authorisation from the Committee for similar dispensations to be granted for any further requests received by the Monitoring Officer after the Committee's meeting but prior to the Council meeting on 18 March 2026; and
  - b) a delegation from the Committee to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of full Council, to grant similar analogous dispensations, on similar terms, as may be requested by such dual-hatted Members (and confirmed by them in writing) who are members of/clerks to a parish/town council which may be affected by the 2025/26 Community Governance Review, at meetings of full Council on 18 March 2026, 15 July 2026 and any other full Council meetings when the Review will be considered.

##### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 provides that a relevant authority may, on a written request made to the proper officer of the authority by a Member or co-opted Member of the authority, grant a dispensation relieving the Member or co-opted Member from the restrictions regarding speaking and voting in relation to disclosable pecuniary interests. Any dispensation requests for parish and town councillors relieving them from the requirements of their authority's Code of Conduct must therefore be made to the Clerk of the relevant parish/town council.
- 2.2 The Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer was designated by the Council as Proper Officer to receive written requests by Members/voting Co-opted Members for a dispensation under section 33 Localism Act 2011 relieving them from either or both of the restrictions on participating in the discussion and vote on a matter where they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI).
- 2.3 Under North Yorkshire Council's standards regime, Members holding an Other Registrable Interest (ORI) or a Non-Registrable Interest (NRI) may also seek a dispensation in relation to that interest.
- 2.4 The power to grant dispensations to Members and voting co-opted Members under the new ethical framework was delegated by the Council to this Committee, after consultation with the Independent Persons.

2.5 Power was also delegated to the Monitoring Officer to grant dispensations (after consultation with the Independent Persons) where the timescales are such that a Standards and Governance Committee meeting cannot be convened and where the Monitoring Officer has consulted every available Member of the Standards and Governance Committee, all of whom consent to the granting of the dispensation.

### **3.0 DISPENSATION PROCESS**

3.1 Under the Localism Act 2011 and delegated power from the Council, where a written request has been made to the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer as Proper Officer, the Standards and Governance Committee has power to grant a dispensation to a Member from non-participation in relation to a disclosable pecuniary (and other) interest where the Committee concludes, after having had regard to all relevant circumstances, that:

- (a) without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;
- (b) without the dispensation the representation of different political groups on the body transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business;
- (c) granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area;
- (d) without the dispensation each Member of the Authority's Executive would be prohibited from participating in any particular business to be transacted by the Executive; or
- (e) it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

3.2 The Committee must decide whether the application fulfils any of the criteria set out in paragraph 3.1 and, if so, whether it is appropriate to grant the dispensation in the circumstances, after balancing the public interest in preventing a Member with an interest from taking part in Council business, against the public interest in the relevant constituents not being disenfranchised and their views being able to be put forward on the business in question.

3.3 If the Standards and Governance Committee is minded to grant a dispensation, it must consider the scope (for example whether the dispensation will allow the Member to speak, discuss and vote on the item or speak and discuss only) and the duration of it. Dispensations may be granted for a maximum period of 4 years.

3.4 Any dispensation granted will be recorded in writing.

### **4.0 DISPENSATION REQUESTS BY DUAL-HATTED COUNCILLORS SITTING ON/CLERKING PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS**

4.1 The 2025/26 Community Governance Review is underway and draft recommendations for the second phase consultation will be considered by full Council on 18 March 2026. It is anticipated that a further report will be taken to full Council on 15 July 2026 to approve the 2025/26 Community Governance Review outcome.

- 4.2 NYC councillors who are members of a parish/town council should have registered their membership of their parish/town council in their register of interests. For such dual-hatted Members whose parish/town council may be affected through the Community Governance Review, they are likely to have an Other Registerable Interest (as they will not receive any allowance/remuneration for being a parish councillor to make it a disclosable pecuniary interest) in any Council business regarding the 2025/26 Community Governance Review as the business will directly relate to their registered interest. The Monitoring Officer does not view any such interest as a disclosable pecuniary interest as parish council membership is not remunerated and consequently the outcome of any Community Governance Review will not affect the Member financially. Having an Other Registrable Interest means that such dual-hatted councillors would not be able to participate in the debate and vote on any Community Governance Review related reports without a dispensation.
- 4.2.1 For NYC councillors who may be a clerk to a parish/town council which may be affected through the Community Governance Review, their clerkship should be registered in their register of interests. They may have a disclosable pecuniary interest if the position is remunerated or otherwise an Other Registrable Interest in any Council business regarding the 2025/26 Community Governance Review as the business will directly relate to their registered interest. As explained above, this means that they would not be able to fully participate in the debate and vote on any Community Governance Review related reports without a dispensation.
- 4.3 The Monitoring Officer is, at the time of writing this report, contacting those NYC Members who also sit on/clerk parish/town councils which may be affected by the 2025/26 Community Governance Review to see if they would wish to seek a dispensation, in the form set out in **Appendix 1**, in relation to their registered interest to enable them to fully participate.
- 4.4 The Monitoring Officer will update the Committee at its meeting as to any such dispensation requests received.
- 4.5 The Committee is therefore requested to consider and determine such dispensation requests received by the date of its meeting, to enable such dual-hatted Members whose parish/town council they sit on/clerk may be affected by the 2025/26 Community Governance Review to speak, vote and be included in the quorum at meetings of full Council when it is considering business relating to the 2025/26 Community Governance Review, the dispensation to last until the next local government elections in 2027.
- 4.6 If minded to grant any such dispensation request(s) received by the date of the Committee's meeting:
- a) the Committee is requested to authorise similar dispensations for any further requests received by the Monitoring Officer after the Committee's meeting but prior to the Council meeting on 18 March 2026;
  - b) the Committee is requested to delegate to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of full Council, the power to grant similar analogous dispensations, on similar terms, as may be requested by such dual-hatted Members (and confirmed by them in writing), who are members of/clerk to a parish/town council which may be affected by the 2025/26 Community Governance Review, at meetings of full Council on 18 March 2026, 15 July 2026 and any other full Council meetings when the Review will be considered.

## **5.0 PARTICIPATION WITH A DISPENSATION**

5.1 Any councillor who has a dispensation from the Committee, must still declare their interest to the meeting and state that they are relying on a dispensation to participate.

## **6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.

## **7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The legal implications are set out in the body of this report.

## **8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no environmental/climate change implications arising from this report.

## **9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report

## **10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 That Members consider and determine any dispensation requests, as set out at **Appendix 1**, submitted by dual-hatted Members who are members of/clerk to a parish/town council which may be affected by the 2025/26 Community Governance Review, by the date of the Committee's meeting, for a dispensation until the next local government elections in 2027 to enable them to speak, vote and be included in the quorum at meetings of full Council when it is considering business relating to the 2025/26 Community Governance Review.

10.2 That if the Committee is minded to grant any such dispensation requests(s) received by the date of the Committee's meeting:

- a) then the Committee is requested to authorise similar dispensations for any further requests received by the Monitoring Officer after the Committee's meeting but prior to the Council meeting on 18 March 2026; and
- b) the Committee is requested to delegate to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of full Council, the power to grant similar analogous dispensations, on similar terms, as may be requested by such dual-hatted Members (and confirmed by them in writing) who are members of/clerk to a parish/town council which may be affected by the 2025/26 Community Governance Review, at meetings of full Council on 18 March 2026, 15 July 2026 and any other full Council meetings when the Review will be considered.

BARRY KHAN

Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer

Background Documents:

None

County Hall

NORTHALLERTON

4 March 2026

**NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL**  
**STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**Request for a Dispensation**

**Name of Member seeking dispensation:** NYC Members who are members of/clerk to a parish/town council which may be affected by the 2025/26 Community Governance Review

**In respect of which meeting(s)?** *(Include dates, where possible)*

Meetings of full Council when considering business relating to the 2025/26 Community Governance Review.

**In respect of what business?** *(If applicable, include full details of the agenda item or other matter)*

Debating and approving the Council's budget and any associated motions.

**Name of the Relevant Officer:** *(Please indicate the name of the officer who usually presents reports on the matter for which a dispensation is sought).*

Jennifer Norton, Assistant Director Legal Operations and Deputy Monitoring Officer

**Desired length of dispensation:** *(Please note the maximum length of a dispensation is four years)*

Until the next local government elections in 2027.

**Ground(s) for application:** *(Please tick the relevant box(es))*

- (a) without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;
- (b) without the dispensation the representation of different political groups on the body transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business;
- (c) granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area;
- (d) without the dispensation each Member of the Authority's Executive would be prohibited from participating in any particular business to be transacted by the Executive; or
- (e) it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

**Details of your interest:**

*Please set out full details of your interest in the business concerned. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary:*

I am seeking a dispensation to enable me to speak, vote and be included in the quorum at meetings of full Council when it is considering business relating to the 2025/26 Community Governance Review.

I have a registered interest in a parish/town council which may be affected by the 2025/26 Community Governance Review.

I understand that draft recommendations for the second phase consultation on the Review will be considered by full Council on 18 March 2026 and that it is anticipated that a further report will be taken to full Council on 15 July 2026 to approve the 2025/26 Community Governance Review outcome.

As such Council business will directly relate to my registered interest, I will not be able to fully participate in the debate and vote on any Community Governance Review related reports without a dispensation.

**Reasons for seeking a dispensation:**

*Please set out full reasons why it is desirable for the Standards and Governance Committee to grant you a dispensation in respect of the above interest. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary:*

I am seeking a dispensation on the grounds that it is in the interests of persons living in the area and it is otherwise appropriate to grant the dispensation, so I am able to represent residents as local Member.

The nature of my interest is such that it would not affect my objectivity in considering the wider public interest in matters relating to the Community Governance Review and the matter has no financial impact on myself as an individual.

***PLEASE REMEMBER THAT WHEN ACTING UNDER A DISPENSATION, MEMBERS MUST AT ALL TIMES ACT, AND APPEAR TO ACT, IN THE AUTHORITY'S BEST INTERESTS.***

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

TO: **BARRY KHAN**, Monitoring Officer, North Yorkshire Council

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

### STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

13 March 2026

#### **Complaints Update**

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To update the Committee regarding standards complaint activity.

#### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

2.1 A standing report regarding complaints that Members and voting co-opted Members of North Yorkshire Council and parish and town councils in North Yorkshire may have breached the relevant Code of Conduct for Members is brought to scheduled ordinary meetings of the Standards and Governance Committee and other meetings as the Monitoring Officer deems appropriate.

2.2 North Yorkshire Council is the principal authority for parish and town councils in North Yorkshire for the purposes of the standards provisions in the Localism Act 2011. It is responsible for receiving and handling complaints that a parish/town councillor may have breached that authority's code of conduct for Members. That is the extent of North Yorkshire Council's jurisdiction in respect of parish/town council governance; parish/town councils are separate legal entities responsible for their own general governance and North Yorkshire Council has no jurisdiction to consider other complaints for example about the way in which the parish/town council has or has not done something, or about particular parish/town council decisions or employees.

