

East Herts Council Report

Leadership Team Meeting

Date of meeting: Wednesday 16 July 2025

Report by: James Ellis – Director for Legal, Policy and Governance

Report title: Standards Committee

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

Summary – The report updates Members of the Committee on standards issues generally.

RECOMMENDATION that:

- a) That the Committee receive the report and provide any observations to the Director for Legal, Policy and Governance and Monitoring Officer.**

1.0 Proposal(s)

- 1.1 As above

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Within its terms of reference, the Standards Committee has a function “to promote and maintain high standards of conduct of Members and Co-opted Members of the Council” and “to receive reports from the Monitoring Officer and assess the operation and effectiveness of the Members’ Code of Conduct”.
- 2.2 Paragraph 7.5.1 of the Constitution also states that “The Monitoring Officer will present a general report on standards matters at each Committee meeting, updating the Committee on the workload of the Monitoring Officer and current standards issues”.

2.3 The Committee will therefore receive update reports from the Monitoring Officer on matters that relate to, or assist to govern, Member conduct.

East Herts complaints/ issues update

2.4 There has only been one complaint made to the Monitoring Officer since the last report to the Standards Committee on 28 January 2025, which is as follows:

Complaint about: Parish/Town or District Councillor	Summary of complaint	Action taken
Complaint 01/2025 Complaint against District Councillor	Inappropriate social media post	No breach found.

3.0 Reason(s)

3.1 To ensure good governance within the Council.

4.0 Options

4.1 Not providing updates to Members on standards issues. This option is NOT RECOMMENDED, as to do so would weaken the Committee's ability to adequately promote and maintain the Ethical Standards Framework, and to maintain an oversight of the council's arrangements for dealing with complaints.

5.0 Risks

5.1 Appropriate reporting processes and policy frameworks help to ensure good governance of the Council and therefore reduce risk of poor practice or unsafe decision making.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

6.1 None

Community Safety

No – None in this report.

Data Protection

No – All information pertaining to the complainants, Councillors complained of, and the Parish and Town Council involved have been removed to maintain confidentiality, other than the matter that progressed to a Standards Sub-Committee meeting, which was held in public and there is in the public domain.

Equalities

Yes - Where complainants make it known that they require assistance in making their complaints e.g. with language issues, the Monitoring Officer took additional steps to assist them in this regard.

Environmental Sustainability

No – There are no environmental implications to this report.

Financial

No – There are no capital or revenue implications arising from the content of this report. Complaints are dealt with by the Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer, with some referrals externally should the Procedure indicate that this is appropriate or because of resource implication within the Directorate in dealing with this in-house.

Health and Safety

No – None in this report.

Human Resources

No – The work outlined within the report is within the caseload of the Monitoring Officer. Implications are otherwise touched on under financial implications above.

Human Rights

No

Legal

Yes – The Standards Committee has a function under paragraph 7.4.1(a) and (f) to promote and maintain high standards of conduct of Members and Co-opted Members of the Council and receive reports from the Monitoring Officer and assess the operation and effectiveness of the Members' Code of Conduct.

Specific Wards

No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 None

Contact Officer

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