

Agenda

Standards Committee

Date: **Thursday 23 October 2025**

Time: **6.00 pm**

Place: **Council Chamber**

For any further information please contact:

Francesca Whyley

Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer

0115 901 3907

Standards Committee

Membership

Chair	Councillor Paul Feeney
Vice-Chair	Councillor David Brocklebank
	Councillor Michael Adams
	Councillor Andrew Ellwood
	Councillor Andrew Meads
	Councillor Martin Smith
	Councillor Clive Towsey-Hinton
	Councillor Russell Whiting
	Rosalie Hawks
	Louise Kopyrko

WEBCASTING NOTICE

Please note that this meeting will be live streamed on the Council's YouTube channel and via the website (www.gedling.gov.uk). At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being broadcast.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during this webcast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy.

For more information about how your personal data is collected and used please view our privacy notice <https://www.gedling.gov.uk/elections-privacy/>

Responsibility of committee:

Within their terms of reference the Standards Committee will be responsible for:

- a) promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by the members and co-opted members of the council;
- b) assisting members and any co-opted members of the Council to observe the Members' Code of Conduct;
- c) advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- d) monitoring the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- e) advising, training or arranging to train members and any co-opted members of the council on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct;
- f) performing the functions set out in (a) - (e) above in respect of the parish councils in the Borough;
- g) granting dispensations to members and any co-opted members from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct;
- h) dealing with any reports from the Monitoring Officer on any matter;

- i) advising on what should be entered into the register of interests for members and co-opted members;
- j) dealing with matters relating to the recruitment of co-opted independent and parish members of the Standards Committee;
- k) dealing with matters relating to the recruitment of the Independent Person and to make recommendations to Council as to the appointment of the Independent Person.
- l) approving all strategies, policies, protocols and procedural documents that fall within the remit of the Committee (excluding budget and policy framework items).

AGENDA

Page

- 1 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions.**
- 2 To approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 26/06/2025.** 5 - 6
- 3 Declaration of Interests.**
- 4 Code of Conduct Review** 7 - 10
A report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer.
- 5 Update on Code of Conduct Complaints** 11 - 40
A report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer.
- 6 Any other item which the Chair considers urgent.**

MINUTES STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Thursday 26 June 2025

Councillor Paul Feeney (Chair)

Councillor David Brocklebank
Councillor Andrew Ellwood

Councillor Martin Smith
Councillor Clive Towsey-Hinton
Louise Kopyrko

Absent: Councillor Boyd Elliot, R Hawks

Officers in Attendance: F Whyley and L Squires

26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS.

No apologies were received, Councillor B Elliot was absent.

27 TO APPROVE, AS A CORRECT RECORD, THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22.05.25.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the above meeting, having been circulated, be approved as a correct record.

28 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

None.

29 GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY 2024-25

A report of the Monitoring Officer was circulated prior to the meeting, to inform Standards Committee of gifts and hospitality received between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 and identify any issues arising from the annual review of the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

RESOLVED:

THAT Committee:

- 1) Notes the details of the annual review of gifts and hospitality.

30 CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

The Monitoring Officer introduced a report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, to inform members of the Standards Committee of complaints received between 20 March 2025 and 26 June 2025.

RESOLVED:

THAT:

- 1) The report be noted.

31

ANY OTHER ITEM WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT.

None.

The meeting finished at 6.10 pm

Signed by Chair:

Date:



Report to Standards Committee

Subject: Review of the Code of Conduct

Date: 23 October 2025

Author: Monitoring Officer

Purpose

To seek approval to postpone a review of the Council's Member Code of Conduct to 2026/27.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- 1) **Members note the current position on the Government's consultation on the Standards regime and agree to a review of the Gedling Borough Council Code of Conduct in 2026/27.**
- 2) **Members support the development of social media guidelines for Councillors to support the Code of Conduct.**

1 Background

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires authorities to have a Code of Conduct for Members, which must include details of Member Interests and reflect the Nolan Principles. This Council adopted a new Code of Conduct in January 2024 following a review of the Code of Conduct by this Committee and a consultation. The current code reflects the Local Government Association's Model Code of Conduct.
- 1.2 The Committee on Standards in Public Life ("CSPL") Report – Review of Local Government Ethical Standards report, published in January 2019 recommended that authorities should review their Code of Conduct annually and should engage with relevant stakeholders when doing so.

This was a best practice recommendation which this Committee agreed to in July 2019.

1.3 In December 2024, the Government launched a consultation on changes to the standards regime. The consultation ended on 26 February 2025 and the feedback is being considered. The key areas for change included:

- the introduction of a mandatory minimum code of conduct for local authorities in England
- a requirement that all principal authorities convene formal standards committees to make decisions on code of conduct breaches, and publish the outcomes of all formal investigations
- the introduction of the power for all local authorities (including combined authorities) to suspend councillors or mayors found in serious breach of their code of conduct and, as appropriate, interim suspension for the most serious and complex cases that may involve police investigations
- a new category of disqualification for gross misconduct and those subject to a sanction of suspension more than once in a 5-year period
- a role for a national body to deal with appeals

In addition, the consultation seeks views on how to empower victims affected by councillor misconduct to come forward and what additional support would be appropriate to consider.

