

STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

23 July 2014

REPORT OF COUNTY CLERK AND MONITORING OFFICER

AGENDA ITEM:

MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

Reason for this Report

- To provide Members of the Committee with a brief update on complaints made against Members alleging breaches of the Code of Conduct.

Statistics

- In the period from 1 January 2014 to 6 March 2014 16 Complaints were made to the Monitoring Officer alleging breaches of the Member's Code of Conduct. Further details are set out below.

	1 Jan – 31 March 2014	1 April – 30 June 2014	1 July – 31 September	1 October – 31 December
Total Number of Complaints	16	14		
Type/Source of Complaints				
Member on Member	9	3		
Public on Member	7	11		
Officer on Member	0	0		
Status/Resolution of Complaint				
Informally resolved	6	5		
Referred to PSOW 1	5	7		
Referred to PSOW 2	1	0		
Referred to S&E	1 (in process)	1		
Active	3	1		

Key

- *Referred to PSOW 1* = Referred to Public Services Ombudsman for Wales as their office is the appropriate body to investigate and report on the subject matter of the complaint due to the

complainant being a member of the public. Informal resolution may be attempted prior to such reference being made.

- *Referred to PSOW 2* = Referred to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales as the matter is not considered to be a "minor" Member on Member complaint and therefore not suitable for informal or local resolution.
- *Active* = not yet resolved, complaint is under investigation or informal resolution is being attempted.

Trends/Monitoring Officers Comments

3. It is the Monitoring Officer's intention that these figures be reported to the Committee on a regular basis.
4. Whilst most of the complaints have been informally resolved, the Monitoring Officer is concerned about the number of complaints this latest quarter from members of the public. Some of these relate to local citizens bring dissatisfied with lack of timely responses from local members. A review of how this can be improved is underway involving a look at the whole system of member support in relation to local service queries and how this could be improved.
5. The Monitoring Officer is also keen to ensure that complaints referred to the Public Service Ombudsman are dealt within a more timely manner. This is an issue that has concerned the Committee for some time and a meeting with the new Ombudsman has been requested to discuss this and the service standards that can be expected. In the meantime the Monitoring Officer will record the time being taken to deal with referrals

Legal Implications

6. There are no legal implications arising from the content of this report.

Financial Implications

7. There are no direct financial implications arising from the content of this report.

Recommendation

The Committee is recommended to note the contents of the report.

MARIE ROSENTHAL
COUNTY CLERK AND MONITORING OFFICER
11 July 2014