

## AGENDA

---

**Meeting:** Standards Committee  
**Place:** Kennet Room - County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JN  
**Date:** Wednesday 8 October 2014  
**Time:** 2.00 pm

---

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Kieran Elliott, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718504 or email [kieran.elliott@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:kieran.elliott@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225) 713114/713115.

This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at [www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)

### **Chairman's Briefing 13.30 on Wednesday 8 October 2014 in the Kennet Room**

---

#### **Membership:**

Cllr Desna Allen	Cllr Julian Johnson (Chairman)
Cllr Rosemary Brown	Cllr John Noeken (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Allison Bucknell	Cllr Paul Oatway QPM
Cllr Trevor Carbin	Cllr Sheila Parker
Cllr Terry Chivers	Cllr Horace Prickett
Cllr Howard Greenman	

#### **Substitutes:**

Cllr Glenis Ansell	Cllr Bob Jones MBE
Cllr Ernie Clark	Cllr Magnus Macdonald
Cllr Mary Douglas	Cllr Howard Marshall
Cllr Dennis Drewett	Cllr Pip Ridout
Cllr George Jeans	Cllr John Smale
	Cllr Jerry Wickham

#### **Non-Elected Non-Voting Members:**

Mr Philip Gill MBE JP  
Mr Paul Neale  
Mr John Scragg  
Miss Pam Turner

---

## **Part 1**

Items to be considered when the meeting is open to the public

1 **Apologies for Absence**

To receive any apologies or substitutions for the meeting.

2 **Minutes** (*Pages 1 - 4*)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2014.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable interests or dispensations granted by the Standards Committee.

4 **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive any announcements through the Chair.

5 **Public Participation and Questions**

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public.

### **Statements**

If you would like to make a statement at this meeting on any item on this agenda, please register to do so at least 10 minutes prior to the meeting. Up to 3 speakers are permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes each on any agenda item. Please contact the officer named on the front of the agenda for any further clarification.

### **Questions**

To receive any questions from members of the public or members of the Council received in accordance with the constitution. Those wishing to ask questions are required to give notice of any such questions in writing to the officer named on the front of the agenda no later than 5pm on **1 October 2014**. Please contact the officer named on the front of this agenda for further advice. Questions may be asked without notice if the Chairman decides that the matter is urgent.

Details of any questions received will be circulated to Committee members prior to the meeting and made available at the meeting and on the Council's website.

6 **Update from the Code of Conduct Seminar** (Pages 5 - 30)

To receive a report on the outcomes of the Code of Conduct Seminar held on 23 July 2014.

7 **Status Report on Complaints** (Pages 31 - 32)

To receive a report from the Monitoring officer on the current status of Complaints under the Code of Conduct.

8 **Date of the Next Meeting and Forward Work Programme**

To note the date of the next meeting as 21 January 2015.

To confirm the details of the Forward Work Programme.

9 **Urgent Items**

To consider any other items that, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be taken as a matter of urgency.

10 **Exclusion of the Public**

To consider passing the following resolution:

To agree that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting for the business specified in Item Number 10 because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

*Paragraph 1 - information relating to an individual*

**Part II**

*Item(s) during consideration of which it is recommended that the public should be excluded because of the likelihood that exempt information would be disclosed*

11 **Minutes of the Standards Review Sub-Committees** (Pages 33 - 42)

To consider the minutes of the Standards Review Sub-Committees held on 5 June 2014, 10 July 2014 and 11 September 2014.

This page is intentionally left blank

## **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

---

### **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9 JULY 2014 AT KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.**

#### **Present:**

Cllr Rosemary Brown, Cllr Howard Greenman, Cllr Julian Johnson (Chairman), Howard Marshall (Substitute), Mr Paul Neale, Cllr John Noeken (Vice Chairman), Cllr Paul Oatway, Cllr Sheila Parker, Cllr Horace Prickett, Mr John Scragg and Miss Pam Turner

---

#### **21 Membership Changes**

The Membership changes following the meeting of Council on 13 May 2014 were noted.

#### **22 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Allison Bucknell and Desna Allen, and Mr Phillip Gill JP MBE.

Cllr Allen was substituted by Cllr Howard Marshall.

#### **23 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2014 were presented for consideration and it was,

#### **Resolved:**

**To APPROVE as a true and correct record and sign the minutes.**

#### **24 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations.

## 25 **Chairman's Announcements**

Through the Chairman, it was announced that as agreed at its meeting in April 2014, a Standards Seminar on the Effectiveness of the Code of Conduct Complaints Procedure had been organised for all councillors and independent persons on 23 July at 1000 in the Council Chamber at County Hall.