1.4 The timescales for feedback on the consultation are not clear but given the changes that are likely, including potentially a new mandatory code, it does not seem like a review of the Council's Code of Conduct at the current time is the best use of resources. In addition, there have been no changes to the Model Code of Conduct that would merit a further review of the Code at this point in time. The current Code of Conduct remains fit for purpose and Member training on the Code is being refreshed currently.

1.5 When looking at the effectiveness of the Code, the one area that could be strengthened is guidance around social media use. There have been a number of incidents reported of social media being used where the content is not always accurate and occasions where content has been offensive. The LGA guidance does provide some guidance on social media but some updated specific guidelines for members would be helpful. Guidance for staff has recently been updated.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 In light of the potential changes to the standards regime nationally and given that the current Code of Conduct remains fit for purpose, it is proposed that any review of the Council's Code of Conduct be postponed until 2026/27. Whilst this is not in accordance with CSPL best practice it is not considered to be an effective use of resource at the current time.
- 2.2 In order to support members in relation to social media usage specifically linked to Code of Conduct requirements, it is proposed that members support the creation of social media guidelines to be brought back to this Committee for consideration.

3 Alternative Options

- 3.2 That Members seek a review of the Code of Conduct in 2025/26 in line with best practice. This is not considered to be an effective use of resource, in addition such a review would involve some level of consultation and if the national position changes this may cause some confusion.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires authorities to have a Code of Conduct for Members, which must include details of Member Interests and reflect the Nolan Principles. The CSPL best practice recommendations were agreed by this Committee in July 2019 which included a review of the Code of Conduct on an annual basis. These are recommendations not legal requirement and ultimately it is for individual authorities to determine the content of their Code of Conduct.

6 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report. The Code itself does require members to act in a way that is in accordance with equality obligations in line with the Equality Act 2010.

7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications

- 7.1 There are no carbon reduction/sustainability implications arising from this report.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 None

9 Background Papers

- 9.1 [Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England - GOV.UK](#)

Statutory Officer approval

Approved by:

Date:

On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Approved by:

Date:

On behalf of the Monitoring Officer



Report to Standards Committee

Subject: Code of Conduct Complaints Update

Date: 23 October 2025

Author: Monitoring Officer

Purpose

To inform members of the Standards Committee of complaints received between 26 June 2025 and 23 October 2025.

Recommendation

THAT the report be noted.

1 Background

- 1.1 A summary of the number of complaints received since the implementation of the existing Standards regime (from 1 July 2012) is set out in the graph in Appendix 1. A summary of the complaints received since 2022/23 is set out in the table at Appendix 1. Since 26 June 2025, the Monitoring Officer has received one new Code of Conduct complaint. The Monitoring Officer has also dealt with two potential complaints which were ultimately not pursued as formal complaints.
- 1.2 Members may recall that at the last Committee, there were five complaints outstanding. Of those three complaints have concluded and the details are attached at exempt Appendix 2. Two of the complaints have now been closed as after assessment they were ultimately not deemed to be valid Code of Conduct complaints.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed that the Committee notes the report.

3 Alternative Options

- 3.1 Not to report code of conduct complaints received by the Monitoring Officer however this would be contrary to the Council's arrangements for dealing with complaints.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The costs associated with complaints are met from existing budgets.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Code of Conduct complaints must be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Approved Arrangements for Dealing with Complaints.

6 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report any equality related matters are dealt with within individual complaint responses. The complaints process is accessible and complaints can be submitted in a number of formats.

7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications

- 7.1 There are no carbon reduction/environmental sustainability implications arising from this report.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Summary of the Code of Conduct complaints received since 1 July 2012.

Appendix 2 – Exempt Appendices outcome of complaints

9 Background papers

- 9.1 None identified.

