
Joint Standards Committee

31 January 2024

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 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 2023/13 has been investigated by a CYC lawyer and a report has been prepared. [A hearing will be convened under the Case Handling Procedure to determine the matter].

4. Case reference 2023/14 has been assessed by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Independent Person and it has progressed to investigation. An investigating officer has been appointed. An investigation plan is in place and a draft report was initially expected to be completed by mid December 2023. Progress on the investigation has unfortunately been delayed by competing work demands and an extension of time until 16 February 2024 is requested to complete the report.
5. Case reference 2023/21 falls under paragraph 5 of the complaints handling process and has been referred to a JSC Sub Committee for assessment on 30 January 2024. At the time of publication of this report the outcome of the assessment committee meeting is not known.
6. Case reference 2023/23 falls under paragraph 5 of the complaints handling process and will be referred to a JSC Sub Committee for assessment, scheduled provisionally to take place on 21 February 2024.

Cases closed since last JSC

7. Case reference 2023/15 was assessed by a Sub Committee in accordance with the case handling procedure. The Sub Committee assessed the complaint and agreed that the complaint would not be referred to investigation as it could not be seen to constitute a breach of the code. The parties notified were notified and a letter of advice was sent to a Subject Member.

Implications

8. **Financial** Not applicable to this report.
9. **Human Resources (HR)** Not applicable to this report.
10. **Equalities** 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.
11. **Legal** As detailed within the report.
12. **Crime and Disorder, Information Technology and Property**
Not applicable to this report.

Recommendation

13. 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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Report **Date** 22 January
Approved 2024

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes:

- 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)