#### **3.0 CONTEXT AND SCALE**

3.1 Within North Yorkshire there are currently:

- 729 individual parishes
- 412 parish and town councils, including the new town councils for Harrogate and Scarborough
- 160 parish meetings
- 90 NYC councillors

3.2 The national context:

- NYC has the largest number of parish and town councils of any local authority in the country
- The next nearest council - Somerset Council has 272 plus three groups of councils
- 51% have less than 30
- 97.5% of councils have less than 200
- There are only 6 councils with over 200 parish councils
- Only 2 councils have over 300 parish councils

3.3 The North Yorkshire context:

NYC is one of the largest local authorities in the country, in terms of geographic

area, and there is a significant number of the smallest form of parish sector organisations, parish meetings (24%). Overall, parish sector organisations are generally smaller and charge a smaller precept (if any) than other similar councils. This uniquely larger number of parish Sector organisations are spread over a significantly large rural area and generally have very limited resources.

- Within the NYC area the average precept charge is 75% less than the national average (£20,212)
- 46.6% of Parish Councils have total annual precept income less than £5k
- Only 5.6% (28) Parish Councils have total annual precept income more than £100k
- Only 4 (0.8%) Parish Councils have total annual precept income more than £300k

#### **4.0 STANDARDS COMPLAINTS RECEIVED**

##### **Previous municipal years**

- 4.1 During the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, the Council received **174** complaints that members may have breached the relevant authority's code of conduct for Members.
- 4.2 During the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, a further **133** complaints were received.
- 4.3 A more detailed breakdown of the complaints statistics for the two full municipal years is attached at **Appendix 1** to this report for Members' information.
- 4.4 The statistics for the municipal years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 are now published on the Council's website at:

[Councillors' code of conduct | North Yorkshire Council](#)

##### **Current municipal year**

- 4.5 During the period 1 April 2025 to 27 February 2026, a further **164** complaints have been received. It is apparent that the number of complaints already received to date in the current year exceeds that of the previous year and continues to rise.
- 4.6 A more detailed breakdown of the complaints statistics for the current year is attached at **Appendix 2** to this report for Members' information.

#### **5.0 BREAKDOWN OF COMPLAINT STATISTICS**

##### **Pre-assessments and Assessments for the current year**

- 5.1 So far this municipal year, of the **164** complaints received:
- a) **70** complaints were pre-assessed by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer and did not proceed to full assessment. For example:
- **1** against an NYC Councillor where there was no evidence presented that the councillor was acting in their official capacity at the relevant times;
  - **24** against parish/town councillors which did not progress to an assessment as they were deemed to be outside the Monitoring Officer's jurisdiction as they related to matters of internal parish council governance and parish council employees;
  - **12** against councillors of one town council which did not progress to an

assessment as they were deemed to be outside the Monitoring Officer's jurisdiction as they related to matters of internal town council governance;

- **4** against parish councillors where there was no evidence presented that the councillor was acting in their official capacity at the relevant times;
- **1** which was mistakenly sent to the NYC Monitoring Officer when it related to another council;
- **1** which was a second anonymous complaint against an NYC Councillor – the first related complaint had been assessed and no further action was required;
- **1** against an NYC Councillor where there was no evidence of a breach of the Code but in any event the subject member had already apologised to the complainant;
- **2** against town councillors where there was no evidence that comments on social media were posted whilst the councillor was acting in their official capacity;
- **1** against a town councillor which fell outside the MO jurisdiction as the councillor was no longer serving;
- **3** against 3 councillors of the same council which were not progressed;
- **20** unspecified complaints concerning governance issues at a particular council.

b) **87** complaints have progressed to a full assessment by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Independent Persons for Standards. Of those assessed complaints:

i. **83** complaints did not merit referral for formal investigation, for example:

- a parish councillor's failure to declare an interest, which had been addressed by them;
- allegations of a parish councillor bullying and harassing the clerk where insufficient evidence was provided of a potential breach of the relevant code of conduct;
- two concerned different NYC Councillors, one relating to levels of engagement with a parish council, and the other regarding alleged disrespect, whereby in both cases there was insufficient evidence presented of a potential breach of the Code of Conduct;
- two concerned the same NYC Councillor from the same member of the public - in both cases there was insufficient evidence presented of a potential breach of the Code of Conduct;
- an anonymous complaint regarding an NYC Councillor alleging illegal activity which was not evidenced;
- self-referrals by two councillors of two different councils which did not merit further action;
- nine complaints concerning four councillors belonging to the same Town Council – where mediation is being advocated by the Monitoring Officer to address the apparent ongoing dysfunctional working relationships between councillors and with members of the public.

ii. **1** complaint was recommended for informal resolution: the parish councillor concerned was urged to consider apologising to the complainant.

iii. **3** complaints have been referred for investigation (**Investigations 11, 12 and 13** listed in section 5.2 below).

c) It is anticipated that at least **3** further complaints will have been assessed by the time of this meeting.

The remaining are in preparatory stages or awaiting pre-assessment or assessment. A further update will be given to the Committee by the Monitoring Officer at the next scheduled meeting.

### **Investigations/Determinations since Vesting Day**

5.2 Since Vesting Day (1 April 2023), 35 complaints have been referred for investigation, through 13 investigations:

#### **2023 - 2024**

- **Investigation 1** – 1 complaint against 1 North Yorkshire Councillor. Referred to Hearings Panel. **Breach of Code found**. Sanction – apologies. Recommendations made to authority.
- **Investigation 2** – 1 complaint against 11 Town Councillors. Referred to Hearings Panel. **No breach**. Recommendations made to authority.
- **Investigation 3** – 1 complaint against 2 individual Parish Councillors. Referred to Hearings Panel. **Breach of Code found**. Recommended sanction – apologies, training, review of one PC Code.
- **Investigation 4** – 1 complaint against 1 individual Parish Councillor. Referred to Hearings Panel. **Breach of Code found**. Sanction – recommended that PC issue private letter of censure to the subject Member.
- **Investigation 5** – 2 complaints from different individuals about the same matter against 1 Town Councillor. The Investigating Officer found **no evidence of breach** of code. Accepted by Monitoring Officer and Independent Person as sufficient. No further action required.
- **Investigation 6** - 1 complaint against 1 individual Parish Councilor. Referred to Hearings Panel. **Breach of Code found**. Sanction – recommended that the subject Member undertake inclusion and diversity training.
- **Investigation 7** – 2 complaints from different individuals about the same matter against 1 North Yorkshire Councillor. Complaint is live. The Monitoring Officer will update the Committee when in a position to do so.

#### **2024 - 2025**

- **Investigation 8** – 2 complaints about the same matter against 4 Town Councillors. The Investigating Officer found **no evidence of breach** of code. Accepted by Monitoring Officer and Independent Person as sufficient. No further action required.
- **Investigation 9** – 3 complaints about the same matter against 1 Town Councillor. The Investigating Officer concluded that there was **evidence of a breach** of the code by the subject member who had since resigned. In accordance with section 9 of the North Yorkshire Council standards complaints procedure, the Deputy Monitoring Officer consulted the Independent Person for Standards and the parties and was satisfied the matter could reasonably be **resolved informally** without the need for a Hearing.

- **Investigation 10** – 1 complaint against 1 individual Town Councillor.  
The Investigating Officer found **no evidence of breach** of code. Accepted by Monitoring Officer and Independent Person as sufficient. No further action required.

## **2025 – 2026**

- **Investigation 11** – 1 complaint against 1 North Yorkshire Councillor.  
Referred to Hearings Panel. **Breach of Code found**. Sanction – repayment to Council for use of pool cars at weekends, reimbursement to Council for mileage claim payments claimed in error, return of Council mobile telephone, publication of Decision Notice. Recommendations also made.
- **Investigation 12** – 1 complaint against 1 North Yorkshire Councillor.  
The Investigating Officer found **no evidence of breach** of code. Accepted by Monitoring Officer and Independent Person as sufficient. No further action required.
- **Investigation 13** – 1 complaint against 1 Town Councillor.  
This complaint is live. The Monitoring Officer will update the Committee when in a position to do so.

5.3 The volume of complaints and associated correspondence and information governance requests has meant a sustained heavy workload for officers and the Independent Persons during the three years since Vesting Day. Whilst the flow of new complaints had slowed during 2024/2025, Members will see that the rate has increased once again as can be seen from section 4 of the report which shows the comparative figures for years one, two, and three. Despite this upturn, the average time taken to process complaints remains significantly reduced, following the erosion of the previous backlog which accrued after Vesting Day and the introduction of the pre-assessment stage of complaint handling and other streamlining of processes.

5.4 The Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer would again wish to take this opportunity to thank all the Independent Persons for their valued views, time, patience and input into what can be time-consuming and complex matters.

## **6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.

## **7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no significant legal implications arising from this report.

## **8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no significant environmental/climate change implications arising from this report.

## **9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no significant equalities implications arising from this report

**10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 That the Committee notes the current position on standards complaints received.

