

Agenda

Standards Committee

Date: **Thursday 25 June 2026**

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

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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

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- 1 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions**
- 2 To approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 19/03/2026** 5 - 7
- 3 Declaration of Interests**
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Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer
- 5 Update to Register of Interests report** 17 - 20
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer
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Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer
- 7 Any other item which the Chair considers urgent**

MINUTES STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Thursday 19 March 2026

Councillor David Brocklebank (Chair)

Councillor Paul Feeney
Councillor Andrew Ellwood
Councillor Andrew Meads
Councillor Martin Smith

Councillor Clive Towsey-Hinton
Councillor Russell Whiting
Councillor Darren Maltby
Louise Kopyrko
Mr J.R. Baggaley

Officers in Attendance: F Whyley, N Osei and L Squires

38 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Michael Adams and Rosalie Hawks, with Councillor Darren Maltby acting as substitute for Councillor Adams.

39 TO APPROVE, AS A CORRECT RECORD, THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23/10/2025

RESOLVED:

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

40 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

Councillor Meads declared an interest in item 7 of the agenda.

41 SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE

The report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer was circulated prior to the meeting, to seek approval of the Social Media Guidance for Councillors.

RESOLVED:

That:

- 1) Members approve the Social Media Guidance at Appendix 1.

42 UPDATE ON STANDARDS REGIME

The report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer was circulated prior to the meeting, to update members on the Government's response to a consultation on changes to the Standards Regime.

RESOLVED:

That:

- 1) Members note the content of the report.

43 RECRUITMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS

The report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer was circulated prior to the meeting, to seek approval to recommend to Council the appointment of the current Independent Person David Walsh and Reserve Independent Person John Baggaley for a further two - year term or until the authority is dissolved through Local Government Reorganisation, whichever is sooner.

RESOLVED:

That:

- 1) Members recommend to Council the appointment of David Walsh as Independent Person and John Baggaley as Reserve Independent Person for a further 2 year term or until the dissolution of the authority following Local Government Reorganisation.

44 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and press will be excluded from the meeting during consideration of item 10 on the grounds that the report involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

45 UPDATE ON CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

The report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer was circulated prior to the meeting, to inform members of the Standards Committee of complaints received between 23 October 2025 and 19 March 2026.

Councillor Smith asked whether Councillor Wheeler had made an apology in regard to his Code of Conduct complaint and whether any training had been provided.

The Deputy Chief Executive stated that an apology had been made, and Councillor Wheeler will undertake training.

RESOLVED:

That:

- 1) The report be noted.

46 ANY OTHER ITEM WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT.

None.

The meeting finished at 6.24 pm

Signed by Chair:
Date:

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Report to Standards Committee

Subject: Gifts and Hospitality 2025/26

Date: 25 June 2026

Author: Monitoring Officer

Purpose

To inform Standards Committee of gifts and hospitality received between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026 and identify any issues arising from the annual review of the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

Recommendation

THAT Committee:

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

1 Background

- 1.1 The Council has a Gifts and Hospitality Code of Practice for Members and Officers to enable Members and Officers to decide on the circumstances and the manner in which gifts and hospitality may be accepted. The Code of Practice was reviewed during 2023 and minor amendments approved by both Standards Committee (December 2023) and Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee (October 2023). The register for officers is held centrally on the online Employee Claims system. The system automatically sends an email reminder to Managers at the end of each quarter requesting that they ensure the register entries are up to date.
- 1.2 Updates on the Gifts and Hospitality register entries are reported through the year to Senior Leadership Team.

- 1.3 The register of gifts and hospitality for Members is still held in an electronic folder in the I:Drive and is updated on the Monitoring Officer's behalf by Democratic Services. Members received induction training in 2023 on the need to notify the Monitoring Officer of gifts and hospitality accepted in excess of £50 as this will be included on their register of interests in line with the Member Code of Conduct. In addition to this requirement, Members should notify the Monitoring Officer of any gifts and hospitality offered for inclusion on the members Gifts and Hospitality register. Members are being reminded regularly to keep their Register of Interests including gifts and hospitality received up to date.
- 1.4 The entries on the Register for officers shows that during 2025/26, across the Council's officers, 40 offers of gifts were made, a slight increase on the 38 last year; no gifts were refused. There was one recorded offer of hospitality. The offer was tickets to a sporting event which were correctly refused by officers.
- 1.5 The most commonly recorded gifts were boxes of chocolates, boxes of biscuits and flowers given by members of the public to staff which were generally shared amongst teams. Quarter 3, over the festive period remains the busiest in terms of receiving gifts. Whilst officers are not encouraged to accept gifts personally, it is noted that on a number of occasions low level gifts were accepted so as not cause offence, or the gift was simply left at reception so could not be refused. In addition, gifts have been shared across teams rather than given to an individual officer.
- 1.6 The Gifts and Hospitality Register for Officers appears at Appendix 1. There were no gifts recorded on the Gifts and Hospitality Register for Members in 2025/26.
- 1.7 A review of the registered entries has identified that managers are generally prompt to respond and authorise gifts and hospitality where appropriate. Only one reported gift was considered to be of higher than average value, this was a "goodie bag" containing various items received at a conference estimated to be worth £80 which was reported by two officers attending a conference. The items were repurposed for use across the team. The bag was given to all attendees at the conference so was not a direct gift to Council employees only.
- 1.9 Managers have been reminded of the importance of ensuring gifts and hospitality are correctly recorded and dealt with in accordance with the Code of Practice.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed that the Committee notes the report in terms of the annual review of Gifts and Hospitality.

