

**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**

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