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## **Joint Standards Committee**

**18 March 2025**

Report of the Deputy Monitoring Officer

### **Monitoring Report in respect of Complaints Received**

#### **Summary**

1. This report is to update the Committee on the position regarding ongoing and recently closed complaints.

#### **Background**

2. The Joint Standards Committee is responsible for promoting a culture of openness, accountability, probity and the maintenance of high standards of conduct by members. In order to do this, it reviews all code of conduct complaints. This enables, amongst other things:
  - Monitoring overall numbers of complaints allowing comparison with similar authorities
  - Monitoring trends of increasing/decreasing levels of complaints and identifying links to key events or triggers
  - Identifying common types of complaints which may illustrate a need for enhanced training and information
  - Assessing the efficacy of sanctions imposed by linking an increase/decrease in complaints regarding a particular member or from a particular locus to intervention or sanctions previously imposed.
  - Assessing the efficacy of the complaints procedure and identifying possible improvements.

#### **Commentary on Case Logs**

##### **Open cases**

3. Case reference 2024/15 falls under paragraph 5 of the complaints handling process and was considered by a JSC Assessment Sub Committee on 23 January 2025. The Sub Committee recommended informal resolution by way of a conciliation meeting which has been scheduled to be facilitated by the Monitoring Officer.

## **Cases closed since last JSC**

4. Case reference 2023/21 falls under paragraph 5 of the complaints handling process and was considered by a JSC Assessment Sub Committee on 30 January 2024. The Committee decided to refer the matter for investigation which it indicated should be external. The cost of an external investigation was explored and found to be disproportionate. An investigation was undertaken by CYC lawyers who completed and circulated their draft report to the parties for comment. Significant representations were received in response during December 2024. The report and all representations were then fully reviewed by the Monitoring Officer. Two subject members were found to have not breached the code. One subject member was found to have made a technical breach of the code. The Monitoring Officer concluded that this should be resolved informally by way of mediation and training. An external mediator has been identified and the parties invited to participate

## **Implications**

### **Financial**

5. The cost of external mediation applicable to case reference 2023/21 above are as follows:
6. Fixed fee of £1100 + VAT (includes up to 4 hours preparation / administration time and up to 7 hours mediation). Alternatively, an hourly rate of £120 per hour + VAT. Offers video conference option to reduce time and travel costs.

### **Human Resources (HR)**

7. Not applicable to this report.

### **Equalities**

8. Maintaining standards across the City through the Code of Conduct ensures that an ethical framework can be adhered to, including ensuring that equality issues form an integral part of that framework.

### **Legal**

9. As detailed within the report.

### **Crime and Disorder, Information Technology and Property**

10. Not applicable to this report.

## **Recommendations**

11. That the Joint Standards Committee notes the report, in order to ensure that the Committee is aware of the current levels of activity and is able to provide oversight of the complaints' procedure.

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for the report:**

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**Report  
Approved**



**Date** 7 March  
2025

**Wards Affected:**

**All** ☒

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

- Annex A (i) Table showing open complaints received.
- Annex B (i) Table showing recently closed complaints.
- Annex A (ii) Table showing open complaints received (confidential)
- Annex B (ii) Table showing recent complaints (confidential)