BARRY KHAN

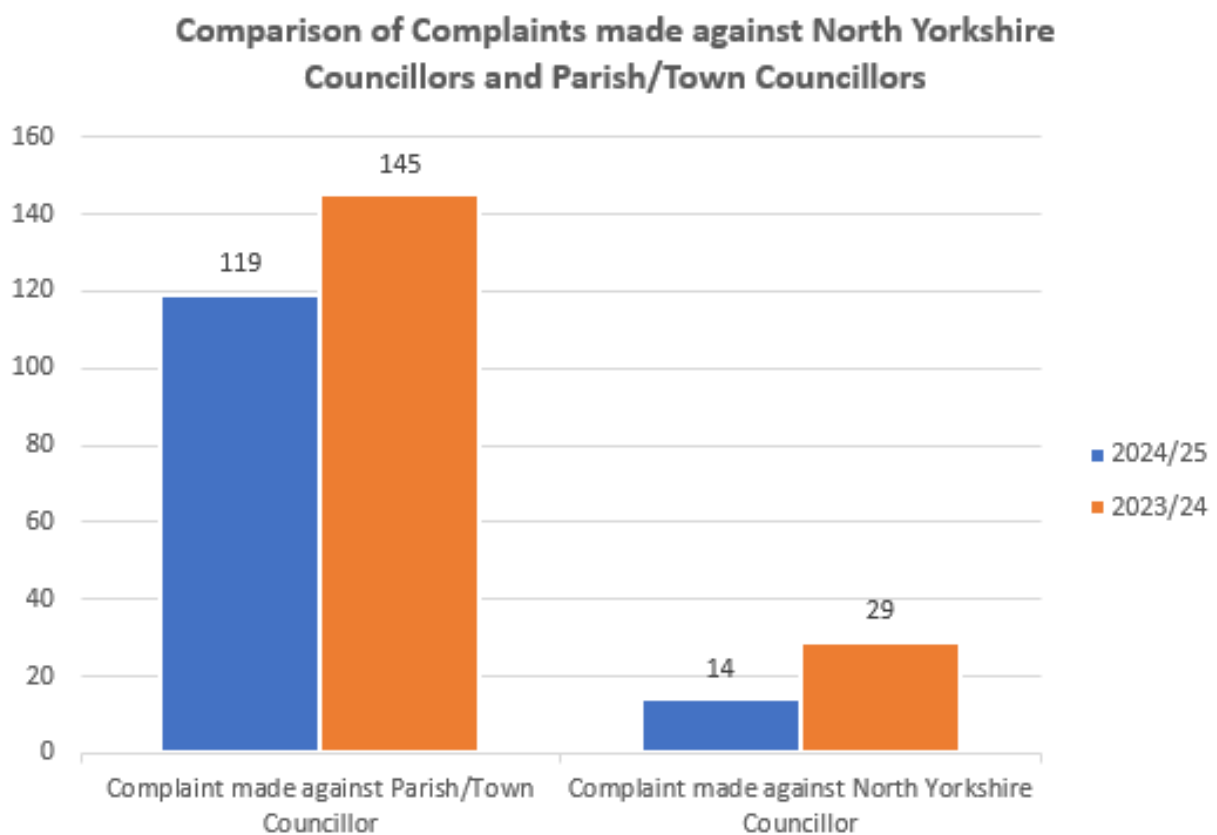
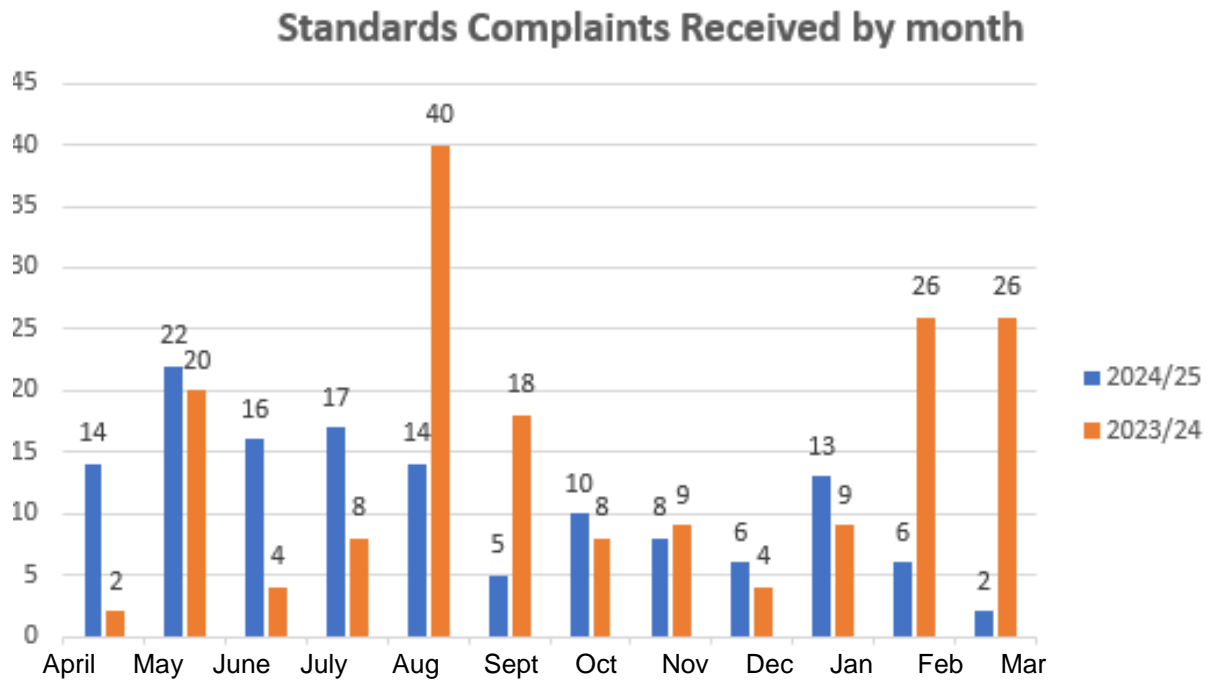
Assistant Chief Executive, Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer

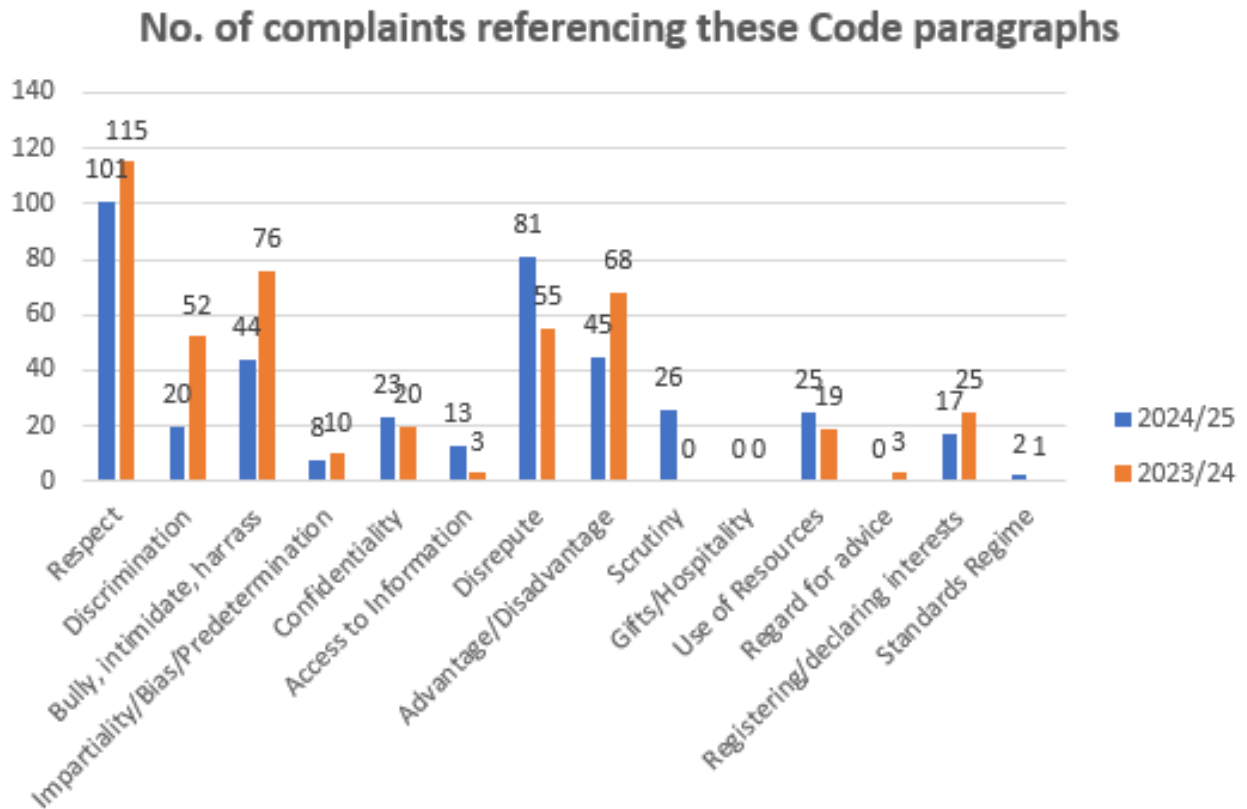
Background Documents: None

County Hall  
NORTHALLERTON

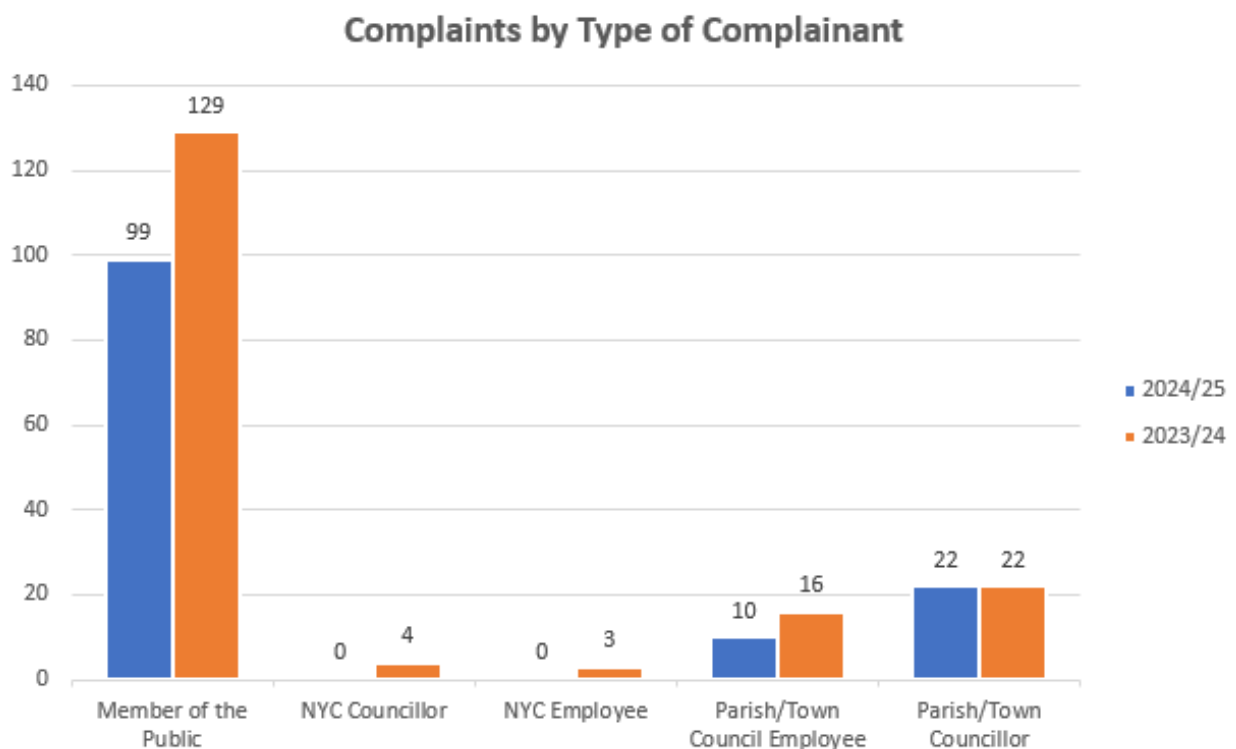
2 March 2026

### Comparison of Complaints received: 2023-2024 and 2024-2025



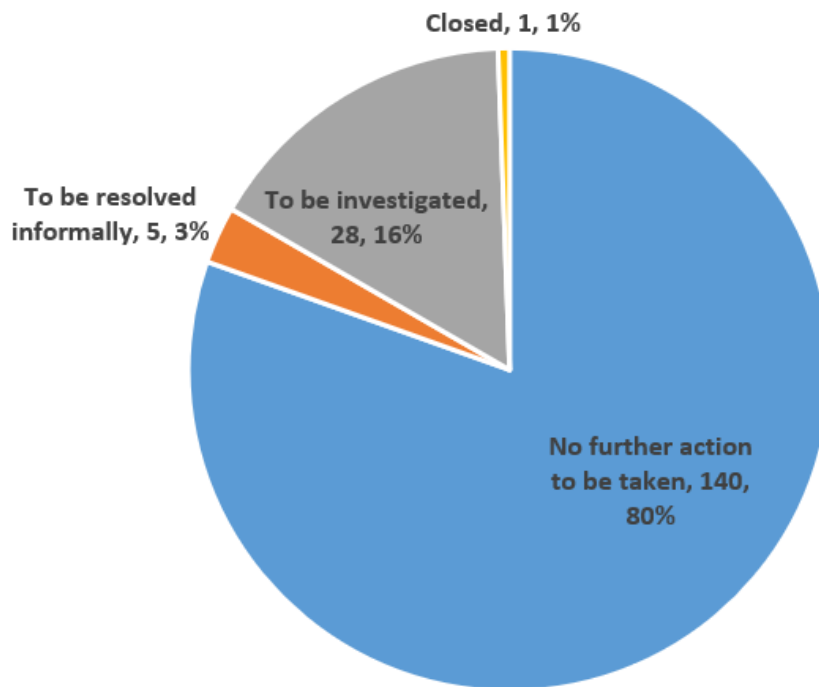


**NB: Complaints may reference several paragraphs of the Code as being breached**

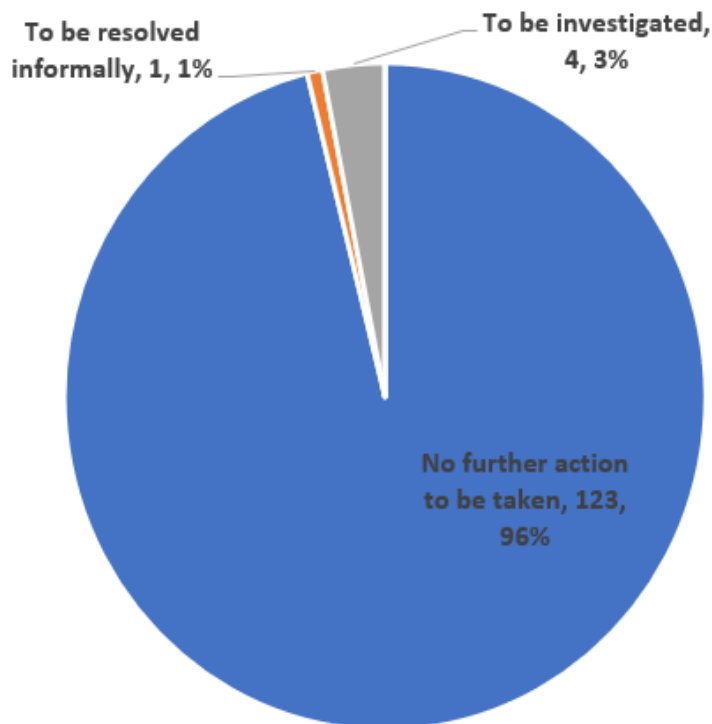


### Complaint Assessment Outcomes – All Complaints

#### 2023-2024

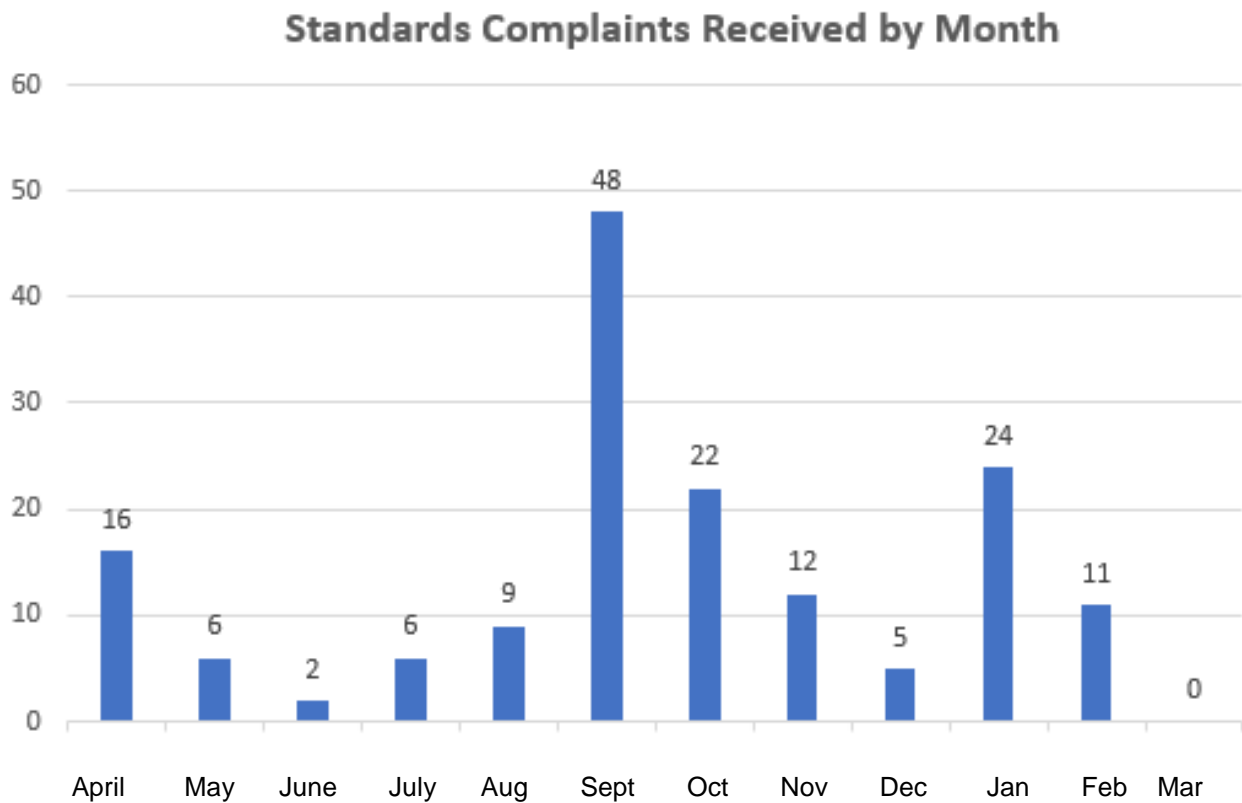


#### 2024-2025

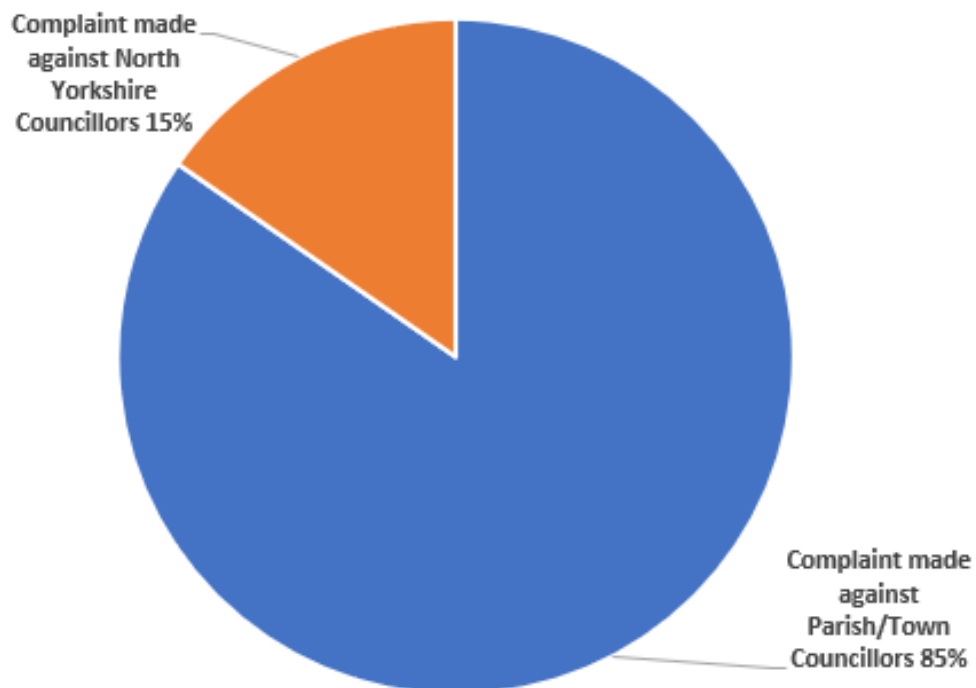


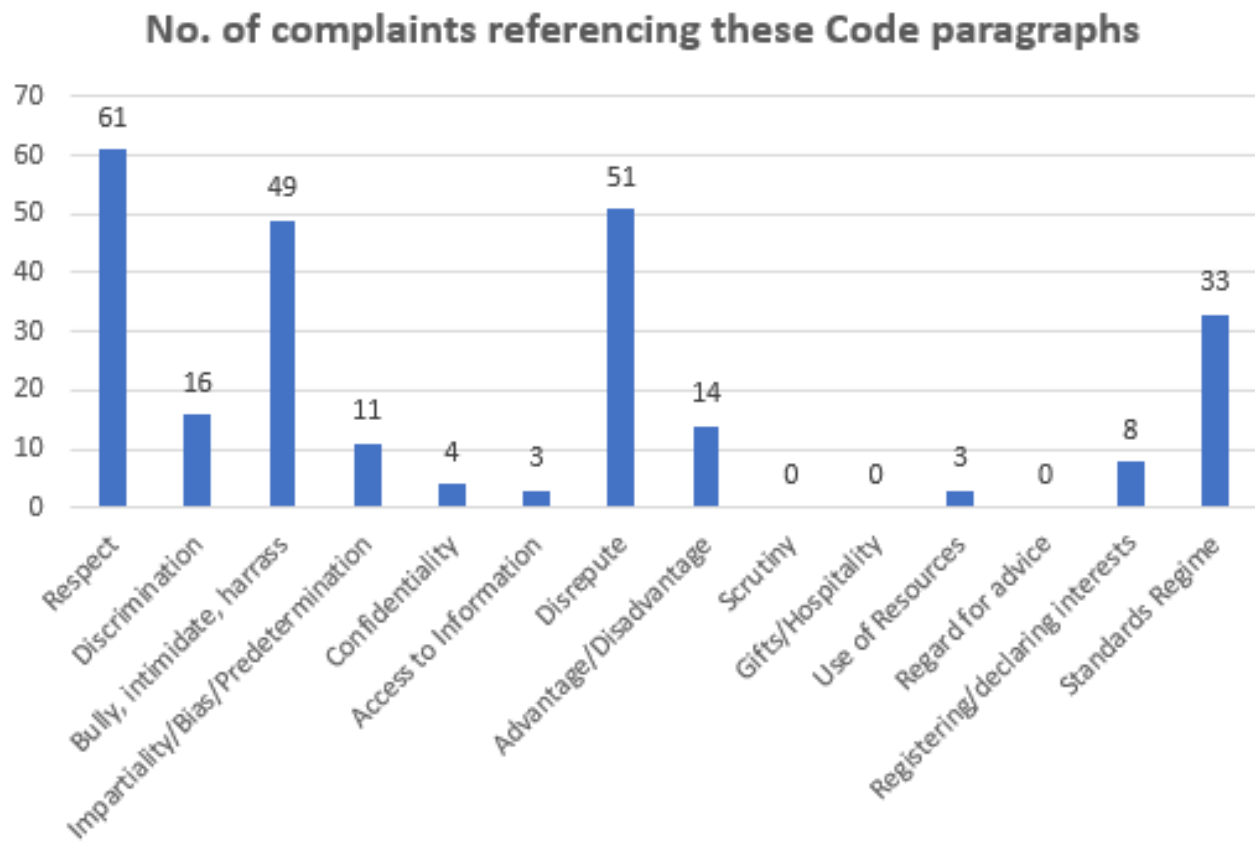
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**Complaints Received Year to date (up to 27 February) 2025-2026**

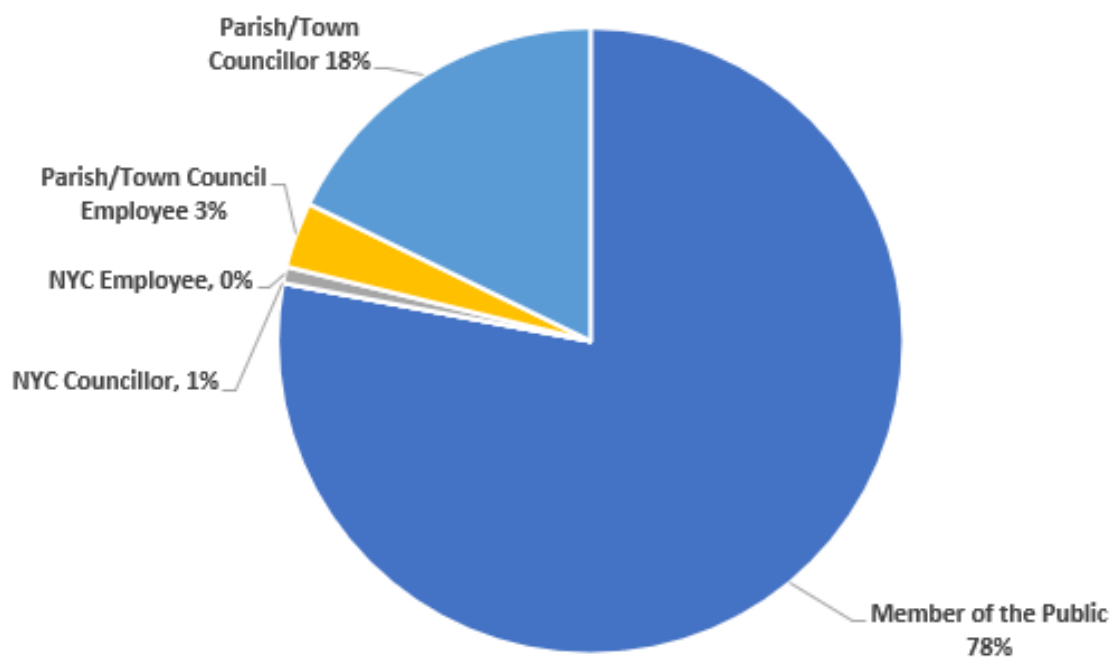


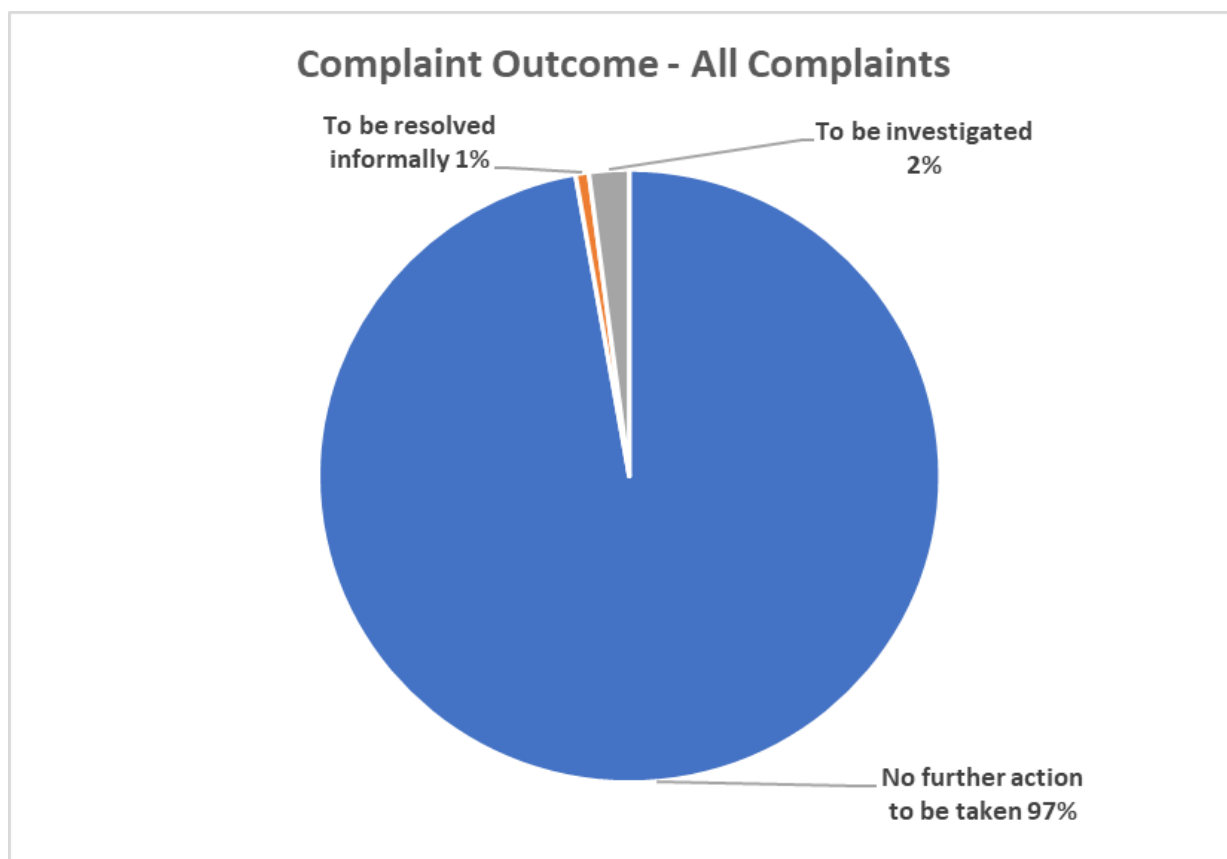
**Comparison of Complaints made against North Yorkshire Councillors and Parish/Town Councillors**





### Complaints by Type of Complainant





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## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

### STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

13 March 2026

#### **Standards Training Plan for Members**

##### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present to Members, for review, the Standards Training Plan for Members for 2026/2027.

##### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 A report is brought to each ordinary meeting of the Committee for it to consider the standards training needs of Members of the Council and how best to meet them through the Standards Training Plan.

##### **3.0 STANDARDS TRAINING PLAN**

- 3.1 The current Standards Training Plan is attached at **Appendix 1** for Members' consideration and discussion.

- 3.2 The Training Plan is split into separate sections for:

- The Standards and Governance Committee
- Independent Persons for Standards;
- Members of North Yorkshire Council; and
- Parish and Town Councils.

with identified training needs set out, an indicative timescale for completion and bulleted entries of any such training undertaken in the time period.

- 3.3 Members are requested to consider the standards training needs across the authority and review the Standards Training Plan for 2026/27.

##### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.

##### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no significant legal implications arising from this report.

##### **6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no significant environmental implications arising from this report.

##### **7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no significant equalities implications arising from this report.

**8.0 CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 Members are requested to consider the standards training needs across the authority and review the Standards Training Plan in terms of those needs being met.
- 8.2 Members will be kept informed of progress in relation to standards training.

**9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 That Members consider the Standards Training Plan for Members for 2026/2027 and determine whether any amendments are required.

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

Background Documents:  
None

County Hall  
NORTHALLERTON

4 March 2026

**NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL**  
**STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**Standards Training Plan for Members – 2026/2027**

TRAINING	DATE
<b>Standards and Governance Committee</b>	
<b>Training required:</b>	
i. Training on any new Code of Conduct and standards regime, once any legislative changes arising out of the Government consultation on strengthening the standards regime are enacted and any new regime is implemented by NYC.	Possibly Autumn 2026 or as soon as possible after any new regime implemented
ii. Standing guidance on key issues of code and standards regime in each edition of Standards Bulletin.	Twice per year as a minimum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2026</li> <li>• September 2026</li> </ul>
iii. Refresher training as the Committee may request.	Periodic
iv. Refresher training to Hearings Panel regarding Hearings Panel procedures in advance of each Hearing.	As required and before each Hearings Panel hearing.
<b>Independent Persons for Standards</b>	
<b>Training required:</b>	
i. Independent Persons to be invited to all Standards and Governance Committee training.	See above section.
ii. External training as appropriate and as opportunities are presented.	Periodic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16 April 2026: Independent Persons' Workshop 2026 (external)</li> </ul>
iii. Annual catch-up meeting for IPs – organised and hosted by Monitoring Officer and training provided re reviewing the previous year, complaint statistics and themes, the role of the IP, assessments, investigations and hearings.	Anticipated April 2026
iv. Introductory training by Monitoring Officer to any new Independent Person for Standards, should there be a need to recruit to the current vacancy.	As may be required.
<b>North Yorkshire Council Members</b>	
<b>Training required:</b>	
i. Refresher training to NYC Members on Members' Code of Conduct through a Members' seminar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training undertaken at Members' seminar on 4 February 2026 in context of social media training</li> </ul>

ii.	Full Code of Conduct training for any newly elected NYC councillors	As required
iii.	Standing guidance on key issues of code and standards regime in each edition of Standards Bulletin.	Twice per year as a minimum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2026</li> <li>• September 2026</li> </ul>
iv.	Training on any new Code of Conduct and standards regime, once any legislative changes arising out of the Government consultation on strengthening the standards regime are enacted and any new regime is implemented by NYC.	Possibly Autumn 2026 or as soon as possible after any new regime implemented
v.	Monitoring Officer to produce a recorded training session on standards for Members to access at any time, once any legislative changes arising out of the Government consultation on strengthening the standards regime are enacted and any new regime is implemented by NYC.	Possibly Autumn 2026 or as soon as possible after any new regime implemented
<b>Parish and Town Councils</b>		
<b>Training required:</b>		
i.	Previous online training session (13 September 2024) by Deputy Monitoring Officer and Senior Governance Lawyer to North Yorkshire parish and town councils (West Team) re Code of Conduct and standards regime was recorded and is now published and available for parish and town councils to access.	Please contact Democratic Services for the hyperlink.
ii.	Standing guidance on key issues of code and standards regime in each edition of Standards Bulletin. Standards Bulletins are circulated to parish and town councils in North Yorkshire.	Twice per year as a minimum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2026</li> <li>• September 2026</li> </ul>
iii.	Update the recorded training session once any legislative changes arising out of the Government consultation on strengthening the standards regime are enacted and any new regime is implemented by NYC.	Possibly Autumn 2026 or as soon as possible after any new regime implemented

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

### STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

13 March 2026

#### **Standards Bulletin**

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To present to the Committee, for consideration, a draft Standards Bulletin.

#### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Standards Bulletin is produced periodically and circulated to Members and relevant Officers of the Council to keep them informed of key developments in the standards regime.

2.2 The production of the Standards Bulletin helps to maintain the Council's statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct.

#### **3.0 THE STANDARDS BULLETIN**

3.1 The latest draft edition of the Bulletin is attached at **Appendix 1** to this report.

3.2 The Committee is requested to consider the Bulletin with a view to its subsequent circulation to Members and Officers and publication on the Council's website.

3.3 The Bulletin is also circulated to YLCA and to parish and town councils in the North Yorkshire area and certain other authorities at their request.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no significant legal implications arising from this report.

#### **6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no significant environmental/climate change implications arising from this report.

#### **7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no significant equalities implications arising from this report

#### **8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 That, subject to any comments Members may have, the Bulletin be approved for circulation.

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

Background Documents: None

County Hall  
NORTHALLERTON

3 March 2026

## The Standards and Governance Committee

- **Councillor Nick Brown**
- **Councillor Sam Cross**
- **Councillor Melanie Davis**
- **Councillor David Ireton**
- **Councillor Nigel Knapton**
- **Councillor Clive Pearson**
- **Councillor Heather Phillips**
- **Councillor Monika Slater**
- **Councillor Andy Solloway**
- **Councillor Peter Wilkinson**

## Independent Persons for Standards

- Ms Gill Baker
- Mrs Louise Holroyd
- Mr James Nelson
- Ms Richinda Taylor

## Officers

### **Barry Khan**

Assistant Chief Executive Legal & Democratic Services  
and Monitoring Officer

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## Introduction

This edition of the Standards Bulletin for North Yorkshire Council sets out the latest developments in the national standards regime, particularly in relation to the work by the Ethics and Integrity Commission and the Local Government Association.

Members will continue be kept informed of all ethical framework developments.

Should you wish to discuss any standards matter, please do not hesitate to contact the Monitoring Officer or any of his Team.

### **Councillor Clive Pearson**

Chair of the Standards and Governance Committee

## In this issue:

### **Standing guidance:**

- Members' expenses
- Interests' regime
- Sensitive Interests
- Bias, Predetermination, Predisposition
- Members' Gifts and Hospitality
- Social media and the Members' Code of Conduct

### **Latest News:**

- Update on Government consultation on strengthening the standards regime
- The Ethics and Integrity Commission
- Civility in Public Life
- Better Mental Health for Councillors: Looking after your wellbeing
- Intimidation in public life
- NYC Member Liaison Group on Councillor Safety
- LGA guide to disinformation
- Updating of LGA guidance re model code of conduct
- NYC standards complaint statistics
- Complaint statistics
- Cases

# STANDING GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS

## Members' Expenses

Members are reminded to include sufficient details in their expense claims and to submit them in a timely manner to avoid submitting multiple claims at the same time where possible.

Members should have regard to the current **Scheme of Approved Duties** and the **Protocol on Members' Attendance at Conferences** published in Part 6 of the Constitution, published on the Council website at [Constitution | North Yorkshire Council](#)

## Interests' Regime

Under the Council's Code of Conduct for Members ([Councillors' code of conduct | North Yorkshire Council](#)), the following interests' regime applies.

### Registration of Interests

Members must register the following interests **within 28 days** of election/appointment:

- **Disclosable pecuniary interests** (DPIs) of the Member and their spouse/partner who they live with and
- **Other registrable interests** (ORIs) of the Member

and keep their interests under review, registering any changes within **28 days**.

A pecuniary interest is a **DPI** if it is of a description specified in regulations ie

- **Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation (for profit or gain)**
- **Sponsorship**
- **Contracts**
- **Land**
- **Licenses**
- **Corporate tenancies**
- **Securities**

(please see the Code for the detailed descriptions)

**And either:**

- (a) it is the Member's interest or
- (b) an interest of the Member's spouse or civil partner or a person with whom the Member is living with as such

**and** the Member is aware of the interest.

**Members may request to have, for example, their home address treated as sensitive and not disclosed in the published Register of Interests or in their contact details on the Council website, if they feel this is necessary for their personal safety or that of someone connected to them.** Please see the later section in the Bulletin on Sensitive Interests and contact the Monitoring Officer to discuss any concerns in this regard.

**Should Members have any immediate concerns around Member safety, please contact the Head of Democratic Services and Scrutiny to discuss.**

Other Registrable interests (ORIs) are:

- 1. Unpaid directorships**
- 2. Any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority**
- 3. Any body:**
  - i. exercising functions of a public nature**
  - ii. directed to charitable purposes or one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union/professional association)**
  - iii. of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.**

The Register of Members' Interests is maintained by the Monitoring Officer and is generally available for public inspection during office hours at County Hall, Northallerton. It is

published on the Council's website (as required by the Localism Act 2011) - [Your Councillors | North Yorkshire Council](#)

**Members must, within 28 days of becoming aware of a new interest or a change to an existing interest, register the necessary details electronically via the ModGov committee software system.**

### **Participation re Interests**

#### **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs)**

A Member may not participate in the discussion of, or vote on, Council business *directly relating* to a DPI and must declare the existence and nature of the interest and withdraw from the meeting room at the start of the item (unless a dispensation is granted).

#### **Other Registrable Interests (ORIs)**

Where a matter arises at a meeting which *directly relates* to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of the Member's ORIs, then the Member must declare the existence and nature of the interest, can speak on the matter if the public can and then must withdraw from the meeting room (unless a dispensation is granted).

#### **Non-Registrable Interests (NRIs)**

These are interests which are not required to be registered in the Register of Members' Interests (ie interests other than DPIs and ORIs):-

- (i) which *directly relate* to the Member's financial interest or well-being, or that of a relative or close associate (of which the Member could reasonably be expected to be aware); or
- (ii) which *affect* the Member's financial interest or well-being or that of a relative or close associate or of a body included under Other Registrable Interests (of which the Member could reasonably be expected to be aware).

For NRIs falling under category (i) above, the Member must declare the existence and nature of the interest, can speak on the matter if the public can and then must withdraw from the

meeting room (unless a dispensation is granted).

For NRIs falling under category (ii) above, the Member must declare the existence and nature of the interest, and then consider the 'prejudicial interest' test to determine if and how they may participate:

- Where the matter affects the financial interest or wellbeing more than it affects that of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected and a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect the Member's view of the wider public interest, then the Member can speak if the public can, but must not take part in any discussion/vote and must leave room (unless a dispensation is granted);
- Where the matter does not so affect the financial interest or wellbeing, then the Member may speak and vote in usual way.

If a **dispensation** is granted to a Member, the Member must still **declare** the existence and nature of the interest and the fact they are relying on a dispensation to the meeting.

#### **What is the difference between 'relates to' and 'affects'?**

Something 'relates to' a Member's interest if it is directly about it, eg the matter being discussed is an application about a particular property in which the Member or somebody associated with them or an outside body they have registered has a financial interest.

'Affects' means the matter is not directly about that interest but nevertheless the matter has clear implications for the interest – for example, it is a planning application for a neighbouring property which will result in it overshadowing the Member's property. An interest can of course affect you, your family or close personal associates positively and negatively. So, if you or they have the potential to gain or lose from a matter under consideration, an interest would need to be declared in both situations.

### Please note:

A Member commits a **criminal offence** if, without reasonable excuse, they —

- fail to:
  - ❖ register disclosable pecuniary interests
  - ❖ disclose an interest to a meeting where required
  - ❖ notify the Monitoring Officer of an interest disclosed to a meeting
- participate in any discussion or vote where prohibited
- an individual Member decision taker takes any steps in relation to a matter where prohibited

A Member also commits a **criminal offence** if, in relation to the registration/disclosure of disclosable pecuniary interests, they provide information that is false or misleading and —

- know that the information is false or misleading, or
- are reckless as to whether the information is true and not misleading.

A court may also disqualify the person, for a period not exceeding five years, for being or becoming (by election or otherwise) a member or co-opted member of the relevant authority in question or any other relevant authority.

**Please therefore keep your interests form under review** to ensure it is up to date.

**Interests' issues are ultimately Members' responsibility.**

**NB: Even if something is not a Code issue, always bear in mind the rules relating to bias, predetermination and predisposition.**

If you are in any doubt as to your position, please contact the Monitoring Officer or any of his team.

## Sensitive Interests

You do not need to register or declare the details of an interest which you and the Monitoring Officer have agreed is sensitive.

A “sensitive interest” is any interest (whether or not a disclosable pecuniary interest) where **disclosure of the details could lead to you, or a person connected with you, being subject to violence or intimidation.**

The existence of an interest must still be registered/declared but not any detail in relation to it.

**Should you feel that any of your interests are sensitive given any prevailing circumstances, please contact the Monitoring Officer immediately to discuss.**

## Bias, Predetermination, Predisposition

Members involved in making a decision on particular business must always bear in mind the rules relating to **bias and predetermination** and must not participate in, or seek to influence, Council business where their interests may prejudice, or appear to prejudice, their views.

**Predetermination** occurs *where a fair minded and well informed observer, looking objectively at all the circumstances, considers there is a real risk that a decision maker has refused to consider a relevant argument or would refuse.*

Possible examples of bias or predetermination are:

- connection with someone affected by a decision;
- improper involvement of someone with an interest in the outcome;
- prior involvement in a matter;
- commenting before a decision is made.

However, the Localism Act 2011 makes it clear that a Member is not to be taken to have had, or to have appeared to have had, a closed mind when making a decision just because they had previously done anything that directly or indirectly indicated what view they took, or would or might take, in relation to a matter; this would amount to **predisposition** to a view and is acceptable. This ensures that Members can freely discuss issues, including expressing a view and/or campaigning on an issue, and then later speak or vote on those issues.

**Unless there is positive evidence of a closed mind, prior observations or apparent favouring of a particular decision is unlikely to suffice as predetermination.**

**Members are entitled to have and express their own views, as long as they are prepared to reconsider their position in the light of all the evidence and arguments. They must not give the impression that their mind is closed.**

## **Members' Gifts and Hospitality**

Members' gifts and hospitality are recorded with their Register of Interests, electronically via the ModGov committee software system.

Under the Council's Code of Conduct, you should not accept gifts/hospitality, of any value, which could create an impression of obligation upon you or the Council or substantive personal gain or propensity to show favour. You should inform the Monitoring Officer of any such offers.

Otherwise, you should register any gifts/hospitality received or offered worth **£25 or more**.

Should you have any queries in relation to the registration of any gifts or hospitality received/offered, then please feel free to contact the Monitoring Officer or any of his team.

Parish and town councillors should have regard to their own authority's Code of Conduct in terms of how any offers of gifts and hospitality should be dealt with.

## **Social media and the Members' Code of Conduct**

Social media is an important means of communication and engagement, however the use of social media frequently features in many of the standards complaints received by the Monitoring Officer.

Aspects of the Members' Code of Conduct will apply to your online activity, as in other communications, if you are, or appear to be, acting in your capacity as a councillor, rather than a private individual. The same standards of

conduct apply online as would be expected offline.

The key issue is whether you are acting in your official capacity as a councillor when using your social media platforms. Be clear as to the capacity in which you are posting, official or private.

Use of the title "Councillor" may give rise to an inference that you are acting in your official capacity, when the Code can be engaged.