It was also announced that should the Committee recommend to Council that the proposed revisions to the Constitution be adopted at its July meeting, a briefing session for all councillors had been arranged for 1400 on 24 July in the Council Chamber at County Hall.

## 26 **Public Participation and Questions**

There were no questions or statements submitted.

## 27 **Draft Annual Governance Statement 2013/14**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer presented a report on the draft Annual Governance Statement, as drafted by the Governance Assurance Group which is comprised of senior officers who have lead roles in corporate governance and a representative from the Audit Committee, to review the effectiveness of the council's governance arrangements.

It was reported that the council was meeting its obligations in adhering to the six principles of good governance in its Code of Corporate Governance, and that the draft report had been assessed by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 24 June 2014, with comments attached to the report in the agenda. Following comments from the Standards Committee, final approval for the draft statement would be sought from the Audit Committee at its meeting on 31 July 2014.

Members discussed the draft statement, seeking details of how governance improvements were monitored and assessed, and it was stated issues were added to the corporate risk register and service risk reports to the assurance group, which met monthly to consider progress and options to improve any concerns. Members noted the intention for a phased roll out of mandatory on-line training for all staff on data protection and good practice in information management, and it was requested the Committee be informed if this was intended to be rolled out to Members, as it was felt it would be beneficial for Members to be familiar with the same issues.

At the end of discussion, it was,

### **Resolved:**

**To note that the draft AGS will be revised in the light of comments from the Committee, Cabinet, Standards Committee as detailed above and further work by the Governance Assurance Group before being brought back to the Audit committee for final approval and publication with the Statement of Accounts at the end of July.**

## 28 **Recommendations from the Constitution Focus Group - Part 3 of the Constitution**

The Chairman of the Committee and the Deputy Monitoring Officer introduced the proposed changes to Part 3 of the Constitution, Responsibility for Functions and Schemes of Delegation, following consideration by the Constitution Focus Group.

It was stated the majority of changes were to clarify matters and eliminate duplication to make it clearer and easier to follow, including a new contents and definitions section with a focus on principles of decision making for delegated decisions. There were also changes to reflect changes in legislation and operational practice, as detailed in the report, with clarifications on the allocation of applications to specific planning committees and the call-in of officer delegated decisions, which would in future all be published on the council's intranet. Additionally, due to its length, it was proposed the rules and procedures for the Police and Crime Panel be removed from Part 3 of the Constitution and placed in a separate protocol, although no changes would be made to the details.

Members discussed the changes in detail, seeking clarification on which criteria would be considered by the Associate Director when determining which planning committee would consider a specific application which had been called in, with some concerns raised that with the Core Strategy being currently unadopted, the criteria allowed speculative outline applications to be submitted and considered by area planning committees, despite have a clear strategic impact once the full details would be brought forward. In response to queries it was also confirmed there were no proposed changes to the scheme of delegation in respect of licensing.

At the end of discussion, it was,

### **Resolved:**

**To recommend that Council approve the proposed changes to Part 3 of the Constitution, including the transfer of the Police and Crime Panel Arrangements to a new Protocol.**

## 29 **Status Report on Complaints**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer presented a report on the status of code of conduct complaints, with a total of 41 received for the current year.

Members discussed the updated, noting that the number of complaints received was significantly higher than the totals for previous years at 24 and 25. In response it was stated there had been several parishes which had received multiple complaints regarding single incidents, but that officers would investigate further to determine if this or other reasons were behind the increase.

It was noted that for the first time under the new standards regime, complaints had been referred for investigation, either at the direction of a Standards Review Sub-Committee or the Monitoring Officer.

Members were also informed of an increase in complaints partially or wholly in relation to councillor conduct on social media platforms, with suggestions that the Committee should consider whether the council's social media etiquette policy should be attached to the Code of Conduct in the manner of the behaviours framework so that it must be considered by members. It was stated this would not impact town and parish council's, as even those which used the same Code as Wiltshire Council would not have attached the appendices to the Code that Wiltshire Council had adopted.

It was also requested that the Committee be provided if possible with details of how many town and parish councils had adopted their own codes, Wiltshire's code, or had failed to adopt any code.

**Resolved:**

**To note the update on the status of code of conduct complaints.**

**30 Parish and Town Council Training**

It was stated that further information would be provided at a later date on refresh training for town and parish councils on standards regime issues.

**31 Date of the Next Meeting and Forward Plan**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 8 October 2014, and it was requested consideration of the Social Media Etiquette Policy be added to the Forward Plan.

**32 Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 2.00 - 3.05 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Kieran Elliott of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718504, e-mail [kieran.elliott@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:kieran.elliott@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115



## Wiltshire Council

### Standards Committee

8 October 2014

---

#### Review of the Council's Arrangements on Standards of Conduct for Councillors

##### Purpose of Report

1. To advise the Committee of the outcome of the seminar on standards on 23 July 2014 and to ask the Committee to consider the issues raised and how it wishes to take these forward.

##### Background

2. At its meeting on 25 April 2014 the Committee received a report on reviewing the effectiveness of the standards regime adopted by Wiltshire Council and resolved:

*To arrange a seminar as soon as possible for members of the Committee and any other Wiltshire Councillors who wish to attend, together with the Council's three Independent Persons and Mr Paul Hoey of Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd. to review the operation and effectiveness of the standards regime and consider whether any changes to the current system are appropriate.*

3. A seminar was, therefore, held on 23 July 2014 attended by councillors, co-opted members, independent persons and officers. The programme included a presentation from Paul Hoey, of Hoey Ainscough Associates, a consultancy firm which supports local government members and officers in ensuring effective local governance with a particular emphasis on councillor standards of conduct. Paul's co-director, Natalie Ainscough, then led us through some case studies, which involved applying the Council's Code of Conduct to a range of fictitious circumstances. A general discussion followed on aspects of the Council's Code and Complaints Procedure.
4. A copy of the presentation and case studies is attached.
5. Officers have since met with the Chairman of the Standards Committee and Independent Persons to discuss the issues that came out of the seminar. These are summarised below.

##### Main Considerations

##### Standards Committee

6. The Standards Committee is responsible for ensuring that the Council discharges its duty under section 27 Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the Council. It is,

therefore, important to ensure that members of the Standards Committee are fully engaged in this function, by increasing awareness of the nature of the complaints that are being referred, how these are being dealt with, and the overall impact this is having on standards of conduct and public confidence in local democracy.

7. Whilst members have been involved in meetings of Review and Hearing Sub-Committees more can be done to share the learning that comes out of these with the wider committee membership. In future, therefore, we will be including the minutes of review and hearing sub-committees on agendas, providing more analysis of complaints and trends, and having regular opportunities to review issues emerging from cases and procedural issues.
8. Paul Hoey pointed out that some authorities have waived the requirement for political balance in their standards committee to order to avoid any perception that the committee may be politically motivated. In Wiltshire the Standards Committee is politically balanced, but the review and hearing sub-committees are not and these arrangements seem to be effective.
9. A number of authorities' standards committees, including Wiltshire, have non-voting co-opted members within their membership. This is seen as good practice and enhances the independence and depth of experience of the Committee. It is acknowledged that we should be involving our co-opting members more in review and hearing sub-committees, particularly in cases involving parish and town councillors.

### ***Code of Conduct***

10. The adequacy and fitness for purpose of the current code of conduct was a key issue covered at the seminar. Members will be aware that concerns have been expressed previously that the absence of specific provisions on the expected standards of behaviour of members and co-opted members in the code of conduct may result in cases being rejected that might otherwise have been referred for investigation, with the risk of undermining public confidence in the process
11. This issue was explored at the seminar through discussions on the case studies, which highlighted circumstances where the lack of specificity on behavioural standards in the code may be a problem. There were also discussions on whether the council should be more explicit in its code on interests that should be declared and registered. This aspect was reviewed recently by the council and it was decided that the current requirements in the code are satisfactory, supported with suitable guidance for members on their obligations in respect of declaring interests.
12. A further area which was raised, which the Standards Committee may wish to look at in the context of the code of conduct, is the use of social media. The Council has a social media policy, which is due to be reviewed as part of a review of the Council's Media Protocol. However, it was suggested that guidance for members on this subject would be helpful.
13. At the follow-up meeting with the Chairman and Independent Persons in August it was agreed that any proposed changes to the code of conduct must be

evidence-based. Therefore, if the Committee is minded to pursue this further it will be necessary for officers to undertake detailed work and analysis of the complaints received under the code of conduct and report to the Committee with their findings on the operation of the code in due course. The Committee's steer on this is requested.

### ***Procedure for Dealing with Complaints under the Code of Conduct***

14. The Council's procedure for dealing with complaints under the code is broadly similar to arrangements adopted in other authorities and is considered fit for purpose. Points to consider included:

- **Arrangements for notifying parties of complaint** - the current practice of giving full details of the complaint to the subject member and inviting their comments on the complaint before assessment works well and should be retained. This is a considerable improvement on the former practice under the old regime when regulations prevented disclosure of the details of the complaint to the subject member until after an assessment decision had been made.
- **Review of Monitoring Officer decisions** - it was suggested that the review rights afforded under our current procedure could be removed to streamline and speed up the process. We were advised that many authorities do not provide for reviews of assessment decisions by their monitoring officers. However, the involvement of members in reviews in our view provides important safeguards for the parties in the decision-making process and should be retained. Review meetings are scheduled to be held within tight timescales and in practice do not add in any significant delay to the process.

It is, however, proposed to retain the existing arrangement that the decision of a hearing sub-committee is final with no right of appeal.

- **Disclosure of papers to complainant** - this is not an issue for us as we are clear that the complainant, as a party to the proceedings, is generally entitled to see papers relating to the case.
- **Informal resolution** - we agree that where possible we should seek to resolve matters informally through mediation or otherwise. We may consider using our Independent Persons to facilitate informal resolution in appropriate cases.
- **Access to meetings and information** - we apply the usual statutory rules on access to meetings of standards review and hearing sub-committees and to information with a presumption in favour of openness and transparency.
- **Complainant access to Independent Persons** - on balance we do not feel that it would be appropriate to give complainants the right of access to an Independent Person. This is not envisaged in the legislation and may compromise the role of our Independent Persons. It would also be difficult to manage in terms of process and availability.

- **Hearings** - generally the process ensures fairness and transparency and there is sufficient flexibility in the arrangements to meet the particular circumstances of each case. The need for the views of the Independent Persons to be given in public during the hearing of a case was emphasised (except where the public are excluded under the statutory rules).
- **Sanctions** - there was a strong view that the current sanctions for breaches of the code are inadequate and that the Government should be pressed to revisit this issue and, in particular, restore the power to suspend as a sanction. Without this the standards regime is perceived to be lacking in teeth and this ultimately undermines public confidence.

### **Legal Implications**

15. The Council's statutory obligations in respect of standards, including the duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members, are set out in sections 26 -37 (Chapter 7) of the Localism Act 2011.

### **Financial Implications**

16. There are none directly arising from this report.

### **Recommendations**

14. The Committee is, therefore, asked to consider what action they wish to take in relation to the above areas to ensure that the Council's arrangements on standards are fit for purpose, and promote and maintain high standards of conduct and public confidence in local democracy.

**Ian Gibbons**

**Associate Director, Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer**

---

Report Author: Ian Gibbons

Date of report: 30 September 2014

**Appendices:** Presentation slides and case studies – Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd.

**Background Papers:** There are no unpublished documents relied upon in the preparation of this report.



This page is intentionally left blank

Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd

# Standards arrangements in Wiltshire

Paul Hoey

Natalie Ainscough

# Localism Act 2011

- Local code based on 7 Nolan Principles
- Local arrangements to handle complaints
- Independent Person to be consulted
- Criminal offence for non-registration and non-declaration but no suspension
- Duty to promote and maintain high standards



# Case handling

- Complaint received
- Decide whether to take any action
- If investigated, is it a breach?
- If it's a breach does it need any sanction?
- Independent Person to support process

Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd

# Standards committee

- Composition – political proportionality
- Other representatives

# Filtering complaints

An allegation is made

- MO consults IP and decides whether any action is needed
- May simply take no action
- May try to resolve the matter informally
- May decide it needs investigating
- Decision can be reviewed

# Filtering – some issues

- Referring matter up to standards committee
- Right of review
- Getting balance right – what needs action and what doesn't?
- When should the councillor be told?

# Informal resolution

- Views of complainant?
- Getting balance right – what needs action and what doesn't?

# Investigating

If case is investigated

- MO may agree that there has been no breach and close the matter
- If the MO thinks there has been a breach, may seek informal resolution or case goes to Conduct Committee

# Conduct hearing

- Composition of panel?
- Public or private?

# Sanctions

- Committee decides if there has been a breach or not and imposes sanctions or makes recommendations to council or group
- May
  - Censure or recommend training
  - Remove from committee or outside appointments
  - Restrict use of resources or access to premises
- What if council disagrees?

Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd



# Role of the Independent person

## Law says

- Council must take account of views of IP on matter under investigation
- Member accused may seek views of IP

## **Typical arrangements**

- IP consulted by MO before initial decision
- IP consulted by MO at end of investigation
- Standards committee consults IP before deciding

Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd

# Independent Person – some issues

- Relationship with Standards Committee
- What do they do if they feel sidelined?
- What about the complainant?
- Giving views in public

# The Nolan Principles

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

# Behaviours

- “You must be as open as possible about your decisions and actions.. And be prepared to give reasons.”
- “You are accountable for your decisions and must cooperate fully with whatever scrutiny is appropriate to your office.”

# Interests

- Disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs)
- Other interests?

# Scenarios

- What would you expect MO to do?
- Would you expect to be consulted?
- If it turned out to be a breach of the Code what action do you think would be appropriate?
- Are there other ways the issue could be dealt with?

# Any further questions?

Paul Hoey

Natalie Ainscough

[www.hoeyainscough.co.uk](http://www.hoeyainscough.co.uk)

[www.standards-exchange.co.uk](http://www.standards-exchange.co.uk)

Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd

This page is intentionally left blank



# CODE OF CONDUCT SCENARIOS

## 1. Car park rage

A pool attendant at the council's leisure centre has written a letter of complaint about a councillor. He says that last Saturday when he was at the local supermarket, he and a woman had both tried to get the same parking space. After he had nipped in in front of her, she had got out of her car, swore at him and bent his car aerial. Another person who witnessed the incident told him that the driver was a local councillor. The police had not been called.

## 2. Facebook

A councillor claimed on Facebook that a number of named members and officers had abused their positions and mismanaged council finances.

The councillor defended her actions by arguing that she was acting in the public interest and for the benefit of open government. She also argued that the named members and officers had forfeited their right to respect by their actions. She further claimed that under the European Convention on Human Rights she was merely exercising her right to freedom of speech and in any case, was not acting in her official capacity when she made the comments.

## 3. Pornography

A councillor has regularly used a council laptop. He has signed the council's IT protocol for members, which includes a requirement not to use the equipment for anything other than council business, and not to lend council IT equipment or disclose his passwords to third parties.

However, he allowed other people to use the laptop and on its return to him found that pornographic material had been downloaded onto it. He took the laptop to the council's IT department and asked them to remove this material.

## 4. Stage whispers

An officer presented a report to the council's overview and scrutiny committee. During the meeting a councillor stated as a loud 'aside' to the other members and officers: "Don't listen to him, you can't rely on his advice". The councillor had previously had a meeting with the officer who advised that a course of action was not good practice and should not be pursued. The councillor was unhappy with the advice.

A member of the public present at the meeting makes a complaint about the comment saying it was rude and disrespectful.

## 5. Confidential information

The council was looking at proposals for a major housing development which was strongly opposed by sections of the community. Councillors were sent information ahead of a planning meeting, including confidential legal advice saying that the council was unlikely to win a legal challenge by the developer if they rejected the plans. The papers were accompanied by a letter from the monitoring officer reminding all members of the confidential nature of the contents.

When the councillor expressed his concern that the matter was to be considered in private at the meeting he was told by the Director and the monitoring officer that disclosure could prejudice the council's negotiations. Despite the council having voted for the matter to be exempt, the councillor disclosed information to the local newspaper. Also despite an undertaking given personally to the monitoring officer not to do so, he disclosed information from the minutes of a later meeting which were also exempt.

The Director submits a complaint.

## 6. The father-in-law

The planning committee has received an application from a company to build a small office block. The development would be in a conservation area.

One of the councillors on the planning committee is the father-in-law of the managing director of the development company. The councillor doesn't declare an interest and a member of the public opposed to the development subsequently makes a complaint.

## **7. Neighbours**

There is a contentious development of 40 houses happening in a parish. One of the councillors lives adjacent to the area for development.

At the meeting to discuss the planning application the chairman says that the councillor should not take part in the discussion because he has a disclosable pecuniary interest.

The councillor says he is speaking on behalf of the community and has a right to take part, so although he declares a personal interest, takes part in the debate and votes against the application.

The chairman reports the councillor to the police, but the police decide not to take any further action so a complaint is then made to the monitoring officer.

