

# ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

## REPORT TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE ON 1 JULY 2021

**SUBJECT:** Register of Assessments of Complaints against Councillors

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Solomon Agutu - Interim Monitoring Officer  
**DATE:** June 2021  
**EXTN:** ext 37432

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report updates the Committee on the complaints against Councillors received since the last report. The Committee is responsible for maintaining high standards of conduct by Members of the District and Town and 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 (Interim) 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 Since the last report (considered by Standards Committee at the meeting on 18 February 2021), the following complaints have been received, progressed or completed.

Case Ref	Council	Allegation/Complaint	Outcome
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 considered by Assessment Panel; breaches identified and sanctions agreed. A review of the Panel's decision was requested and rejected. Complaint closed.

20/04	Arun District Council	Breach of Code – Paras 8, 9, and 10.  Conduct at meetings	Investigation report received. Recommended action that further training be delivered. To be addressed by training on new 2021 Code of Conduct.
20/10	Arun District Council	Breach of Code (paras not identified)  Misrepresentation of Councillor role.	Stage 1 investigation completed – no further action. Complaint closed.
20/12	Arun District Council	Breach of Code – Paras 1-11 and 13 and 15-17  Non-disclosure of pecuniary interests	Being progressed as Code of Conduct complaint.
20/13	Arun District Council	Breach of Code (Paras to be identified)  Behaviour at Council meetings	No further action following attempts by Group Leaders to improve Member behaviour. Complaint closed.
20/18	Arun District Council	Breach of Code (Paras not identified)	Code of Conduct not engaged. No further action. Complaint closed.
20/19	Arun District Council	Breach of Code (Paras 5, 8, 9, 10)  Being present in two virtual meetings at the same time.	Explanation given by Subject Member accepted. No further action. Complaint closed.
20/20	Arun District Council	Breach of Code (Paras 9, 10, 11)  Showing disrespect to colleague Councillors.	Apology offered at Council meeting – not accepted by complainant. Monitoring Officer to consider way forward.
20/21	Arun District Council	Breach of Code (Paras 4, 5, 6)  Alleged mis-use of social media.	Insufficient evidence to demonstrate breach. No further action. Complaint closed.

20/22	Arun District Council	Breach of Code (Paras 9 & 10)  Unacceptable conduct at a training event.	Monitoring Officer conducting initial assessment.
<b>2.0 REASON FOR THE INFORMATION</b>			
2.1 To comply with the adopted Code of Conduct and Local Assessment Procedure.			
<b>3.0 OPTIONS</b>			
1. None as all the complaints have been considered in line with the adopted Local Assessment Procedure.			
<b>4.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>			
Members Code of Conduct Local Assessment Procedure		<a href="https://www.arun.gov.uk/complaints-against-councillors">https://www.arun.gov.uk/complaints-against-councillors</a> <a href="https://www.arun.gov.uk/complaints-against-councillors">https://www.arun.gov.uk/complaints-against-councillors</a>	