

Joint Standards Committee

17 September 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 2023/21 falls under paragraph 5 of the complaints handling process and was considered by a JSC Assessment Sub

Committee on 30th 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 has been undertaken by two senior CYC lawyers and a draft report will now be shared with the parties and IP before the matter is determined by a JSC sub-committee.

4. Case references 2024/06 and 2024/09 are interrelated and have been assessed by the Deputy Monitoring Officer as in scope and requiring investigation. The views of the IP have been sought. An investigation is being carried out by CYC Legal Services.
5. Case reference 2024/12 is a new complaint which has been assessed by the Deputy Monitoring Officer and with the support of the IP has progressed to an investigation which is ongoing.
6. Case reference 2024/14 is a new complaint which is currently being assessed by the Deputy Monitoring Officer following receipt of additional information from the parties and views of the IP.

Cases closed since last JSC

7. Case reference 2024/01 was processed in accordance with paragraph 5 of the complaints handling process. It was referred to a second JSC Sub Committee for assessment on 23rd July 2024 which determined the complaint was not in scope.
8. Case reference 2024/10 was not capable of being progressed due to lack of information provided and lack of contact details through which to seek clarification. A learning point from this case is to ensure that sufficient prompts are included in the revised case handling procedure to secure adequate information from complainants however they choose to submit their complaint from a variety of accessible options.
9. Case reference 2024/08 was processed in accordance with paragraph 5 of the complaints handling process. It was referred to a JSC Sub Committee for assessment on 23rd July 2024 which determined the complaint was not in scope.
10. Case reference 2024/11 was assessed by the Deputy Monitoring Officer as being out of scope as the matters complained of are not seen to pass the threshold to constitute a breach of the code.

11. Case reference 2024/13 was assessed by the Deputy Monitoring Officer as being out of scope in line with paragraphs 10b, 10e and 10g of the case handling procedure.

Implications

12. **Financial** Not applicable to this report.
13. **Human Resources (HR)** Not applicable to this report.
14. **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.
15. **Legal** As detailed within the report.
16. **Crime and Disorder, Information Technology and Property** Not applicable to this report.

Recommendations

17. 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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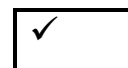
Report
Approved



Date 9 September
2024

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

- Annex A (i) - Table showing open complaints received.
- Annex A (ii) - Table showing open complaints received (confidential)

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