## **8. Chairing a meeting**

At the start of a parish council meeting, a councillor sought to raise a point of order. The chair ruled it inadmissible as it related to a constitutional matter which would be better addressed elsewhere. The councillor then accused the chair of being dishonest, a liar and seeking to stifle free speech and transparency. The chair moved that the meeting move on to 'next business' and this was agreed by a vote of the meeting. However, the councillor continued to disrupt the meeting with comments about the chair and the council's lack of proper procedure and accountability. The chair then asked that the councillor be "no longer heard" and this was agreed by the meeting. Following further disruption the councillor was repeatedly warned that if he continued to disrupt the meeting it would be necessary to ask him to leave. As he continued to interrupt the meeting, the chair asked the local police inspector who was at the meeting to discuss a separate police matter to ask the councillor to leave the meeting. The councillor refused to move and was told that he was disturbing the Queen's peace to which he again resisted. Eventually the inspector led the councillor from the meeting and business was allowed to resume.

The chair complains to the monitoring officer about the councillor's behaviour. The councillor in turn makes a complaint to the monitoring officer that he was not being treated with respect because the chair was refusing to listen to his legitimate concerns.

## **9. Village green parking**

A village was to have a major regeneration scheme. Part of the project included stopping cars from parking in the centre of the village around the village green and instead building alternative parking provision on the edge of the village.

The proposals were supported by the parish council but were vehemently opposed by a small number of councillors who had shops and small businesses in and around the green. The owners of the eight shops in the village, including the councillors, formed a pressure group to lobby against the parking restrictions and stood as a slate at the elections. Some but not all were elected.

At a meeting after the election to reconsider the scheme, no councillors declared any interests despite being requested to, there was a very heated meeting and support for the scheme was reaffirmed by a narrow majority. A number of complaints were made to the district council about failures to declare interests and about lack of respect, intimidation and bullying.

A further meeting was called at which no interests were again declared. Due to the previous events the Chair proposed that any person, either member of the public or councillor, making personal or sarcastic remarks during the meeting would be asked to leave and if they refused, the meeting would be closed. A Councillor then made a gesture and a reference to Hitler that was interpreted by many of those present as a 'Heil Hitler' salute and disruptive behaviour continued.

Further complaints were made to the district council, by both councillors and members of the public following this meeting.

At the next meeting the clerk reminded all members of the need to declare interests and read out the exact wording of the code but no declarations were made and further disruption was caused to the meeting. The local press started to focus on meetings of the council under the strapline 'a village divided.'

In total over 100 complaints are made to the monitoring officer over a four-month period all either by or about the shopowner councillors.

**Code of Conduct Complaints - Status Report**  
Complaints received and progressed under new arrangements

	Cases received	Cases open (cumulative)	Assessed investigation	Assessed no further action	Assessed alternative resolution/complaint withdrawn	Pending assessment	Cases closed
<b>2012</b>							
<b>May - December</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2013</b>							
<b>January – December</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>2014</b>							
<b>January</b>	5	12	0	3	2 (1** & 1 referral to Police)	0	4
<b>February</b>	5	16	0	4	1****	0	1
<b>March</b>	10	19	0	8	2 (1* & 1****)	0	7
<b>April</b>	5	19	0	2	3(1*** & 2**)	0	5
<b>May</b>	2	10	1	1	0	0	11
<b>June</b>	14	19	0	13	1 (not Code)	0	5
<b>July</b>	4	14	0	2	1**	1	9
<b>August</b>	1	13	0	1	0	0	2
<b>September</b>	0	4	0	0	0	0	9
<b>Totals to date 2014</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>53</b>

Appeals received
<b>4 (not upheld)</b>
<b>5 (not upheld)</b>
1 (not upheld)
3 (not upheld)
3 (not upheld)
0
3 (2 upheld & 1 not upheld)
1 (not upheld)
1 (not upheld)
0
1 (not upheld)
13

\*member resigned prior to assessment

\*\* clarification not supplied within time limit

\*\*\*withdrawn following informal resolution prior to assessment

\*\*\*\* withdrawn by complainant

\*\*\*\*\* pending re non adoption of new Code by parish council

### Complaints referred for investigation since 1 January 2014

Case reference	Date of Assessment	Progress
WC 10/14	18/03/2014	Investigation report completed – MO & IP to review
WC 13/14	29/04/2014	Referred for investigation on review - investigation report being drafted
WC 24/14	30/05/2014	Referred for investigation on review – investigation underway

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

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

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

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank



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

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank