

**STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE
22 SEPTEMBER 2015**

REPORT OF DIRECTOR GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL SERVICES

MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS 2015/16

Reason for this Report

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

Background

2. During 2014/15, the Monitoring Officer dealt with a total of 96 Code of Conduct complaints as detailed below.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total	14	55	7	20
Complaint Type				
Member on Member	3	15	6	12
Public on Member	11	37	1	8
Officer on Member	0	3	0	0

3. The Table below shows the position for the first and second quarters of the financial year 2015/16

	Q1	Q2
Total	9	24
Complaint Type		
Member on Member	5	15
Public on Member	3	8
Officer on Member	1	1
Status		
Informally resolved	6	10
Referred to PSOW 1	2	8
Referred to PSOW 2	1	2
Referred to S&E	0	4

- *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.

4. Trends/Monitoring Officers Comments

4.1 It is the Monitoring Officer’s intention that these figures be reported to the Committee on a regular basis.

4.2 There was a decline in the first quarter of the 2014/15 financial year. There does appear to be a pattern developing which sees an increase in complaints in Q2 each year.

4.3 The figures for the last three months have seen a rise especially in relation to member on member complaints. It is also concerning to see complaints by officers alleging members may have breached the Code although the numbers are very small.

4.4 Training on the Code of Conduct and the Ombudsman’s most recent Guidance is scheduled to take place in September which may help in reminding members of the requirements of the Code.

4.5 The forthcoming meeting with political group leaders will provide a useful forum to discuss these figures and what action can be taken to reduce the number of member on member complaints being reported.

4.3 The Local Resolution procedure also continues to provide a useful means to resolve most member on member complaints but there are several which will need to be dealt with more formally at the Hearings Panel.

Legal Implications

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

Financial Implications

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
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15 September 2015