



**Notice of a meeting of  
Joint Standards Committee - Assessments Sub-Committee**

**To:** Councillors Perrett (Parish Representative (Vice-Chair)),  
Hayes and Cannon  
Mr Laverick & Ms Davies (Independent Persons)

**Date:** Friday, 22 September 2017

**Time:** 10.00 am

**Venue:** Fairfax Room (S024), West Offices

**AGENDA**

**1. Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members are asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests,
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

**2. Exclusion of Press and Public**

To consider excluding the public and press from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 3 on the grounds that it contains information relating to individuals and information which is likely to reveal the identity of individuals. This information is classed as exempt under paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

**3. Complaints against Members of a Council covered by the Joint Standards Committee (Pages 1 - 84)**

This report confirms that an allegation has been made that two Members of the Council may have breached the Member Code of Conduct. The Sub-Committee is asked to make a decision as to whether any further action is required.

#### **4. Urgent Business**

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

#### Democracy Officers

Names: Catherine Clarke/Louise Cook (job share – please send any correspondence to both email addresses)

Contact details:

- Telephone – (01904) 551031
- E-mail – [catherine.clarke@york.gov.uk](mailto:catherine.clarke@york.gov.uk)  
[louise.cook@york.gov.uk](mailto:louise.cook@york.gov.uk)

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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## City of York Council Joint Standards Committee Assessment Criteria for complaints

### 1. Background and Context

- 1.1 The Joint Standards Committee's arrangements for dealing with complaints are described in more detail in a separate document available from the Monitoring Officer and on the City Council's website.
- 1.2 The first decision to be made when a complaint is received is whether or not it should be referred for investigation. That decision is normally made by the Monitoring Officer but may be made by a Sub Committee of Members of the Standards Committee. In making the decision regard will be had to the following criteria.

### 2. Is the complaint covered by the Code?

- 2.1 Is the complaint about the conduct of a member?

*The complaint must relate to one or more named elected or co-opted members of the district or parish councils covered by the Standard Committee i.e. within the City of York Council Area.*

- 2.2 Was the named member in office at the time the alleged misconduct took place?

- 2.3 Does the allegation relate to the Member's conduct as a Councillor?

*Complaints which relate to a Councillor's private life rather than their Council business are unlikely to be covered by the Code.*

- 2.4 If the complaint is proven, would there be a breach of the Code under which the member was operating at the time of the alleged misconduct?

*Codes of Conduct are concerned with Members' ethical behaviour. Sometimes complaints are received about decisions which*

*Councillors have made or about the quality of service provided by a Councillor. These are unlikely to be covered by the Code.*

- 2.5 If the complaint is not covered by the Code then it cannot be investigated.

### **3. Sufficiency of Information**

- 3.1 The complainant must provide sufficient information to show that there is a real possibility that there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct. If insufficient information is available the case will not normally be referred for investigation.

### **4. Seriousness of the Complaint**

- 4.1 A complaint will not normally be referred for investigation or other action where the complaint appears to be trivial, vexatious, malicious, politically motivated or tit for tat.

### **5. Length of Time Which Has Elapsed**

- 5.1 A complaint will not normally be investigated where the events took place more than 6 months prior to the complaint being submitted. An exception to this may arise where the conduct relates to a pattern of behaviour which has recently been repeated.

### **6. Public Interest**

- 6.1 Consideration will be given as to whether the public interest would be served by referring a complaint for investigation or other action. They may consider that the public interest would not be served where, for instance, a member has died, resigned or is seriously ill.
- 6.2 The Standards Committee encourages informal resolution of complaints where it is in the public interest to do so. In some cases a speedy apology to the complainant may be the most effective outcome. In a case where the Code has been breached through ignorance an acceptance of fault from the Councillor together with an offer of training or a briefing from the Monitoring Officer, may be sufficient.

6.3 If the complaint has already been the subject of an investigation or other action relating to the Code of Conduct or the subject of an investigation by other regulatory authorities, it is unlikely that it will be referred for investigation or other action unless it is evident that the public interest will be served by further action being taken.

## **7. Anonymous Complaints**

7.1 Anonymous complaints will not normally be entertained unless there is additional documentary evidence to support the complaint.

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