If you publish information you can only access as a Member, you are likely to be viewed as acting in your official capacity.

"...These are ordinary descriptive English words. Their application is inevitably fact sensitive and so whether or not a person is so acting inevitably calls for informed judgment by reference to the facts of a given case. This also means that there is the potential for two decision makers, both taking the correct approach, to reach different decisions..."

You may wish to set up different social media accounts for your private life and councillor role to maintain professional boundaries.

You are personally responsible for the content you publish on social media, in the same way that you are responsible for letters or emails you send. It is less formal but is still a form of communication and posts can be capable of being misunderstood - the immediacy of social media can magnify this problem.

Being misunderstood is likely to lead to rapid and wide broadcasting (particularly with something perceived as being more controversial than was intended) almost instantly.

Be approachable, polite and respectful in your language and tone. Irony and sarcasm are very difficult to convey in writing and therefore should be avoided, as should profanity.

North Yorkshire Council has a Social Media Policy available on the Council's Intranet, which Members may find helpful.

Members should ensure that they are familiar with the provisions and that they do not put the Council's systems and information at risk, or be

damaging to the reputation of the Council or the office of Member.

## LATEST NEWS

### Update on Government consultation on strengthening the standards regime

Members have previously been briefed regarding the Government consultation on strengthening the standards regime ([Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England - GOV.UK](#)) (and the associated LGA Questionnaire regarding the consultation), which closed on 26 February 2025

On 11 November 2025, the Government published its response to the consultation - [Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England – consultation results and government response - GOV.UK](#). which was considered by the Standards and Governance Committee on 11 February 2026.

The Government has stated that it intends to "legislate for a **whole system reform of the current regime** as set out in Localism Act 2011", to include:

- a mandatory code of conduct for councillors, across all types and tiers of local authorities
- requirement for principal authorities to have formal Standards Committees
- new powers to suspend elected members for a maximum of 6 months for serious code of conduct breaches, with the option to withhold allowances during suspension for the most serious breaches and introduce premises and facilities bans either in addition or as standalone sanctions
- in response to the most serious allegations involving police investigation, or where sentencing is pending, the introduction of powers to suspend elected members on an interim basis for an initial period of 3 months which, if extended, will require regular review

- a new disqualification criterion for any elected member subject to the maximum period of suspension more than once within 5 years
- requirement that all principal authorities offer individual support during any investigation into code of conduct allegations to both the complainant and the councillor subject to the allegation
- introduction at the authority level of a 'right for review' for both complainant and the subject elected member to have the case reassessed on grounds that will be set out in legislation
- creation of a new national appeals function for suspended councillors and for complainants if they consider their complaint was mishandled (after internal review process exhausted).

The necessary legislative changes will be brought forward "when parliamentary time allows".

A copy of the report to the Standards and Governance Committee, setting out full details of the proposed reforms is published on the Council's website - [Agenda](#)

Members will be kept informed of developments.

### The Ethics and Integrity Commission

Members have previously been briefed regarding the intended establishment of a new Ethics and Integrity Commission, to oversee the ethical standards of ministers and public officials and "drive up standards in public life", change the ministerial severance arrangements and the business appointment rules.

The Commission was officially launched in October last year and the Committee on Standards in Public Life is now subsumed into the Commission.

The Commission will also have a role regarding the proposed public body professional duty of candour for staff which is anticipated will be set out in a code of ethics based on the general principles of public life.

A letter from the Prime Minister to the Chair of the Commission regarding the Commission's work is published online - [Letter from the Prime Minister | Ethics and Integrity Commission](#).

The Chair of the Commission's comments on the Government response to the 'Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England' consultation are published online - [here](#)

The Commission has stated that it will review the public sector ombudsman system, with further information about the review to be published this month. The Chair of the Commission has written to the Prime Minister to set out the early work intended to be undertaken by the Commission - [EIC progress – Letter to Prime Minister | Ethics and Integrity Commission](#).

Further information about the work of the Commission is published on its website [-here](#).

## Civility in Public Life

In October 2025, the UK's local government associations agreed a joint statement in support of the Civility in Public Life Programme. Information about the Civility in Public Life programme has previously been presented to the Committee and is published online - [Civility in public life | Local Government Association](#).

The joint statement is published online - [UK local government associations: Joint statement on Civility in Public Life | Local Government Association](#) – with the organisations stating that they are "increasingly troubled by threats and violence against councillors and officers".

## Better mental health for councillors: looking after your wellbeing

The LGA has published presentations regarding the 'Better mental health for councillors: Looking after your wellbeing' event held on 24 September 2025. The presentations can be found online - [Better mental health for councillors](#).

## Intimidation in public life

The Local Government Association has published presentations regarding:

- "Handling online abuse and intimidation for councillors" from its event on 11 December 2025. The slides are published here - [slides](#).
- "Personal safety for councillors" from its event on 12 February 2026. The slides are published here - [slides](#).

## NYC Member Liaison Group on Councillor Safety

North Yorkshire Council takes Member safety seriously. The Council's cross party Member Liaison Group on Councillor Safety was established in May 2024 and has met 8 times to date, next due to meet on 5 March 2026. It is supported by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer and the Head of Democratic Services and Scrutiny and is also attended by the Head of Health and Safety and two North Yorkshire Police Officers.

The Group has undertaken a number of practical steps to promote Member safety, including:

- Consideration of the Local Government Association's 'Debate Not Hate' campaign and supporting toolkit action points and work undertaken by other authorities to promote councillor safety, to provide a framework against which progress locally can be assessed; and an audit of the Council's approach to supporting councillors has been undertaken, based upon key aspects of the toolkit.
- An all-councillor survey on member safety completed and the results analysed and responded to in November/December 2024. This is to be repeated on an annual basis.
- A system for the reporting, collation and analysis of incidences where councillors have felt or been threatened or intimidated during the course of their duties has been in place since March 2025;

- The roll out of the PeopleSafe App to all councillors as of 31 March 2025. This is currently used by frontline council staff and enables access to a range of support (check-ins, alarms, times alerts) when visiting somewhere for the first time or where there are concerns;
- The roll out of councillor access to the Staff Warning Register, via Democratic Services, which enables addresses to be checked for any flagged concerns;
- Developing strong relationships with the Police to enhance coordination and foster mutual understanding of abuse affecting councillors and the role of the Police in addressing it, including the establishment of a named Police officer contact as Elected Officials Advisor, who is available to speak with and support councillors who have concerns regarding their safety;
- Cross council planning for the management of committee meetings where contentious issues are being considered and there are large numbers of people attending, planned protest and a risk of possible disruption;
- A standard, documented process for all committee chairs to adopt should there be any public disorder in a meeting;
- Councillors concerned about their physical safety can apply for funding for practical measures to increase security at their homes;
- Councillor addresses and phone numbers can be removed from the Council website where there are concerns around safety;
- Councillor access to wellbeing services can be enabled upon request;
- Training and awareness raising on a range of issues is periodically undertaken through the Member seminars and briefings. A member working group on training and development has been established that is leading on the induction package and first 12 months of development and support for newly elected councils post May 2027. Part of this will focus upon member safety.

- Training and/or briefings for councillors on the following: personal safety and risk assessment; social media training and digital citizenship; safer canvassing during the election period (March to May 2027) and conflict de-escalation;
- Provision of mentor support for councillors, made available following an incident, and how this would be done through the political groups;
- A review of the current level of support that is available to councillors through the employee wellbeing services

### **LGA guide to disinformation**

The LGA has published a Guide to disinformation for local councillors - [A guide to disinformation for local councillors | Local Government Association](#) - developed in response to interest from councillors seeking support in approaching and countering disinformation. The Guide sets out the key definitions and tangible actions councillors can take to respond effectively.

There is a separate guide for officers – [A guide to disinformation affecting local authorities and their communities | Local Government Association](#)

There are other LGA resources to support councillors and candidates in their online communications which can also be used to try to curb and limit the spread of disinformation (false information shared with the intent to deceive) - [Digital citizenship: support and resources for councillors | Local Government Association](#).

### **Updating of LGA guidance on model code of conduct**

It appears that LGA Guidance on Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct ([Guidance](#)), now includes more hyperlinks to other guides and resources such as:

The Group has identified further areas for consideration, including:

- An annual all-councillor survey;

[Full word english version guide for councillors on handling intimidation FINAL.pdf](#)

[Social media guidance for councillors | Local Government Association](#)

[Civility in public life | Local Government Association](#)

Which Members may find helpful.

## **NYC STANDARDS COMPLAINT STATISTICS**

The Standards and Governance Committee monitors complaints raised with the Monitoring Officer under the standards regime.

As well as considering complaints that a member of North Yorkshire Council may have breached the Members' Code of Conduct, North Yorkshire Council is the principal authority for parish and town councils in North Yorkshire for the purposes of the standards provisions in the Localism Act 2011.

It is therefore also responsible for receiving and handling complaints that a parish/town councillor may have breached that authority's code of conduct for Members.

That is the extent of North Yorkshire Council's jurisdiction in respect of parish/town council governance; parish/town councils are separate legal entities and North Yorkshire Council has no jurisdiction to consider other complaints for example about the way in which the parish council has or has not done something, or about particular parish council decisions.

### **Context for complaints**

There are currently:

- 729 Individual Parishes
- 412 Parish and Town Councils, including Harrogate and Scarborough
- 160 Parish Meetings; and
- 90 NYC councillors.

In terms of the national context:

- NYC has the largest number of parish and town councils of any local authority in the country;

- The next nearest council has 272
- 51% have less than 30
- 97.5% of councils have less than 200
- There are only 6 councils with over 200 parish councils
- Only 2 councils have over 300 parish councils

### **Complaints received**

During the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, the Council received 174 complaints that members may have breached the relevant authority's code of conduct for Members.

During the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, 133 complaints were received.

A full breakdown of the complaint statistics for each municipal period is published on the Council's website at the bottom of the Councillors' Code of Conduct webpage - [Councillors' code of conduct | North Yorkshire Council](#)

For the period 1 April 2025 to 27 February 2026, **164** complaints have been received.

### **Pre-assessments and Assessments in current year**

Of the 164 complaints received in this current year:

- a) 70 complaints have been disposed of by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer at pre-assessment stage.
- b) 87 complaints have progressed to assessment by the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Independent Persons for Standards. Of those assessed complaints:
  - i. 83 complaints did not merit referral for formal investigation;
  - ii. 1 complaint was recommended for informal resolution;
  - iii. 3 complaints were referred for investigation.

The remaining complaints are in preparatory stages or awaiting pre-assessment or assessment.

## Investigation outcomes

Since the last Standards Bulletin, 2 complaint investigations, each regarding a separate NYC Councillor, have been concluded:

- **Investigation 11** - The Investigating Officer concluded there was evidence of a breach of the Code of Conduct. The complaint was referred to the Hearings Panel which determined there had been a **breach of the Code**. A copy of the Decision Notice is published on the Council's website - [SGC2025039 Decision Notice by Hearings Panel.pdf](#)
- **Investigation 12** - The Investigating Officer concluded there was evidence of a minor technical, but not inconsequential, **breach of the Code of Conduct**. In accordance with section 9 of the North Yorkshire Council standards complaints procedure, the Deputy Monitoring Officer consulted the Independent Person for Standards and the parties and was satisfied the matter could reasonably be resolved informally without the need for a Hearing.

One investigation remains live.

A detailed Complaints Update report is taken to each ordinary meeting of the Standards and Governance Committee, giving an update on complaints received and their progress. The Committee's agenda and papers are published here - [Browse meetings - Standards and Governance Committee | North Yorkshire Council](#)

Members will be kept informed of statistical information in relation to standards complaints received.

## **NATIONAL CASES**

The following cases have recently been reported nationally:

- A councillor was found not to have breached the authority's code of conduct following an external investigation into allegations of him bullying an officer;

The council leader subsequently

refused a request to publish the confidential investigation report.

- A councillor was removed from committee positions after setting up a company with a similar name to a new council-owned business;
- A borough council meeting was disrupted by protesters wearing balaclavas, causing damage to the council offices and heckling and attacking councillors from the public gallery by throwing eggs and objects at them. The police are investigating.
- A former councillor who sent approximately 100 anonymous 'poison pen' letters over a two year period to a fellow councillor was charged with harassment without violence and received a restraining order and community order. He also received a £300 fine, was ordered to pay a victim surcharge and prosecution costs.
- A principal authority has asked a parish council responsible for an "unprecedented volume" of standards complaints to contribute to the costs of standards investigations, which had resulted in a disproportionate pull on the principal authority's resources. The parish council was responsible for 64% of all parish council complaints during that financial year. It also recommended that the parish council promote "preventative and holistic measures such as mediation, training, and governance reviews as opposed to relying only on the complaints process".
- A councillor who expressed strong objections to a planning application in a consultation response before participating and voting on the application, despite being provided with advice, was found to have breached the authority's code of conduct. The councillor was to undergo training on the declaration of interests.
- Six councillors were found, after an independent investigation, to have breached the code's respect and disrepute provisions regarding their involvement in a controversial

WhatsApp group chat containing offensive messages, which could be considered discriminatory, which also led to a local MP being suspended from their party.

The investigator concluded that the councillors were acting in their official capacity whilst sending messages in the group as some of the correspondence related to council business and occurred during council meetings.

One councillor was also found to have breached the Code's by misusing council resources as they had participated in the group chat, including messages on council business and for political purposes, by using a council owned mobile phone.

One councillor was also found to have breached the code by failing to co-operate with the standards investigation.

A range of sanctions were imposed including censure, the publication of decision notices, removal from committees and training.

- Following a standards complaint investigation, where the investigator found evidence of potential disrepute and misuse of position through use of social media, a council has encouraged parish and town councils to ensure parish/town councillors are using social media responsibly, in accordance with guidance.

The case recognises that use of social media by public office holders can raise complex issues in terms of balancing the right of freedom of expression with the maintenance of high standards of conduct and public confidence.

<p><b>Resources</b> Localism Act 2011 and subordinate legislation. <a href="#">Ethics and Integrity Commission</a> Information published on <a href="http://www.gov.uk">www.gov.uk</a> and <a href="http://www.london.gov.uk">www.london.gov.uk</a> Local Government Lawyer website BBC news website</p>
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## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

### STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

13 March 2026

#### **Standards and Governance Committee Work Programme 2026/27**

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present to the Committee, for consideration and review, its forward Work Programme for 2026/2027.

#### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Committee previously agreed it would be helpful for the Committee to implement a forward Work Programme of its work, as far as this can be anticipated.
- 2.2 The Programme is a standing item on each scheduled ordinary meeting of the Committee and keeps track of matters that the Committee wishes to consider/review.

#### **3.0 WORK PROGRAMME**

- 3.1 A revised Work Programme for 2026/27 is attached at **Appendix 1** to this report for Members' consideration.
- 3.2 Changes made since the last Committee meeting:
- Inclusion of the extraordinary meeting convened on 11 February 2026;
  - Deferral of the item 'Protocol re Councillors' Use of Resources' to the June 2026 meeting;
  - Inclusion of a new standing item for each meeting, if required, regarding temporary appointments to parish councils by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer under his delegated powers;
  - Updating the dates of standing items for the Committee's meetings for the year.
- 3.3 Members are requested to review the Work Programme and determine whether they would wish to make any changes or include any other items.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

#### **6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no environmental/climate change implications arising from this report.

## **7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report

## **8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 That Members consider and review its Work Programme at **Appendix 1**.

BARRY KHAN

Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer

### Background Documents:

Standards and Governance Committee minutes

County Hall  
NORTHALLERTON

4 March 2026

**WORK PROGRAMME FOR STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 2026/27**

\* standing items for each scheduled ordinary meeting of the Committee

MEETING	AGENDA ITEM	REPORT REQUIRED	PROGRESS
<b>11 February 2026</b>	Draft Recommendations Following the First Phase of the 2025/26 Community Governance Review	Report by Monitoring Officer to present draft recommendations to the Committee for the second phase consultation on the 2025/26 Community Governance Reviews (CGR's), following the Stage 1 consultation.	Report presented to meeting.
	Government Response to Standards Regime Consultation	Report by Monitoring Officer to update Members on the consultation results and Government's response regarding the "Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England" consultation.	Report presented to meeting.
	Investigations Update	Report by Monitoring Officer to update the Committee regarding completed investigations since the last meeting.	Report presented to meeting.
	Dispensation requests	Urgent report by Monitoring Officer presenting various dispensation requests from Members.	Report presented to meeting.
<b>13 March 2026</b>	* Local Ethical Framework Developments	Standing report by Monitoring Officer regarding latest developments in national ethical framework.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	* Complaints Update	Standing report by Monitoring Officer in relation to complaints received of a potential breach of the relevant Members' Code of Conduct by Members and voting co-opted Members of North Yorkshire Council and town and parish councils in North Yorkshire.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	* Standards Bulletin	Standing report by Monitoring Officer presenting draft Standards Bulletin for approval for circulation.	Report to be presented to meeting.

MEETING	AGENDA ITEM	REPORT REQUIRED	PROGRESS
	* Work Programme for 2026/27	Report by Monitoring Officer setting out suggested draft programme of work for 2026/2027 for Members' consideration.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	* Standards Training Plan 2026/27	Standing report by Monitoring Officer in relation to standards training required for Members.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	<b>* If required:</b> Temporary Appointments to Parish Councils by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer.	An update report from the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer regarding any temporary appointments to parish/town councils made under delegated powers.	Report to be presented to meeting <b>if required.</b>
	Annual Report of the Standards and Governance Committee 2025/26	Report by Monitoring Officer presenting a draft Annual Report for 2025/26 for Members' consideration and approval.  To be presented to meeting of full Council on 20 May 2026.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	Council's approach to sensitive interests under the Localism Act 2011	Report by Monitoring Officer to review the Council's approach to sensitive interests under the Localism Act 2011.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	Dispensation Requests regarding Community Governance Review	Report by Monitoring Officer regarding dispensation requests from dual-hatted councillors.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	Dispensation Request from Councillor Dadd	Report by Monitoring Officer regarding dispensation request from Councillor Dadd.	Report to be presented to meeting.
<b>19 June 2026</b>	* Local Ethical Framework Developments	Standing report by Monitoring Officer regarding latest developments in national ethical framework.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	* Complaints Update	Standing report by Monitoring Officer in relation to complaints received of a potential breach of the relevant Members' Code of Conduct by Members and voting co-	Report to be presented to meeting.

MEETING	AGENDA ITEM	REPORT REQUIRED	PROGRESS
		opted Members of North Yorkshire Council and town and parish councils in North Yorkshire.	
	* Standards Bulletin	Standing report by Monitoring Officer presenting draft Standards Bulletin for approval for circulation.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	* Work Programme	Standing report by Monitoring Officer regarding the programme of work for 2026/27 for Members' review.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	* Standards Training Plan	Standing report by Monitoring Officer in relation to standards training required for Members.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	* <b>If required:</b> Temporary Appointments to Parish Councils by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer.	An update report from the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer regarding any temporary appointments to parish/town councils made under delegated powers.	Report to be presented to meeting <b>if required.</b>
	Members' Attendance at Committees	Periodic report from Head of Democratic Services and Scrutiny.  The report should record the number of attendance of Councillors at meetings of the Council and its Committees for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	Protocol re Councillors' Use of Resources	Report by Monitoring Officer presenting a draft Protocol re Councillors' Use of Resources, to assist Members.	Report to be presented to meeting.
16 September 2026	* Local Ethical Framework Developments	Standing report by Monitoring Officer regarding latest developments in national ethical framework.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	* Complaints Update	Standing report by Monitoring Officer in relation to complaints received of a potential breach of the relevant Members' Code of Conduct by Members and voting co-opted Members of North Yorkshire Council and town and parish councils in North Yorkshire.	Report to be presented to meeting.

MEETING	AGENDA ITEM	REPORT REQUIRED	PROGRESS
	* Standards Bulletin	Standing report by Monitoring Officer presenting draft Standards Bulletin for approval for circulation.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	* Work Programme	Standing report by Monitoring Officer regarding the programme of work for 2026/27 for Members' review.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	* Standards Training Plan	Standing report by Monitoring Officer in relation to standards training required for Members.	Report to be presented to meeting.
	* <b>If required:</b> Temporary Appointments to Parish Councils by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer.	An update report from the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer regarding any temporary appointments to parish/town councils made under delegated powers.	Report to be presented to meeting <b>if required.</b>

Matters to note

- **Leader and Chief Executive Officer to periodically attend the Committee.**
- **Independent Persons' terms of office**
  - At its meeting on 19 July 2023, full Council agreed to extend, for four years, the terms of office of the predecessor authority NYCC's two Independent Persons for Standards, Hilary Gilbertson MBE (resigned with effect from 27 August 2025), and Louise Holroyd (whose terms of office automatically continued post Vesting Day); and further approved the appointments, for four years, of Gillian Baker, Roy Martin (resigned with effect from 31 December 2024), James Nelson and Richinda Taylor as additional Independent Persons for Standards for North Yorkshire Council.
  - Full Council also delegated power to the Monitoring Officer to extend the Independent Persons' terms of office, in consultation with the Chair of the Standards and Governance Committee.
- **Protocol re Requests for Community Governance Reviews**
  - 15.9.23 – the Committee agreed the Protocol covering the period up to the scheduled May 2027 elections, setting out how the Council will respond to such requests. The Committee also granted authority to the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Corporate Services, to determine if requests for Community Governance Reviews should be treated as urgent and brought forward to the Standards and Governance Committee to recommend approval of terms of reference to the Council.
- **Community Governance Review**
  - 20.6.25 – Committee delegated the following powers to ACELDS:

- ❖ That if the LGBCE final recommendations have an impact on the terms of reference the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services be delegated authority to amend the terms of reference accordingly;
- ❖ That if further requests for a CGR from other parish areas come forward authority be delegated to the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services to consider whether the request should be incorporated in this CGR and the terms of reference amended accordingly.

- **Schedule of Election Fees for Elections and By-elections in North Yorkshire**

- 13.12.23 - The Committee agreed that the fee Schedule be amended in line with amendments made to the national indicative fee schedule in future years.

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