

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2020

SUBJECT: Register of Assessments of Complaints against Councillors

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DATE: August 2020
EXTN: 01903 737600

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report updates the Committee on the complaints against Councillors received so far in 2020. The Committee is responsible for maintaining high standards of conduct by Members of the District and Town & Parish Councils, for monitoring operation of the Code of Conduct, and for considering the outcome of investigations in the event of breaches of the Code.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to resolve that:

- (1) the Register of Complaints against Councillors and progress of any outstanding complaints be noted.

1.0 BACKGROUND AND COMPLAINT ACTIVITY

- 1.1 A Register of Assessments of Complaints against Councillors is updated regularly by the (Acting) Monitoring Officer and distributed to Members of the Standards Committee. This assists Members in making decisions on where to direct training and to review any lessons learned. The register is also a reference source for Members of other similar complaints, when dealing with assessments.
- 1.2 In 2020, the following complaints have been received, progressed or completed. Members are requested to note that progress with some earlier complaints has unfortunately been stalled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Case Ref	Council	Allegation/Complaint	Outcome
19/09 & 19/11	Littlehampton Town	Breach of Littlehampton Town Council's Code of Conduct paragraphs 3.1,3.2(b), 5.0 and 5.0(a)	Two complaints received. Stage 1 investigation complete – informal resolution agreed to recommend further training, to be

			Showing disrespect at a Town Council meeting.	delivered by the Town Council.
19/10		Arun District Council	Breach of ADC's Code paras 2.1 (9) & (10) Showing disrespect at an Overview Select Committee meeting.	Complaint withdrawn on the basis of insufficient evidence to take forward
19/12		Aldwick Parish Council	Breach of Aldwick Code, Para 2.1(10) Showing disrespect to a member of the public.	No further action as Subject Member no longer a Councillor
19/13		Felpham Parish Council	Breach of Code, Paras 1,2,3,4,5,7,10,11 Dissatisfaction with a Council policy. Showing disrespect to members of the public who challenged a policy decision.	Complaint rejected – not a Code of Conduct matter
19/14, 19/15, 19/16		Felpham Parish Council	Breach of Code Paras 1,2,5,6,7,10,11 Showing disrespect to members of the public; inferring that a Council Policy had been adopted whilst still in draft form.	Three complaints received – being taken to Stage 2 for consideration by Assessment Panel.
19/17		Arun District Council	Breach of Code, Para 10 Showing disrespect to a fellow Councillor.	Withdrawn by complainant, public apology issued
20/01		Arun District Council	Not adhering to social distancing guidelines.	Rejected – not a Code of Conduct matter
20/02		Arun District Council and Bognor Regis Town Council	Breach of Code (paras not identified) Unlawful surveillance activities.	Rejected – not a Code of Conduct matter
20/03		Arun District Council	Breach of Code, Para 8 Not withdrawing from meeting at point of	Informal resolution agreed – apology issued. Refresher on making open minded declarations

			decision-making or failing to make the appropriate declaration.	
20/04	Arun District Council		Breach of Code – Paras 8, 9, and 10. Conduct at meetings	Stage 1 investigation
20/05	Arundel Town Council		Breach of Code, Paras 6, 8, & 10 Disrespect shown on social media	Informal resolution in terms of awareness when using social media.
20/06	Arun District Council		Breach of Code, Paras 1 & 8. Conduct at meetings	Initial assessment – pre Stage 1
20/07	Arun District Council & Littlehampton Town Council		Breach of Code – Para 10 Disrespect shown on social media	Initial assessment – pre Stage 1

2.0 REASON FOR THE INFORMATION

2.1 To comply with the adopted Code of Conduct and Local Assessment Procedure.

3.0 OPTIONS

1. None as all the complaints have been considered in line with the adopted Local Assessment Procedure.

4.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Members Code of Conduct
Local Assessment Procedure

<https://www.arun.gov.uk/complaints-against-councillors>
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