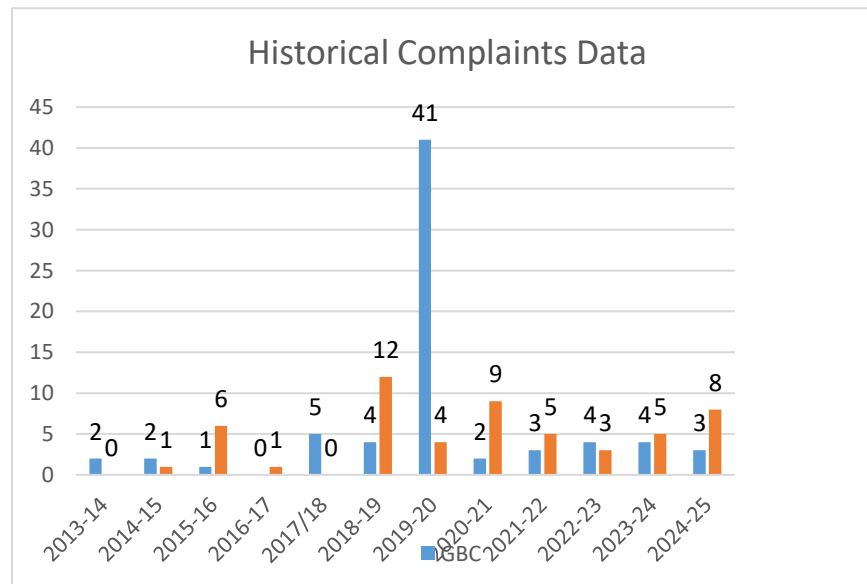
10 Reasons for Recommendation

- 10.1 To keep Committee updated on Code of Conduct Complaints

Statutory Officer approval

Approved by the Chief Financial Officer
Date:

Drafted by the Monitoring Officer



Complaint Ref	Date received	GBC/Parish Council	Complainant	Decision	Date of decision
Complaints received 2022-23					
STD002993	03/05/22	GBC	Member of the Public	Reject complaint – Conduct complained of outside the Code of Conduct	15/06/22

Complaint Ref	Date received	GBC/Parish Council	Complainant	Decision	Date of decision
STD003067	29/06/22	St Albans Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	No further action	16/09/22
STD003116	01/08/22	Calverton Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	No further action	16/11/22
STD003124	13/08/22	Gedling Borough Council	Member of the public	Reject complaint – not acting in official capacity	19/08/22
STD003126	15/08/22	Gedling Borough Council	Member of the public	Reject complaint – not acting in official capacity	19/08/22
STD003127	15/08/22	Gedling Borough Council	Member of the public	Reject complaint – not acting in official capacity	19/08/22
STD003249	30/11/22	Calverton Parish Council	Member of the public	Informal Resolution, apology given – no further action	10/03/23
Complaints received 2023-24					
STD003558	13/04/23	Burton Joyce Parish Council	Member of the Public	No further action	13/7/2023
STD003677	30/6/23	St Albans Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	Investigation concluded – No breach, no further action	27/6/24
STD003687	10/7/23	Newstead Parish council	Member of the Public	Potential breach identified – informal resolution proposed	17/08/23
STD003690	13/7/23	Newstead Parish Council	Member of the	Potential breach identified – informal	17/08/23

Complaint Ref	Date received	GBC/Parish Council	Complainant	Decision	Date of decision
			Public	resolution proposed	
STD004065	26/1/24	GBC	Member of the Public	No further action	8/2/24
STD004092	16/2/24	GBC	Member of the Public	No further action	29/2/24
STD004118	6/3/24	GBC	Member of the Public	No further action	28/3/24
STD004121	9/3/24	GBC	Member of the Public	Withdrawn	1/7/24
STD004143	27/3/24	St Albans Parish Council	Member of the Public	No further action	14/8/24
Complaints Received 2024/25					
STD004264	28/6/24	St Albans Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	No further action	3/10/24
STD004302	27/7/24	GBC	Member of the Public	Investigation concluded – breach found Local Resolution	19/11/24
STD004323	3/8/24	GBC	Councillor GBC	Investigation concluded – breach found, local resolution	19/11/24
STD004450	19/8/24	St Albans Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	No Further Action	19/12/24

Complaint Ref	Date received	GBC/Parish Council	Complainant	Decision	Date of decision
STD004347	23/8/24	St Albans Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	Closed – insufficient evidence	2/12/24
STD004358	31/8/24	St Albans Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	Withdrawn	Jan 24
STD004455	14/10/24	St Albans Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	Closed – insufficient evidence	Jan 25
STD004520	17/11/24	Calverton Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	Referred for investigation – no breach found	16/5/25
STD004563	28/11/24	St Albans Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	Initial Assessment: Potential Breach Informal Resolution	3/2/25
STD004775	30/12/24	St Albans Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	Withdrawn	3/4/25
STD004862	26/03/25	GBC	Councillor (GBC)	No further action – no breach	27/05/25
Complaints received 2025/26					
STD004885	7/4/25	St Albans Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	No further action – no breach	21/8/25
STD004928	23/5/25	St Albans Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	No further action – no breach	20/8/25
STD004950	2/5/25	St Albans Parish council	Councillor (not GBC)	No further action – no breach	7/8/25

Complaint Ref	Date received	GBC/Parish Council	Complainant	Decision	Date of decision
STD004958	28/5/25	St Albans Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	Not valid Code complaint	13/8/25
STD004929	13/5/25	St Albans Parish Council	Member of the Public	Not valid code complaint	13/8/25
STD005071	7/8/25	GBC	Member of the public	Ongoing	

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank