

To Members of the Grievance & Standards Committee

Cllr. Maggie Wright (Chairman)
Cllr. Lee Breckon (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr. Nick Brown

Cllr. Mike Shirley

Cllr. Paul Hartshorn

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **GRIEVANCE & STANDARDS COMMITTEE** will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Narborough on **THURSDAY, 6 MARCH 2025 at 5.30 p.m.** for the transaction of the following business and your attendance is requested.

Yours faithfully



Gemma Dennis
Corporate Services Group Manager



AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Disclosures of interest from Members

To receive disclosures of interests from Members (i.e. the existence and the nature of those interests in respect of items on this agenda).

3. Review of Code of Conduct complaint procedure and Guidance Notes (Pages 3 - 60)

To consider the report of the Corporate Services Group Manager and Monitoring Officer (enclosed).

4. Cases and Work Update (Pages 61 - 70)

To consider the report of the Corporate Services Group Manager and Monitoring Officer (enclosed).

Blaby District Council
Grievance & Standards Committee

Date of Meeting 6 March 2025
Title of Report **Review of Code of Conduct complaint procedure and guidance notes**
Report Author Corporate Services Group Manager & Monitoring Officer

1. What is this report about?

- 1.1 It is best practice to review the Code of Conduct complaint procedure and guidance at regular intervals to ensure it remains fit for purpose. Officers have reviewed the existing procedure and guidance notes and have produced an updated draft document. The Committee's views are sought on the proposed changes to the document.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Grievance and Standards Committee consider and discuss the draft Code of Conduct complaint procedure and guidance notes.
- 2.2 That the Grievance and Standards Committee give officers a clear mandate to move forward with the revisions to the Code of Conduct complaint procedure and guidance notes.

3. Reason for Decision(s) Recommended

- 3.1 To enable officers to update the Code of Conduct complaint procedure and guidance notes to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

4. Matters to consider

- 4.1 Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 requires authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by elected councillors and co-opted members. Under section 28(6) the Council must also have in place arrangements under which allegations can be investigated and decisions on allegations can be made. Code of Conduct complaints received by the Monitoring Officer are dealt with in accordance with the Council's approved arrangements for dealing with such complaints in accordance with the Act.

The Council's Code of Conduct complaint procedure and guidance notes were produced in 2014. Whilst the guidance remains factually correct, it is considered by officers that more detail could be provided to give guidance and support to both those considering submitting a complaint and also to Councillors against whom a complaint is made.

It is vital that the public has confidence in the high standards of local government and that there is transparency about the conduct of councillors and mechanisms for dealing with alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct. Equally it is vital that councillors themselves have confidence in these mechanisms, and that investigations into such complaints abide by the principles of natural justice.

4.2 Proposal(s)

Officers have reviewed the LGA Guidance on Member Model Code of Conduct Complaints Handling and produced the draft guidance at Appendix 2 which is proposed would replace the existing guidance notes.

The revised guidance notes provide more information regarding:

- How to make a complaint
- The process undertaken by the Monitoring Officer in reviewing a complaint and the various options available by way of resolution
- The Hearing process
- Sanctions available to the Standards Committee
- The role of the Independent Person

4.3 Relevant Consultations

None.

4.4 Significant Issues

4.5 All complaints are considered with reference to the Council's Equality Duty. In preparing this report, the author has also considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Public Health Inequalities and there are no areas of concern.

5. **Environmental impact**

5.1 No Net Zero and Climate Impact Assessment (NZCIA) is required for this report.

6. **What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?**

6.1 There are no direct financial implications. The Independent Person roles are funded through existing budgets.

7. **What are the risks and how can they be reduced?**

7.1 None identified

8. Other options considered

- 8.1 Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 requires authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by elected councillors and co-opted members. Under section 28(6) the Council must also have in place arrangements under which allegations can be investigated and decisions on allegations can be made. Code of Conduct complaints received by the Monitoring Officer are dealt with in accordance with the Council's approved arrangements for dealing with such complaints in accordance with the Act.

9. Appendix

- 9.1 Appendix A – Current Code of Conduct complaint procedure and guidance notes
- 9.2 Appendix B – Proposed new Code of Conduct complaint procedure and guidance notes

10. Background paper(s)

- 10.1 None

11. Report author's contact details

Gemma Dennis	Group Manager Corporate Services & Monitoring Officer
Gemma.dennis@blaby.gov.uk	0116 2727716

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Guidance note for Complaints regarding Alleged Breaches of the Member's Code of Conduct (Standards Complaint)

Can your complaint be resolved informally?

It is advisable to speak to the Monitoring Officer (or the relevant Parish Clerk) in the first instance in all cases as there may well be a more informal approach that can be followed.

Also if you are not clear on what grounds your complaint can be considered contacting the Monitoring Officer or the Parish Clerk may help to clarify the process for you.

Are you using the correct form?

The points listed below will help you decide whether this is the correct form to use when making your complaint.

Your complaint must be about conduct that occurred while the member(s) complained about held office. Conduct of an individual before they were elected, co-opted or appointed as a Councillor to the authority, or after they have resigned or otherwise ceased to be a member, cannot be considered.

Your complaint must be about one or more named members of the following local authorities:

Blaby District Council

Parish/Town Councils

Blaby Parish Council
Braunstone Town Council
Cosby Parish Council
Countesthorpe Parish Council
Croft Parish Council
Elmesthorpe Parish Council
Enderby Parish Council
Glen Parva Parish Council
Glenfield Parish Council

Huncote Parish Council
Kirby Muxloe Parish Council
Leicester Forest East Parish Council
Lubbesthorpe Parish Council
Narborough Parish Council
Sapcote Parish Council
Sharnford Parish Council
Stoney Stanton Parish Council
Thurlaston Parish Council
Whetstone Parish Council

Your complaint must be that the member(s) has, or may have, breached the Code of Conduct. A copy of the Blaby District Council Code of Conduct is available on the Council website. Parish Council Codes of Conduct are available from the relevant Parish/Town Council Clerk.

You may also contact the Monitoring Officer if you require further information. Complaints about dissatisfaction with a decision or action of the Council or one of its committees, a service provided by the Council or the Council's procedures do not fall within the jurisdiction of a standards complaint. Complaints about the actions of people employed by the Council also do not fall within the jurisdiction of the standards complaint process.

Your complaint must be in writing. If a disability prevents you from making your complaint in writing you may contact the Monitoring Officer for assistance.

It is important to note that not all complaints received will be referred for investigation or other action. The Monitoring Officer will decide whether this is appropriate. If the Monitoring Officer decides not to refer your complaint for investigation or other action he will give you the reasons for this decision.

How should I set out my complaint?

It is very important that you set your complaint out fully and clearly, and provide all the information at the outset. You should also provide any documents or other material that you wish to be considered.

The Council recommends that you use the complaint form or provide a covering note summarising what you are complaining about, especially if your complaint includes a lot of supporting documentation. In the summary you should tell us exactly what each person you are complaining about said or did that has caused you to complain. If you are sending supporting documentation please cross-reference it against the summary of your complaint.

You should be as detailed as possible and substantiate your complaint where you can. Although you are not required to prove your complaint at this stage of proceedings, you do have to demonstrate that you have reasonable grounds for believing that the member(s) complained about has breached the Code of Conduct.

What happens once you submit your complaint?

When you submit your complaint the Council will write to you to let you know it has been received.

The Monitoring Officer has the discretion to take the administrative step of acknowledging receipt of the complaint and telling the subject member that a complaint has been made about them.

The Monitoring Officer will consider your complaint and decide whether it should be referred for investigation or other action. This will normally happen within an average of 20 working days from the date the Council receives your complaint, however, in some cases, the Monitoring Officer may decide to ask for an independent opinion. This will normally take longer, however the Monitoring Officer will keep you informed if this is the case.

Once the Monitoring Officer has considered the case, you will be notified if any further action is appropriate.

The Monitoring Officer will either close the case, or prepare a report to be taken before the Standards Committee for their consideration. As the Standards Committee only meet 6 to 7 times each year, there might be a delay between the Monitoring Officer's consideration and the Standards Committee decision, although this will not normally be greater than three months. If the complaint is taken to the Standards Committee, you will be informed of the date when the committee will make their consideration.

A decision notice will be issued to you once the Monitoring Officer or the Standards Committee have made their decision.

How to fill in your complaint form.

Section 1 - Who is your complaint about?

In order to help us focus your request we need to know if your complaint is about a District or Parish/Town Councillor, and where they are a member.

Section 2 and 3 - About you

Your address and contact details will not usually be released unless it is necessary in dealing with your complaint.

The following may be informed of your details as part of the complaints investigation process:

- The Monitoring Officer of the District Council
- The Parish Clerk (if applicable)
- Dependent upon the decision, the member (s) you are complaining about.

We will give your name and a summary of your complaint. We will give them full details of your complaint where it is necessary or appropriate.

If you have serious concerns about your name and a summary, or details of your complaint being released, please see section 6 - Confidentiality.

Section 4 and 5 – Your complaint

These sections are vital to enable the Monitoring Officer to be able to investigate your complaint as efficiently as possible. Please ensure you have the correct names and details of the Member (s) you are complaining about.

Should you need to please use separate sheets to continue your complaint, please write your name on the sheets to ensure they do not get separated from your main complaint form.

If you are complaining about more than one member you should clearly explain what each individual has done which you believe breaches the Code of Conduct.

It is important that you provide all the information you wish to have taken in to account by the Monitoring Officer when he decides whether to take any action on your complaint. For example:

- You should be specific, wherever possible, about exactly what you are alleging the member said or did. For instance, instead of writing that the member insulted you, you should state what it was they said.
- You should provide the dates of the alleged incidents wherever possible. If you cannot provide exact dates it is important to give a general timeframe.
- You should explain where there are any witnesses to the alleged conduct and provide their names and contact details if available.
- You should provide any relevant background information.

Section 6 – Confidentiality

During the initial assessment phase the Council will not normally inform the member (s) who have been complained about. If the Monitoring Officer decides that no action should be taken then again the Council may feel that your identity should be kept confidential.

If, however, the Monitoring Officer has decided that some other form of action should be taken e.g. that the matter be referred for investigation then, in the interests of fairness and natural justice, the Council believes that Members who are complained about have the right to know who has made the complaint.

The Council also believes they have the right to be provided with a summary of the complaint. In these circumstances the Council is unlikely to withhold the details of your complaint unless you have a good reason for example:

- You have reasonable grounds for believing that you would be at risk of physical harm.
- You are an officer who fears the consequences for your employment.

- You would suffer medical risks.

Please note that requests for confidentiality or requests for suppression of complaints will not automatically be granted. The Monitoring Officer will consider the request alongside the substance of your complaint. The Council will then contact you with the decision, if your request for confidentiality is not granted, you will usually be allowed the option of withdrawing your complaint.

However, it is important to understand that in certain exceptional circumstances where the matter complained about is very serious, the Council can proceed with an investigation or other action and disclose your name even if you have expressly asked us not to.

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Complaints Form - Alleged Breaches of the Members Code of Conduct

Introduction

You can complain to the Council's Monitoring Officer that a Councillor has not observed the statutory Code of Conduct for Members.

When making a complaint relating to the Code of Conduct the complaint must state why you think a District Councillor, or a Councillor of a Parish/Town Council has not followed the Code of Conduct.

The Monitoring Officer can only deal with complaints about the behaviour of a member of the District Council or a member of one of the Parish or Town Council's within Blaby District. He will not deal with complaints about matters that are not covered by the Councillors' Code of Conduct such as standards of Council service. The Monitoring Officer can decide to refer complaints to the Council's Standards Committee.

If you wish to make a complaint about a Blaby District Council service, please refer to the Council's own complaint form which is available online, on request or from the Council Offices. In the case of a complaint about a Parish/Town Council service please contact the Parish/Town Council Clerk.

For further details of the bodies covered and information on making your complaint please refer to the 'Councillor Complaint Guidance Notes' (available on the Councils website).

Before making a complaint, it is advisable to contact the Monitoring Officer or the relevant Parish Clerk as they may be able to assist you in understanding what issues are covered by the Code or where matters may be dealt with more informally.

Please note Members is another name for Councillors and includes co-opted Members.

1. Who is your complaint about?

Please tick one.

☐

District Councillor

☐

Parish/Town Councillor

Name of the Authority, (Parish or Town Council):

2. About you

Title	
First Name	
Last Name	
Address	
Daytime Telephone	
Mobile Telephone	
Email Address	

3. Which best describes you?

Please tick one.

Member of the public	
An elected or co-opted member of an authority	
An independent member of the Standards Committee	
Member of Parliament	
Local Authority Monitoring Officer	
Other Council Officer or Authority employee	

4. Name of the Member(s) your complaint relates to:

Title	First Name	Last Name	Authority Name

5. Details of your complaint

For help on completing this section please refer to the 'Councillor Complaint Guidance Notes' (available on the Councils website), continue on to a separate sheet if necessary.

6. Confidentiality

Only complete this section if you are requesting that your identity or details of your complaint be kept confidential – for an explanation please refer to the ‘Councillor Complaint Guidance Notes’ (available on the Councils website) pages 4 and 5.

Please provide us with details of why you believe we should withhold your name and/or the details of your complaint.

7. Additional Help

If you need any support in completing this form, please let us know as soon as possible. You should initially contact the Council’s Monitoring Officer (whose contact details are given below) who will try to arrange appropriate assistance for you.

The Council can make reasonable adjustments to assist you if you have a disability that prevents you from making your complaint in writing.

The Council can also help if English is not your first language.

Signed:

Dated:

This form once completed should be sent in an envelope marked “Code Complaint - Confidential” along with any supporting documents, to the address below or email monitoring@blaby.gov.uk:

The Monitoring Officer
Blaby District Council
Council Offices
Narborough
Leicester
LE19 2EP
Telephone: 0116 272 7636

Privacy Notice

Blaby District Council (BDC) is the data controller collecting this personal information from you. BDC can be contacted by telephone on 0116 275 0555 or email customer.services@blaby.gov.uk

Council Service	Complaints about Councillors
The information we are collecting from you	Name, address, contact information, details of your complaint which may include information about you.
Why we use it	To consider your complaint regarding a Member of the Council or a Parish Council for alleged breach of the Member's Code of Conduct.
Why we are allowed to use your information	We are allowed to use your information because it is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest, or so that we can undertake our official duties relating to the Members Code of Conduct set out in the Local Government Act 2000.
Who we may share it with	Information may be shared with independent persons (external individuals appointed to investigate complaints) or the police as part of investigations, the relevant Parish Clerk and Blaby District Councils Monitoring Officer. We may also share your information with other regulatory or law enforcement bodies where it is lawful to do so.

We do not use computers to make any decisions about you, and we do not send your information to other countries.

How long we keep your information, depends on why we need it, but we will only keep information for as long as there is a legal or business need for us to do so. You can find out how long we keep information for in our Records Retention Schedule available on the Council's website.

You have a number of legal rights in respect of your personal data which are: the right to be informed about how it is being used and why; the right the right of access to it to check that we are acting lawfully and, in some cases, the right to rectify it or to have it erased; the right to restrict our processing of it; the right of data portability; and the right to object to automated decision taking.

Contact us

If you have any questions about the way in which Blaby District Council handles your personal information, or want to raise a concern, you may contact:

Name: Louisa Horton, Data Protection Officer
Telephone: 0116 275 0555
Email: gdpr@blaby.gov.uk

You can also contact the Information Commissioner's Office (The ICO) to find out more about your rights as a data subject (a person that we hold personal data about) if you think there is a problem by email to casework@ico.org.uk or by telephone on 0303 123 1113. You can also visit the ICO's website www.ico.org.uk

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Blaby District Council

Councillor Complaints Procedure.

Arrangements for dealing with standards allegations under the Localism Act 2011

1. Introduction

These “Arrangements” set out how you may make a complaint that an elected or co-opted member of Blaby District Council, or of a parish council within the District, has failed to comply with the authority’s Code of Conduct, and sets out how the Council will deal with allegations of a failure to comply with the authority’s Code of Conduct.

Under Section 28(6) and (7) of the Localism Act 2011, the Council must have in place “arrangements” under which allegations that a member or co-opted member of the authority or of a parish council within its area has failed to comply with that authority’s Code of Conduct can be investigated and decisions made on such allegations.

Such arrangements must provide for the Council to appoint at least one Independent Person, whose views must be sought by the authority before it takes a decision on an allegation which it has decided shall be investigated, and whose views can be sought by the authority at any other stage, or by the member against whom an allegation has been made.

2. The Code of Conduct

The Council has adopted a Code of Conduct for members, which is attached as Appendix 1 to these arrangements and available for inspection on the authority’s website.

Each parish council is also required to adopt a Code of Conduct. If you wish to inspect a Parish Council’s Code of Conduct, you should inspect any website operated by the parish council or contact the parish clerk and ask for a copy of the Parish Council’s Code of Conduct.

3. Making a complaint

If you wish to make a complaint, please write to:

The Monitoring Officer

Blaby District Council

Desford Road

Narborough

LE19 2EP

Or email monitoring@blaby.gov.uk

The Monitoring Officer is a senior officer of the authority who has statutory responsibility for maintaining the register of members' interests and who is responsible for administering the system in respect of complaints of member misconduct. In order to ensure that we have all the information which we need to be able to process your complaint, please complete and send us the complaint form, which can be found on the District Council's website, or obtained from the Monitoring Officer. If you decide not to use the complaint form, you must still provide the Monitoring Officer with all of the information requested within it, otherwise the Monitoring Officer will not be able to consider your complaint.

Please provide us with your name and a contact address or email address, so that we can acknowledge receipt of your complaint and keep you informed of its progress. If you want to keep your name and address confidential, please indicate this in the space provided on the complaint form together with the reason why you feel your identity should not be disclosed. It must be noted that only in exceptional cases will it be possible not to disclose your identity. The authority does not normally investigate anonymous complaints, unless there is a clear public interest in doing so.

The Monitoring Officer will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 10 working days of receiving it, and will keep you informed of the progress of your complaint. The Monitoring Officer will also normally inform the member who is subject of the complaint and invite their initial response at this stage. A copy of the complaint will be sent to the member for their consideration.

Parish Councils as employers should have processes in place to ensure the fair and proper treatment of staff. Complaints about the conduct of a Parish Councillor towards a clerk should be made by the chair or by the Parish Council as a whole, rather than the clerk in all but exceptional circumstances.

4. Will your complaint be investigated?

The Monitoring Officer will review every complaint received against the initial tests as set out in the Public Interest Test which can be found at Appendix 2. If the initial test is met and after consultation with the Independent Person, the Monitoring Officer will take a decision as to whether it merits formal investigation. The Monitoring Officer may form the view that the complaint is unlikely to reach a firm conclusion as there is no independent, corroborative evidence. This decision will normally be taken within 14 working days of receipt of your complaint, timescales may differ depending on the complexity of the complaint.

Where the Monitoring Officer has taken a decision, they will inform you of their decision and the reasons for that decision. Where the Monitoring Officer requires additional information in order to come to a decision, they may come back to you for such information, and may request information from the member against whom your complaint is directed. Where your complaint relates to a Parish Councillor, the Monitoring Officer will normally also inform the Parish Council of your complaint.

Wherever possible, the Monitoring Officer will seek to resolve the complaint informally, without the need for a formal investigation. Such informal resolution may involve the member accepting that his/her conduct was unacceptable and offering an apology, or other remedial action by the authority. Where the member or the authority make a reasonable offer of local resolution, but you are not willing to accept that offer, the Monitoring Officer will take account of this in deciding whether the complaint merits formal investigation or if it should be reported to the Standards Committee.

If the Monitoring Officer is satisfied that the complaint will if proven constitute a breach of the code but that formal investigation is not in the public interest, they may decide against a formal investigation. The Monitoring Officer may report the complaint to the Standards committee for information. The subject member may be named if the Monitoring Office is satisfied that the complaint if proven would potentially be a breach of the code. Where the Monitoring Officer is satisfied that the complaint would not be proven, the Subject Member will not be identified by name.

If your complaint identifies criminal conduct or breach of other regulation by any person, the Monitoring Officer has the power to call in the Police and other regulatory agencies.

5. How is the investigation conducted?

If the Monitoring Officer decides that a complaint merits formal investigation, they will appoint an Investigating Officer, who may be another senior officer of the authority, an officer of another authority or an external investigator. The Investigating Officer will decide whether they need to meet or speak to you to understand the nature of your complaint and so that you can explain your understanding of events and suggest what documents the Investigating Officer needs to see, and who the Investigating Officer needs to interview. The complaint may also be referred if the Monitoring Officer considers that they have a conflict of interest in dealing with the complaint.

The Investigating Officer would normally write to the member against whom you have complained and provide him/her with a copy of your complaint, and ask the member to provide his/her explanation of events, and to identify what documents s/he needs to see and who s/he needs to interview. In exceptional cases, where it is appropriate to keep your identity confidential or disclosure of details of the complaint to the member might prejudice the investigation, the Monitoring Officer can delete your name and address from the papers given to the member, or delay notifying the member until the investigation has progressed sufficiently.

At the end of his/her investigation, the Investigating Officer will produce a draft report and will send copies of that draft report, in confidence, to you and to the member concerned, to give you both an opportunity to identify any matter in that draft report which you disagree with or which you consider requires more consideration. Having received and taken account of any comments which you may make on the draft report, the Investigating Officer will send his/her final report to the Monitoring Officer.

6. What happens if the Investigating Officer concludes that there is no evidence of a failure to comply with the code of conduct?

The Monitoring Officer will review the Investigating Officer's report and, if they are satisfied that the Investigating Officer's report is sufficient, the Monitoring Officer will write to you and to the member concerned, and if appropriate to the Parish Council where the complaint relates to a Parish Councillor, notifying you that s/he is satisfied that no further action is required, and give you both a copy of the Investigating Officer's final report. If the Monitoring Officer is not satisfied that the investigation has been conducted properly, he may ask the Investigating Officer to reconsider his/her report. The Monitoring Officer will consult the Independent Person before making any decision following the investigation.

6.1 Local Resolution

The Monitoring Officer may consider that the matter can reasonably be resolved without the need for a hearing to formally determine whether a breach had in fact been committed. In such a case, he/she will consult with the Independent Person and with you as complainant and seek to agree what you consider to be a fair resolution which also helps to ensure higher standards of conduct for the future. Such resolution may include the member accepting that his/her conduct was unacceptable and offering an apology, and/or other remedial action by the authority. If the member complies with the suggested resolution, the Monitoring Officer will report the matter to the Standards Committee, and the Parish Council where applicable, for information, but will take no further action. However, if you tell the Monitoring Officer that any suggested resolution would not be adequate, the Monitoring Officer may refer the matter to the Standards Committee for information where it is considered that a hearing is not in the Public Interest. This may include identification of the Subject member.

6.2 Local Hearing

If the Monitoring Officer considers that local resolution is not appropriate, or you are not satisfied by the proposed resolution, or the member concerned is not prepared to undertake any proposed remedial action, such as giving an apology, then the Monitoring Officer will report the Investigating Officer's report to the Standards Committee which will conduct a hearing before deciding whether the member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct and, if so, whether to take any action in respect of the member.

The Monitoring Officer will conduct a "pre-hearing process", requiring the member to give his/her response to the Investigating Officer's report, in order to identify what is likely to be agreed and what is likely to be in contention at the hearing, and the Chairman of the Standards Committee may explain and give guidance as to the manner in which the hearing will be conducted. At the hearing, the Investigating Officer will present his/her report and may call such witnesses as he/she considers necessary and make representations to substantiate his/her conclusion that the member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct. For this purpose, the Investigating Officer may ask you as the complainant to attend and give evidence to the Standards Committee. The member will then have an opportunity to give his/her evidence, to call witnesses and to make representations as to why he/she considers that he/she did not fail to comply with the Code of Conduct.

If the Standards Committee, with the benefit of any advice from the Independent Person, concludes that the member did not fail to comply with the Code of Conduct, it will dismiss the complaint. If the Standards Committee concludes that the member did fail to comply with the Code of Conduct, the Chairman will inform the member of this finding and the Committee will then consider what action, if any, it should take as a result of the member's failure to comply with the Code of Conduct. In doing this, the Standards Committee will give the member an opportunity to make representations to the Committee and will consult the Independent Person, but will then decide what action, if any, to take in respect of the matter.

7. What actions can the Hearings Standards Committee take where a member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct?

The Council has delegated to the Standards Committee such of its powers to take action in respect of individual members as may be necessary to promote and maintain high standards of conduct.

Accordingly the Committee may –

1. Publish its findings in respect of the member's conduct;
2. Report its findings to Council (or to the relevant Parish Council) for information;
3. Recommend to the member's Group Leader (or in the case of un-grouped members, recommend to Council or to Committees) that he/she be removed from any or all Committees or Sub-Committees of the Council;
4. Recommend to the Leader of the Council that the member be removed from the Cabinet, or removed from particular Portfolio responsibilities;
5. Instruct the Monitoring Officer to (or recommend that the Parish Council) arrange training for the member;
6. Recommend to full Council (or recommend to the Parish Council) that the member be removed) from all outside appointments to which he/she has been appointed or nominated by the authority (or by the Parish Council);
7. Withdraw (or recommend to the Parish Council that it withdraws) facilities provided to the member by the Council, such as a computer, website and/or email and Internet access; or
8. Exclude (or recommend that the Parish Council exclude) the member from the Council's offices or other premises, with the exception of meeting rooms as necessary for attending Council, Committee and Sub-Committee meetings.

There is no power to suspend or disqualify the member or to withdraw a member's basic or special responsibility allowance.

Where the recommended action in respect of items 3, 7 or 8 above relates to a Group Leader the final decision shall be referred to full Council.

8. What happens at the end of the hearing?

At the end of the hearing, the Chairman will state the decision of the Standards Committee as to whether the member failed to comply with the Code of Conduct and as to any actions which the Committee resolves to take.

As soon as reasonably practicable thereafter, the Monitoring Officer shall prepare a formal decision notice in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, and send a copy to you, to the member (and to the Parish Council where applicable), and make that decision notice available for public inspection on the Council's website.

9. What is an Independent Person?

The Independent Person is a person who has applied for the post following advertisement of a vacancy for the post, and is appointed by a positive vote from a majority of all the members of Council. There are a number of statutory restrictions on eligibility for this role to ensure that the post-holder has no close associations with the Council and is therefore truly independent. They are not a member of the Standards Committee but they must be consulted by the Monitoring Officer prior to any decisions or findings on alleged breaches of the Code and may be consulted at other stages of the complaints process.

The Independent Person may also be consulted by a member who is the subject of a complaint under this procedure. Any such consultation shall be arranged through the Monitoring Officer and the subject member will be advised by the Monitoring Officer as to the procedure for doing so at the relevant time.

The Independent Person is invited to attend all meetings of the Standards Committee when a decision is being taken on whether the member's conduct constitutes a failure to comply with the Code of conduct or on any action to be taken following a finding of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct. His/her views will be sought and taken into consideration before any decision is taken on these matters.

The Standards Committee may also contain non-councillor or parish council members who may attend and participate in discussions at meetings of the full Committee but they are not entitled to vote on any matter under discussion.

10. Revision of these arrangements

The Council may by resolution agree to amend these arrangements, and has delegated to the Chairman of the Standards Committee the right to depart from these arrangements where he/she considers that it is expedient to do so in order to secure the effective and fair consideration of any matter.

11. Appeals

There is no right of appeal for you as complainant or for the member against a decision of the Monitoring Officer or of the Standards Committee. If you feel that the authority has failed to deal with your complaint properly, you may make a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

12. Appendices

1. Appendix One Blaby District Council's Code of Conduct
2. Appendix Two Criteria for referral of cases to the full Standards Committee
3. Appendix Three Vexatious Persons Policy

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Blaby District Council Member Code of Conduct

BACKGROUND TO THIS CODE OF CONDUCT

This section sets out general interpretation and background to the Code of Conduct, including definitions used within the code, the purpose of the code, the principles the code is based on and when the code applies. It does not form part of the Code of Conduct itself and consequently does not contain any obligations for you to follow, as these are contained in the 'Code of Conduct' section below.

All councils are required to have a local Member Code of Conduct.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a “member” means a member or co-opted member of Blaby District Council (‘the Council’).

A “co-opted member” is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as “a person who is not a member of the authority but who

- a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;
- b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint subcommittee of the authority;

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee”.

Purpose of the Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a member, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow members, Council officers and the reputation of the council and local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all members and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of member and local government.

General principles of member conduct

Everyone in public office at all levels; i.e. all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, members and council officers; should uphold the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#), also known as the Nolan Principles, which are set out in Appendix A.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of member and these principles underpin the obligations in the Code of Conduct that follows.

In accordance with the public trust placed in you, you should:

- act with integrity and honesty
- act lawfully
- treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of member.

In undertaking your role you should:

- impartially exercise your responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- avoid conflicts of interest
- exercise reasonable care and diligence;
- ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with your Council's requirements and in the public interest; and
- uphold high standards of conduct, show leadership at all times and not misuse your position when acting as a member

Application of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to you as a member or co-opted member of the Council. It applies as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of the office of member or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a member.

This Code of Conduct applies to you when you:

- act in your capacity as a member or co-opted member of the Council; and
- conduct the business of the Council (which, in this Code, includes the business of the office to which you are elected or appointed).

Where you act as a representative of the Council:

- on another relevant authority, you must, when acting for that other authority, comply with that other authority's code of conduct; or
- on any other body, you must, when acting for that other body, comply with this Code of Conduct, except insofar as it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.

The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct. It is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code and to ensure all its obligations are met. You are encouraged to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct which you are unsure of. [Town and parish members are encouraged to seek advice from their Clerk (who may refer matters to the Monitoring Officer).]

THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Standards of member conduct

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a member. Should your conduct be perceived to fall short of these standards or the Nolan Principles, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

General Conduct

1. Respect

As a member:

1.1 I will treat others with respect.

1.2 I will treat council officers, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the council with respect and respect the role they play.

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a member, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in members.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and notify them to the Council, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow members, where action could then be taken under the Member Code of Conduct, and council officers where concerns should be raised in line with the council's member-officer protocol.

2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination

As a member:

2.1 I will not bully any person.

2.2 I will not harass any person.

2.3 I will promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Members have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the Council's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

3. Impartiality of officers of the Council

As a member:

3.1 I will not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the council.

Officers work for the council as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they are political assistants). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

4. Confidentiality and access to information

As a member:

4.1 I will not disclose information:

- a. given to me in confidence by anyone**
- b. acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless**
 - i. I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;**

- ii. **I am required by law to do so;**
- iii. **the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or**
- iv. **the disclosure is:**
 - 1. **reasonable and in the public interest; and**
 - 2. **made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the Council; and**
 - 3. **I have consulted the [Monitoring Officer] prior to its release.**

4.2 I will not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a member for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.

4.3 I will not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.

Local authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the council must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

5. Disrepute

As a member:

5.1 I will not bring my role or Council into disrepute or conduct myself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing my role or Council into disrepute.

As a Member, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other members and/or the Council and may lower the public's confidence in your or the Council's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring the Council into disrepute.

You are able to hold the Council and fellow members to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the Council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

6. Use of position

As a member:

- 6.1 I will not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.**
- 6.2 I will not place myself under a financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence me in the performance of my official duties.**

Your position as a member of the Council provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

As a member you need to be able to act impartially in the exercise of your responsibilities and ensure that you make decisions in the interests of the local community. You should therefore avoid any financial or other obligations to outside individuals or organisations whose influence may prevent you from acting impartially.

7. Use of Council resources and facilities

As a member:

- 7.1 I will not misuse council resources.**
- 7.2 I will, when using the resources of the Council or authorising their use by others:**
 - a. act in accordance with the Council's requirements; and**
 - b. ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the Council or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.**

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the Council to assist you in carrying out your duties as a member.

Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones, ipads, dongles computers etc.
- transport
- access and use of council buildings and rooms.

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a member more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the council's own policies regarding their use.

8. Making decisions

As a member:

- 8.1 When reaching decisions on any matter I will have regard to any relevant advice provided to me by officers and professional third parties.**
- 8.2 I will give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed.**
- 8.3 I will make all choices, such as making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits, on individual and independent merit**
- 8.4 I will be as open as possible about my decisions and actions and the decisions and actions of the authority and will be prepared to give reasons for those decisions and actions, notwithstanding my other obligations under this Code.**

To assist members in acting lawfully, officers may give advice from time to time. It is important that as a member you have due regard to any such advice given and consider it fully, even if (for good reason) you may choose not to follow that advice.

In making any decisions, giving reasons helps instil public confidence in the role of the member and can be a legal requirement in certain situations. You should ensure that you always give reasons in accordance with any specific requirements and having regard to the benefits of transparency generally.

As a member you must act impartially and not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person. It is therefore important that when you are making decisions that involve choosing one party over another, that you do so based on independent merit. You should be open and transparent about the decisions that you have made and the actions of the authority.

9. Complying with the Code of Conduct

As a Member:

- 9.1 I will undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my Council.**
- 9.2 I will cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.**

9.3 I will not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.

9.4 I will comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.

It is extremely important for you as a member to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the Council or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the council's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with the Monitoring Officer.

Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the Council

10. Interests

As a member:

10.1 I will register and disclose my interests in accordance with the provisions set out in Appendix B

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the authority.

You need to register your interests so that the public, Council employees and fellow members know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other members when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as defined in Appendix B, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

The provisions of this paragraph 10.1 shall be applied in such a manner as to recognise that this Code of Conduct should not obstruct a member's service on more than one local authority. For the avoidance of doubt, participation in discussion and decision-making at one local authority will not by itself normally prevent you from taking part in discussion and decision-making on the same matter at another local authority. This is on the basis that a reasonable member of the public will see no objection in principle to such service or regard it as prejudicing a member's judgement of the public interest and will only regard a matter as giving rise to an interest which might lead to bias in exceptional circumstances.

Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, or from the clerk in the case of town and parish councils.

11. Gifts and hospitality

As a member:

- 11.1 I will not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the Council or from persons who may apply to the Council for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.**
- 11.2 I will register with the [Monitoring Officer] any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.**
- 11.3 I will register with the [Monitoring Officer] any significant gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 that I have been offered but have refused to accept.**

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the Council, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a member. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a member, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a member. If you are unsure, do contact the Monitoring Officer or Clerk for guidance.

12. Dispensations

As a member:

- 12.1 I may request a dispensation from the [Monitoring Officer] for one meeting only.**
- 12.2 I must make the request in writing detailing what my interest is, why the dispensation is required and for what meeting.**
- 12.3 I must make my request 5 days prior to the meeting at which the Dispensation is required.**
- 12.4 If I wish to make a further request for dispensation, this must be made to the [Audit and Standards Committee].**

12.5 I will only be granted a Dispensation where there are reasonable grounds for doing so and where such grounds are in the public interest.

Appendix B sets out the situations where a Member's personal interest in a matter may prevent them from participating in the decision-making process. In certain circumstances, however, there may be reasonable grounds to allow a Member to participate in decision-making on that matter where it would be in the public interest to do so. Where you consider that there may be good grounds for you to continue to participate you should request a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer.

Appendices

Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public

Life The principles are:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Appendix B – Interests

1. Definitions

“Disclosable Pecuniary Interest” means any interest described as such in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#) and includes an interest of yourself, or of your Partner (if you are aware of your Partner's interest) that falls within the descriptions set out in the following table. A Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is a Registerable Interest.

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the member during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a member, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the member or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land and Property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. ‘Land’ excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over

Subject	Description
	land which does not give the member or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licenses	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the member's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the council; and the tenant is a body that the member, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where— (a) that body (to the member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either— (i)) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the member, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

"Partner" means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

"Other Registerable Interest" is a personal interest in any business of your authority which relates to or is likely to affect:

- a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority; or
- b) any body
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
 - (ii) anybody directed to charitable purposes or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

"Registrable Interests" are interests that you are required to register in accordance with this Code of Conduct and include both Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Registerable Interests.

"Non-Registrable Interests" are interests that you are not required to register but need to be disclosed in accordance with section 3.3.

A **"Dispensation"** is agreement that you may continue to participate in the decision-making process notwithstanding your interest as detailed at section 12 of the Code of the Conduct and this Appendix B.

A **"Sensitive Interest"** is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the member, or a person connected with the member, being subject to violence or intimidation. In any case where this Code of Conduct requires to you to disclose an interest (subject to the agreement of the Monitoring Officer in accordance with paragraph 2.2 of this Appendix regarding registration of interests), you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, if it is a Sensitive Interest. In such circumstances you just have to disclose that you have an interest.

A matter **"directly relates"** to one of your interests where the matter is directly about that interest. For example the matter being discussed is an application about a particular property in which you or somebody associated with you has a financial interest.

A matter “**affects**” your interest where the matter is not directly about that interest but would still have clear implications for the interest. For example, the matter concerns a neighbouring property.

2. Registering Interests

2.1. Within 28 days of becoming a member or co-opted member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and any Other Registerable Interests.

2.2. Where you have a Sensitive Interest you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a Sensitive Interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

2.3. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.

3. Declaration at and Participation in Meetings

If you are present at a meeting and you have either a Registerable or Non-Registerable Interest in any matter to be considered or being considered, and the interest is not a Sensitive Interest, you must disclose that interest to the meeting (whether or not it is registered).

To determine whether your interest affects your ability to participate in a meeting, you must first determine what type of interest you have and, if necessary, go on to apply the tests as set out below.

3.1. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

3.1.1. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:

- a. you must disclose the interest;
- b. not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter; and
- c. must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a Dispensation.

3.2. Other Registerable Interests

3.2.1. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests:

- a. you must disclose the interest;

- b. may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter; and
- c. must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a Dispensation.

3.2.2. The provisions of paragraph 3.1.1 and 3.2.1 shall be applied in such a manner as to recognise that this Code should not obstruct a member's service on more than one local authority. For the avoidance of doubt, participation in discussion and decision making at one local authority will not by itself normally prevent you from taking part in discussion and decision making on the same matter at another local authority. This is on the basis that a reasonable member of the public will see no objection in principle to such service or regard it as prejudicing a member's judgement of the public interest and will only regard a matter as giving rise to a Personal Interest which might lead to bias in exceptional circumstances'

3.3. Non-Registerable Interests

3.3.1. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to a financial interest or the well-being of yourself or of a friend, relative or close associate (and is not a Registerable Interest):

- a. you must disclose the interest;
- b. may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter; and
- c. must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a Dispensation.

3.3.2. Where a matter arises at a meeting which does not directly relate to but **affects**

- a. a financial interest or the well-being of yourself or of a friend, relative or close associate; or
- b. a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included in those you need to disclose under Other Registerable Interests

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test in paragraphs 3.3.3 and 3.3.4 should be applied.

3.3.3. Where a matter under paragraph 3.3.2 **affects** the financial interest or well-being or body:

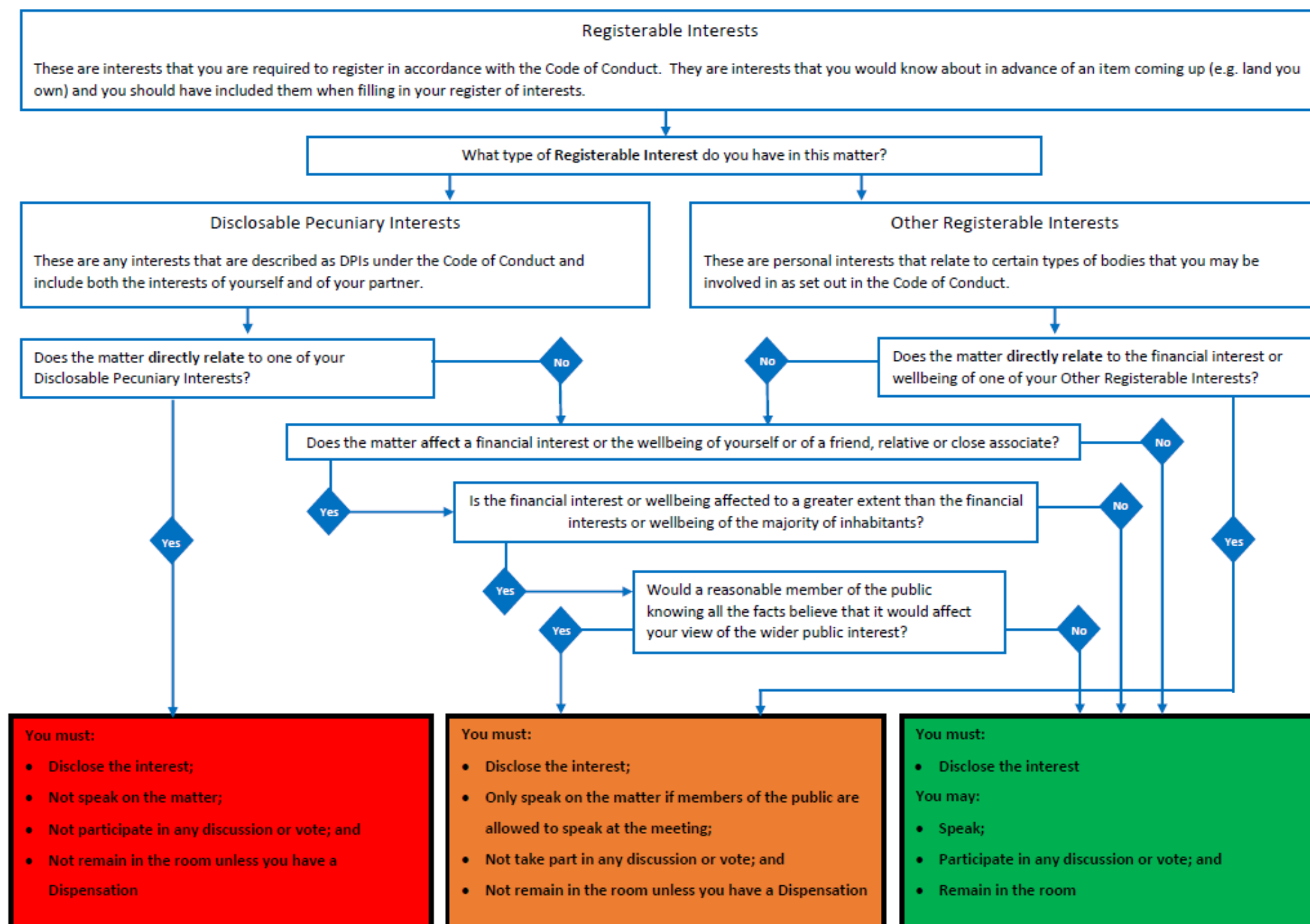
- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests or wellbeing of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision; and
- b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest;

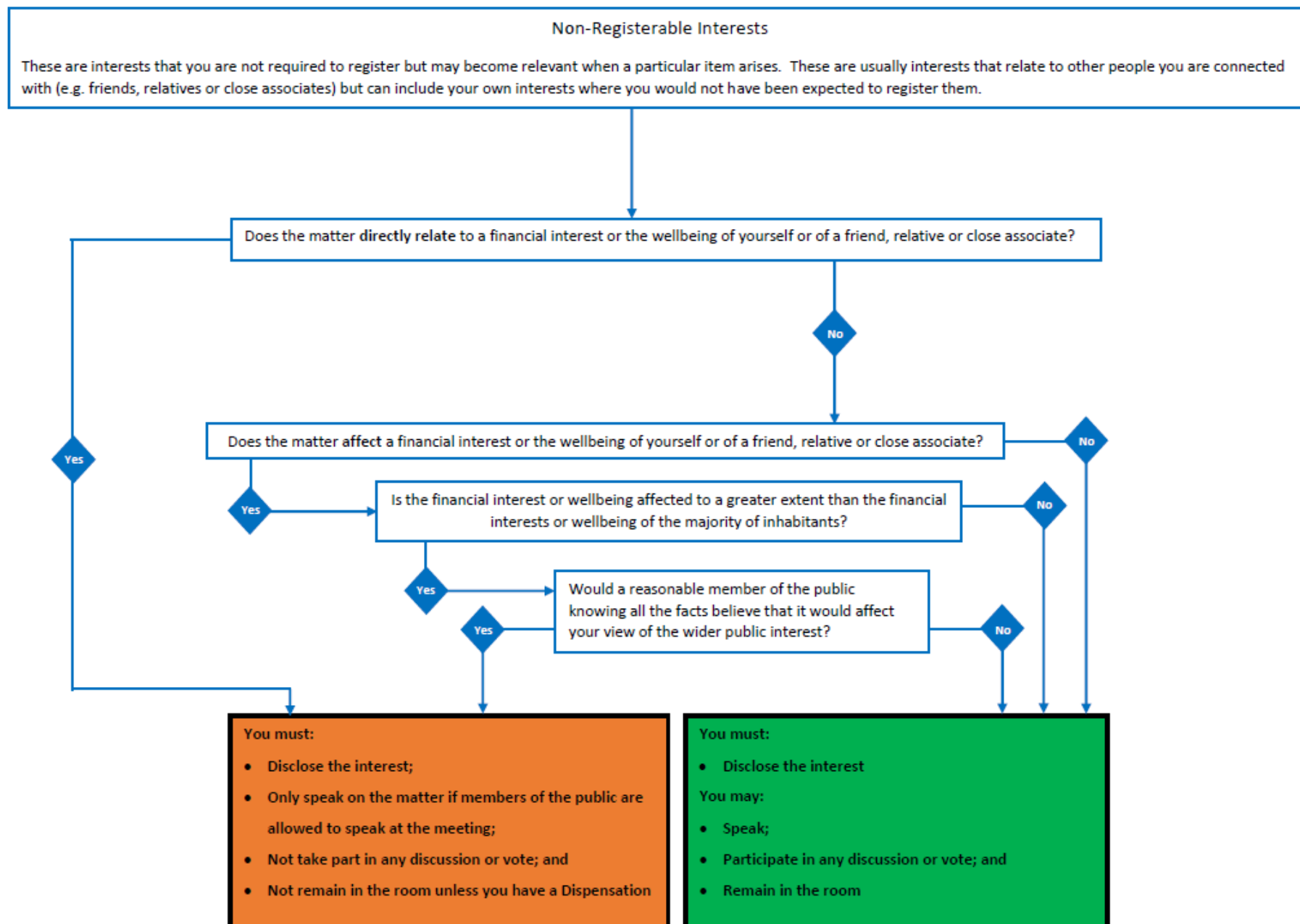
you may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a Dispensation.

3.3.4. Where a matter under paragraph 3.3.2 does not affect the financial interest or well-being or body:

- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests or wellbeing of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision; and/or
- b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would not believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest;

you may remain in the room, speak if you wish to and take part in any discussion or vote on the matter, provided you have disclosed your interest under paragraph 3.3.2.





What constitutes a complaint?

Public Interest Test

The Initial tests:

- a) Is the complaint against one or more named members of a relevant council?
- b) Was the named member in office at the time of the alleged conduct and was the Code of conduct in force at the time?
- c) If proven, would the complaint be a breach of the code of conduct under which the subject member was operating at the time of the alleged misconduct?

If the initial test is met, in order to be investigated a complaint must either:

- a) Demonstrate a continuing pattern of behaviour that is likely to bring the council into disrepute, and or significantly and unreasonably disrupting the business of the Council, and there is no appropriate alternative resolution other than by way of an investigation;
- b) Or, the complaint must comply with all the following criteria:
 - i. Complaint raises matters which would be a breach of the code
 - ii. Complaint is sufficiently serious and particularised to warrant investigation.

For example the complaint should be :

- Specific about the allegation i.e. what exactly the member said or did
- The dates of the alleged incidents
- Confirm and detail whether there are any witnesses to the allegation (provide their names and contact details)
- Relevant background information

iii. Complaint is not 'tit for tat'

iv. Complaint appears not to be politically motivated

v. Received within three months of the alleged failure to comply with the Code (unless there are exceptional circumstances for the delay and the delay does not mean that it would be difficult for a fair investigation to be carried out)

vi. Is not a duplicate or substantially similar to a complaint that has already been investigated

vii. Not an anonymous complaint (unless sufficient documentary evidence to show a significant breach of the Code)

viii. Subject member has not already apologised and/or admitted making an error if complaint reveals a criminal offence referred to the police and following investigation and conclusion of any proceedings or the police have confirmed that no proceedings will be issued.

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Blaby District Council **Policy**

Vexatious and Unreasonable Behaviour Policy

Original Publish Date	28 July 2020	Review Frequency	Every 2 years	Current Version Publish Date	28 July 2020
Approved By*	Group Manager / Portfolio Holder	Approval Date*	28 July 2020	Version Number	1.0
Author Job Title	Monitoring Officer	Service Area	Information Governance	Document Register Reference	A 904

*Approved by and 'approval date' are in relation to the most recent version.

Review History			
Version*	Reviewed By (Job Title)	Review Completion Date	Brief Description of Changes (add 'no changes required' if applicable)
1.0	Information Governance Officer	16 October 2023	Review overdue by 12 months. No changes required

*Version number remains the same if no significant changes are made upon review.

Document Definition / Approval & Review

Definition, Approval and Review

Blaby District Council policies ‘**outline a set of rules or principles that govern how the council (or services within the council) will operate**’.

Key published documents are approved for publication in line with the approval matrix illustrated in the Key Published Document Procedure.

Unless agreed by exception, key published documents must be reviewed at least **every 3 years** from the date of approval.

Significant updates/changes must also seek reapproval in line with the approval matrix.

Scope

To what and to whom this policy applies

The aim of this policy is to contribute to the Council’s overall aim of dealing with all customers in ways which are demonstrably consistent, fair, and reasonable.

It sets out how the Council will decide when correspondence will be treated as vexatious or unreasonably persistent, and what we will do in those circumstances. Nothing in this policy will override anyone’s right to seek their own legal advice on the options available to them.

This policy applies to all areas of the Council.

Terms & Definitions

Definition of any acronyms, jargon, or terms that might have multiple meanings.

Term	Definition
Vexatious	Causing or tending to cause annoyance, frustration or worry
SPOC	Single Point of Contact

Section 1 Introduction

Vexatious, unreasonably persistent behavior and unreasonable behavior arising from customers who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the Council, hinder consideration of their or other complaints or requests.

Examples could include persons who feel that the Council has, or is not, dealing with their complaint/queries properly and are not prepared to leave the matter there or where complaints or queries are justified but are being pursued in an unreasonable or inappropriate way.

Customers may be intent on pursuing complaints or correspondence which appears to have no substance, or which have already been investigated, dealt with, or responded to. In such instances contacts with the Council may be amicable but still place very heavy demands on staff or Member time, or they may be very emotionally charged and distressing for all involved.

Failure to deal with unreasonable behaviour of this type would result in the Council failing to comply with legal responsibilities. It would also impact upon the use of Council resources and hinder the Council's ability to deliver services.

There is of course an acceptance that Officers working for a public body and Members may be subject to criticism from time to time, but that does not equate to an open season and the line must be drawn, otherwise the Council may be negligent in the duty of care it owes to its staff and Members.

Section 2 Reviewing of Cases

Each case will be viewed individually and decided on its merits. Examples of unreasonable and unreasonably persistent behaviour include:

- a) Submitting repeat complaints where the Council's complaints procedure has been fully and properly implemented and exhausted.
- b) Refusing to specify the grounds of a complaint, despite offers of assistance.
- c) Refusing to co-operate with the complaint investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved.
- d) Refusing to accept that issues are not within the scope of the complaint's procedure.
- e) Making unjustified complaints about staff dealing with the complaint or seeking to have them replaced.
- f) Changing the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds.
- g) Denying statements made at an earlier stage.
- h) Introducing trivial or irrelevant information which the customer expects to be taken into account and commented on.
- i) Raising large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions and insisting they are fully answered.
- j) Covertly recording meetings and conversations.
- k) Adopting a 'scattergun' approach: pursuing a complaint across various areas of the Council or with other organisations such as a Member of Parliament / a Councillor / the Standards Committee / local police/solicitors / the Ombudsman / other public bodies.
- l) Making unnecessarily excessive demands, which are unreasonable and unsustainable on the time and resources of staff whilst a complaint is being looked into, by for example excessive telephoning or sending emails to numerous Council staff, writing lengthy complex letters every few days and expecting immediate responses.
- m) Refusing to accept the decision of the Council, repeatedly arguing the point, and complaining about the decision.
- n) Refusing to follow appeal procedures or other forms of legal avenues.
- o) Use of racist, homophobic, or other discriminatory language, including the use of offensive and abusive language.

- p) Using bullying, physical, or psychological threats as a means to gain leverage with an officer or Council member.
- q) Combinations of some or all of these.

Section 3 Considerations Prior to Acting Under the Policy

Different considerations will apply depending on whether an investigation into the complaint or query is ongoing or whether it has been concluded. However, where the issue is ongoing the Council will need to continue some contact with the individual.

The decision to designate someone as vexatious or unreasonably persistent is onerous and could have serious consequences for the individual.

Before deciding whether the policy should be applied the Council should be satisfied that:

- a) The complaint/query is being or has been properly investigated.
- b) Any decision reached is the right one.
- c) Communications with the customer have been adequate.
- d) The customer is not providing any significant new information that might affect the Council's view on the matter.
- e) Any circumstances relating to the customer's mental health, age, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, language, or disability have been considered.
- f) The Council's Complaints and Information Governance policies have been applied correctly.
- g) The customer has been made fully aware of their rights of appeal through the Ombudsman or other organisation.
- h) If the Council is satisfied with these points, it will consider whether further action is necessary prior to taking the decision to designate the behaviour as unreasonable or unreasonably persistent. Examples might include:
 - i) If no meeting has taken place between the customer and an officer, and where it is appropriate to do so, consider offering the individual a meeting with an officer of appropriate seniority. Sometimes meetings can dispel misunderstandings and move matters towards a resolution. The Council does not, however, guarantee a meeting and will offer one dependent on the circumstances of the case.
- j) If more than one service is being contacted, consider:
 - a. setting up a strategy meeting to agree a cross-service approach; and/or
 - b. designating a key officer to co-ordinate the authority's response(s).
- k) If the customer has needs, the Council will consider offering the services of an advocate, such as an Elected Member, or will provide advice as to how the customer might find an independent one.

Before applying any restrictions in line with this policy the customer will be notified by phone, in writing or by email explaining that if his/her actions continue the authority may decide to treat him/her as an unreasonably persistent or vexatious, an explanation why and warning of potential action the Council may take (with reference to this policy) if the problem persists.

Section 4 Approach and Procedure

How the Council manages such correspondence will be dependent upon their nature and extent. If their persistence adversely affects the Council's ability to carry out its functions and provide a service to others, it may need to manage their unacceptable behaviour by restricting contact with staff.

Any restrictions applied will be appropriate and proportionate. The following are examples of the types of restriction(s) which may be used:

- a) Placing time limits on telephone conversations and personal contacts.
- b) Restricting the number of telephone calls that will be taken (for example, one call on one specified morning /afternoon of any week).
- c) Limiting the customer to one medium of contact (telephone, letter, email etc) and/or requiring the customer to communicate only with one named officer.
- d) Requiring any personal contact to take place in the presence of a witness.
- e) Refusing to register and process further complaints/correspondence about the same matter.
- f) Where a decision on the complaint/query has been made, providing the customer with acknowledgements only of letters, faxes, or e mails, or ultimately informing the customer that future correspondence will be read and placed on the file but not acknowledged.

In deciding which restrictions are appropriate, careful consideration will be given to balancing the rights of the individual against those of other customers and of staff and Members as well as the need for the Council to provide its services.

Where the behaviour is so extreme or it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of staff, we will consider other options, for example reporting the matter to the police or taking legal action. In such cases the Council may not give the individual warning of that action.

Section 5 Applying the Policy

Stage 1 - Warning

Where an individual is acting in an unreasonable manner, the matter will be discussed with the Monitoring Officer or Data Protection Officer and an officer of the Information Governance Team and, on their approval, the individual will be informed in writing/by email that this is the case. The letter will explain why the Council finds the behaviour unreasonable or unacceptable and advise them of actions which could be taken if they do not change their behaviour.

In cases where the customer is using offensive, abusive and/or racist, homophobic, or otherwise discriminatory language, the matter will be referred immediately to stage 2 below.

Stage 2 - Restrict or Terminate Contact with the Council

Should the individual fail to moderate their behaviour, the following steps will be taken:

- Set up a strategy meeting to agree a cross-departmental approach.
- Undertake a risk assessment. Decisions to restrict or terminate contact will be taken following a risk assessment. However, where there is an immediate risk to staff or offices the Council may make an on-the-spot decision to restrict access or terminate contact in the short term.
- Consideration of applying a Single Point of Contact (see below)
- The decision and proposed action must be agreed by the Monitoring Officer or Data Protection Officer
- An appropriate officer will write to inform the customer of the restrictions, why the restriction or sanction

has been imposed, what it means for his/her contacts with the authority and how long any restrictions or sanctions will remain in place.

This notification will be copied for the information of others already involved in the complaint or matters closely related to it. A record will be kept by the Information Governance team.

Section 6 Applying a Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

This will involve limiting the customer to one method of contact (telephone, letter, email, etc) and/or requiring the customer to communicate with only one named member of staff.

Where agreed that a single point of contact is to be provided all correspondence sent to the customer, including notification of this decision, will be dealt with by them.

This will include the redirection to a central mailbox of any emails sent to Officers or Members. This is done in an open and transparent manner and the customer will be clearly informed that this action will be taken.

Emails and correspondence will be checked and referred to the intended recipients where appropriate. There will be no restriction on Councilor's responding to the customer should they wish to do so.

At no point will emails be accessed via logging into a Councilor's or Officers email account. The entire process will be carried out in an overt manner, with the customer being properly advised of the measures and why they are being invoked.

Section 7 Dealing with New Complaints from a Vexatious Complainant

When designated unreasonable and unreasonably persistent customers make complaints or requests about new issues these should be treated on their merits, and the Information Governance Team, or a designated SPOC, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer or Data Protection Officer, must decide on whether any restrictions which have been applied before are still appropriate and necessary.

Section 8 Right of Review, Record Keeping and Reporting

Customers have the right to seek a review of a decision to designate them as vexatious or unreasonably persistent with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO), they will be fully informed of this right throughout the process and provided with the appropriate contact details.

Review of Decision

On a six-monthly basis, the Information Governance Team will review all those designated under this policy and determine whether the designation should continue to be applied to everyone. Where it is determined that an individual should be de-designated, they will be informed of that fact in writing/by email. However, the Council reserves the right to continue to monitor their behaviour to ensure that it continues to meet expected standards.

Record Keeping

Copies of correspondence, notes of meetings and telephone conversations and any other documents pertinent to the designated customer will be held in accordance with the Council's GDPR/Data Protection and document retention policies.

Reporting to Councilor's

A report on Complaints is presented to the Council's Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis. This report will

include information on the application of the policy, including the numbers of complainants to whom such a policy has been applied in that year, reasons for the application of the policy and the kinds of restrictions which have been imposed.

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Blaby District Council
Grievance & Standards Committee

Date of Meeting 6 March 2025
Title of Report **Cases and Work Update**
Report Author Corporate Services Group Manager & Monitoring Officer

1. What is this report about?

- 1.1 This report provides the Grievance and Standards Committee with information in relation to Member Code of Conduct complaints received since the last Standards Committee meeting. It also outlines training that has been undertaken during that period.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Grievance and Standards Committee note the contents of the report.

3. Reason for Decision(s) Recommended

- 3.1 To advise members of the committee of the Code of Conduct complaints received by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with good practice and to demonstrate good governance.

4. Matters to consider

4.1 Background

It is considered good practice to report details of Code of Conduct complaints periodically to the Committee. A summary of complaints is provided at Appendix A, so far this year a total of 36 complaints have been submitted to the Monitoring Officer.

The table in Appendix A confirms the date of the complaint, if it related to a District, Parish or Town Councillor, if the complaint was made by a member of the public, another District, Parish or Town Councillor, the nature of the complaint and any action taken to address the complaint.

The tables also confirm which cases have been discussed with the Independent Persons. The Independent Persons are appointed by Full Council. There are a number of statutory restrictions on eligibility for this role to ensure that the post-holder has no close associations with the Council and is therefore truly independent. They are not a member of the Standards Committee, but they must be consulted by the Monitoring Officer prior to any decisions or findings on alleged breaches of the Code and may be consulted at other stages of the complaints process.

Where complaints were not accepted under the Code, the details have not been included as to do so would be misleading; and could be seen to misrepresent the nature of complaints received.

4.2 Other work

During the year, the Monitoring Officer has been available to provide support on questions raised by Councillors and Parish and Town Councillors.

The Member Development Steering Group continues to develop the Councillors training programme and the Monitoring Officer is available to support the Group.

Training on the Code of Conduct for members was held on 10 May 2023 and again on 15 February 2024. This training covered why conduct and standards matter in local government and the types of conduct covered by the Code of Conduct, to ensure that all Councillors are confident about how the Code applies to them.

Training is also scheduled for Councillors on the topic of the Member Officer protocol on March 19th. A training session for officers on the same topic is also to be arranged.

4.3 Relevant Consultations

The Government consultation on proposed changes to the Standards Regime closed on 26 February this year. The consultation sought views on proposals to introduce measures to strengthen the Standards and conduct regime. Specific proposals being consulted upon for legislative change included:

- The introduction of a mandatory minimum code of conduct for local authorities in England
- A requirement that all principal authorities convene formal standards committees to make decisions on code of conduct breaches and publish the outcomes of all formal investigations
- The introduction of the power for all local authorities (including combined authorities) to suspend councillors or mayors found in serious breach of their code of conduct and as appropriate, interim suspension for the most serious and complex cases that involve police investigations
- A new category of disqualification for gross misconduct and those subject to a sanction of suspension more than once in a 5 year period
- A role for a national body to deal with appeals.

A response to the consultation was submitted by Officers. Details of the consultation were circulated to all Members via the SharePoint Newsletters. Councillors were encouraged to read and respond to the consultation.

4.4 Significant Issues

Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 requires authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by elected councillors and co-opted members. Under section 28(6) the Council must also have in place arrangements under which allegations can be investigated and decisions on allegations can be made. Code of Conduct complaints received by the Monitoring Officer are dealt with in accordance with the Council's approved arrangements for dealing with such complaints in accordance with the Act.

All complaints are considered with reference to the Council's Equality Duty. In preparing this report, the author has also considered issues related to Human Rights, Human Resources and Public Health Inequalities and there are no areas of concern.

5. Environmental impact

- 5.1 No Net Zero and Climate Impact Assessment (NZCIA) is required for this report.

6. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications. The Independent Person roles are funded through existing budgets as are external training costs.

7. What are the risks and how can they be reduced?

- 7.1 None identified

8. Other options considered

- 8.1 The Council is legally required to have in place arrangements under which allegations can be investigated and decisions on allegations can be made. Code of Conduct complaints received by the Monitoring Officer are dealt with in accordance with the Council's approved arrangements for dealing with such complaints in accordance with the Act.

9. Appendix

- 9.1 Appendix A – Code of Conduct Complaint Summary

10. Background paper(s)

- 10.1 None

11. Report author's contact details

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APPENDIX A - SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL STANDARDS COMPLAINTS

30 June 2024

Total Cases – August 2012 to 31.03.2024

Number of potential complaints	Number of complaints resolved	Number of times Independent Person involved	Number of times Independent Monitoring Officers opinion requested
76	70	4	5

Closed Cases – 31.03.2024 to 30.06.2024

File Ref	Status of complainant (e.g. Parish Clerk , member, public)	Name of Authority	Summary of Complaint	Decision
SC-2023/24-03	Parish Councillor	Parish	Aggressive/threatening behaviour	Case Dismissed – resignation of Subject Member
SC-2023/24-11	Member of Public	Parish	Disrespectful behaviour	No case to answer
SC-2023/24-13	Parish Councillor	Parish	Breach of Code of Conduct – comments on Council's WhatsApp Group	Informal Resolution

New Cases - 31.03.2024 to 30.06.2024

Number of potential complaints	Number of complaints resolved	Number of times Independent Person involved	Number of times Independent Monitoring Officers opinion requested
5 SC-2024/25-01 SC-2024/25-02 SC-2024/25-03 SC-2024/25-04 (NB out of sequence due to late notification to open a file for complaint received in June 2024) SC-2024/25-06	3	1	0

Total Cases – August 2012 to 30.06.2024

Number of potential complaints	Number of complaints resolved	Number of times Independent Person involved	Number of times Independent Monitoring Officers opinion requested
81	73	5	5

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APPENDIX A - SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL STANDARDS COMPLAINTS

30 September 2024

Total Cases – August 2012 to 30.06.2024

Number of potential complaints	Number of complaints resolved	Number of times Independent Person involved	Number of times Independent Monitoring Officers opinion requested
81	73	5	5

Closed Cases – 01.07.2024 to 30.09.2024

File Ref	Status of complainant (e.g. Parish Clerk , member, public)	Name of Authority	Summary of Complaint	Decision
SC-2023/24-05	Member of Public	Parish	Procedural issues re Contracts	Referred to Crown Prosecution Service – no action
SC-2023/24-06	Member of Public	District	Inappropriate comments made	Referred to Grievance & Standards Committee
SC-2023/24-07	Member of Public	District	Disrespectful comments	Referred to Grievance & Standards Committee
SC-2024/25-03	Parish Councillor	Parish	Comments made at Council meeting	No investigation
SC-2024/25-05	Parish Councillor	Parish	Bullying/Threatening Behaviour	No investigation
SC-2024/25-06	Member of Public	District	Remark made at Planning Committee meeting	No investigation
SC-2024/25-07	Chair of Parish Council	Parish	Contract dispute	No investigation
SC-2024/25-11	Parish Councillor	Parish	Conduct in implementing signing Code of Conduct	No case to answer

New Cases – 01.07.2024 to 30.09.2024

Number of potential complaints	Number of complaints resolved	Number of times Independent Person involved	Number of times Independent Monitoring Officers opinion requested
9 SC-2024/25-05 SC-2024/25-07 SC-2024/25-08 SC-2024/25-09 SC-2024/25-10 SC-2024/25-11 SC-2024/25-12 SC-2024/25-13 SC-2024/25-14	8	8	0

Total Cases – August 2012 to 30.09.2024

Number of potential complaints	Number of complaints resolved	Number of times Independent Person involved	Number of times Independent Monitoring Officers opinion requested
90	81	13	5

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APPENDIX A - SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL STANDARDS COMPLAINTS

31 December 2024

Total Cases – August 2012 to 30.09.2024

Number of potential complaints	Number of complaints resolved	Number of times Independent Person consulted	Number of times Independent Monitoring Officers opinion requested
90	81	13	5

Closed Cases – 01.10.2024 to 31.12.2024

File Ref	Status of complainant (e.g. Parish Clerk , member, public)	Name of Authority	Summary of Complaint	Decision
SC-2024/25-01	Parish Councillor	Parish	Breach of Code of Conduct – Procedures during a Finance meeting	Referred to Economic Crime Unit – no action
SC-2024/25-02	Parish and County Councillor	Parish	Behaviour during a Full Council Meeting	No case to answer
SC-2024/25-04	Member of Public	District	Unacceptable remarks after a meeting	No case to answer
SC-2024/25-10	Parish Councillor	Parish	Unacceptable behaviour	No case to answer
SC-2024/25-13	Member of Public	District	Inappropriate behaviour	No case to answer
SC-2024/25-16	Employee at Parish Council	Parish	Intimidation and bullying	No case to answer
SC-2024/25-18	Employee at Parish Council	Parish	Intimidation and bullying	No case to answer
SC-2024/25-19	Member of Public /Parish Councillor	Parish	Procedures not conducted in proper manner	No case to answer
SC-2024/25-21	Employee at Parish Council	Parish	Breach of Code of Conduct	No case to answer
SC-2024/25-23	Parish Councillor	Parish	Bullying and intimidation	No case to answer
SC-2024/25-25	Parish Councillor	Parish	Non-disclosure of Interest	No case to answer
SC-2024/25-27	Member of Public	District	Inappropriate social media post	No investigation
SC-2024/25-29	Member of Public	District	Inappropriate social media post (rude, inaccurate, bullying)	No investigation
SC-2024/25-30	Parish Councillor	Parish	Inappropriate use of social media/ bullying	No case to answer
SC-2024/25-33	Member of Public	Parish	Unacceptable comments made on a public forum	No case to answer

New Cases - 01.10.2024 to 31.12.2024

Number of potential complaints	Number of complaints resolved	Number of times Independent Person consulted	Number of times Independent Monitoring Officers opinion requested
19 SC-2024/25-15 SC-2024/25-16 SC-2024/25-17 SC-2024/25-18 SC-2024/25-19 SC-2024/25-20 SC-2024/25-21 SC-2024/25-22 SC-2024/25-23 SC-2024/25-24 SC-2024/25-25 SC-2024/25-26 SC-2024/25-27 SC-2024/25-28 SC-2024/25-29 SC-2024/25-30 SC-2024/25-31 SC-2024/25-32 SC-2024/25-33 If case number is in red font indicates Independent Person not consulted If case number is in green font indicates Independent Monitoring Officers Opinion requested	15	14	1

Total Cases – August 2012 to 31.12.2024

Number of potential complaints	Number of complaints resolved	Number of times Independent Person consulted	Number of times Independent Monitoring Officers opinion requested
109	96	27	6