3 Alternative Options

- 3.1 Not to provide an update on gifts and hospitality offered to officers and members, however, given that the Code relates to officers and members, this is considered to be the appropriate forum for consideration of such offers.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report, as indicated, all gifts and hospitality accepted were of a low value.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 With regard to Officers, Section 117(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that an Officer of a Local Authority shall not, under the colour of his or her office of employment, accept any fee or reward whatsoever other than his or her proper remuneration. The Bribery Act 2010 makes it an offence to seek, accept or agree to accept a financial or other advantage as an inducement or reward to perform a function improperly. In simple terms, it is a criminal offence for employees to seek or accept a financial or other advantage in return for making a decision, granting an award or performing any other public function, regardless of what decision is made.
- 5.2 The Code of Conduct requires Members to notify the Council's Monitoring Officer in writing of any gift, benefit or hospitality with a value in excess of £50.00 which they have accepted as a member from any person or body other than the authority within 28 days of receipt. Under the Code of Practice, members are also required to record gifts and hospitality on the gifts and hospitality register, in addition, refusal of gifts offered should also be recorded.
- 5.3 The Council has a Gifts and Hospitality Code of Practice for Members and Officers which has been approved by Standards Committee and Appointments & Conditions of Service Committee but which should be

kept under review.

6 Equalities Implications

6.1 There are no direct equality implications arising from this report.

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 - Gifts and Hospitality Register for Officers 2025/26

9 Background Papers

9.1 None.

10 Local Government Reorganisation

10.1 As we progress through Local Government Reorganisation, there will need to be an alignment of policies in relation to Gifts and Hospitality. A review of the policy in 2026/27 is likely to ensure best practice across the new authority. The Code of Practice currently remains fit for purpose.

Statutory Officer approval

Approved by the Chief Financial Officer

Date:

Drafted by the Monitoring Officer

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Department	Offer Date	Description	Amount	Acceptance
Financial Services	29/10/2025	Bag of sweets	4.00	Accepted
Development Services	29/10/2025	Bag of Celebrations chocolates	5.00	Accepted
Information & Comms Technology	16/03/2026	Box of Jaffa Cakes	1.49	Accepted
Public Protection	02/04/2025	Tote bag. Bag contains an umbrella, 2 note books, several packs of mini sweets, two pens, two hand sanitisers, box of small chocolates promotion book from finders international	10.00	Accepted
Housing	07/10/2025	box of chocolates	3.00	Accepted
Housing	19/11/2025	box of chocolates for team	4.50	Accepted
Leisure	28/10/2025	Hospitality tickets for the England vs Argentina Rugby Union match at Twickenham on 23rd November 2025.	500.00	Refused
Executive Office	28/10/2025	bag of 'celebrations' chocolates	5.00	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	30/06/2025	Belgian Chocolate Sea Shells	3.50	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	16/12/2025	Box of Christmas biscuits	3.50	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	18/12/2025	Quality Street	3.50	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	19/12/2025	Box of Heroes	3.50	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	19/12/2025	box of celebrations	3.50	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	19/12/2025	Box of Celebrations	3.50	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	19/12/2025	Tub of Celebrations	3.50	Accepted
Housing	09/02/2026	Cadburys Dairy Milk Tray 312g & thank you card	7.00	Accepted
Calverton Leisure Centre	07/04/2025	Box of Bournville Chocolates	5.00	Accepted
Democratic Services	13/09/2025	Flowers to say thank you for Civic Service efforts	10.00	Accepted
Democratic Services	08/12/2025	Chocolates for christmas for the team	5.00	Accepted
Democratic Services	15/12/2025	Chocolates for Christmas for the team	5.00	Accepted
Democratic Services	16/12/2025	Chocolates for Christmas for team	5.00	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	06/09/2025	£10 cash left at reception by a customer and transferred to Mayors Charity	10.00	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	11/12/2025	3 tubs of chocolates for all staff	9.00	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	10/03/2026	Small bunch of flowers	3.00	Accepted
Leisure Services	05/06/2025	Goody bag from Evolve leisure conference – shared amongst team	80.00	Accepted

		– water bottles skipping ropes, hand grips		
Arnold Leisure Centre	18/12/2025	Chocolate	3.85	Accepted
Arnold Leisure Centre	18/12/2025	Chocolate	3.50	Accepted
Arnold Leisure Centre	18/12/2025	Chocolate	3.50	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	11/06/2025	A number of "freebies " obtained from a running event at the weekend by the customer. These include 6 grenade bars and a electrolyte replacement drinks and various other drinks including one 250ml low alcohol lager and two gin and mixer250ml cans. Shared amongst team.	10.00	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	29/08/2025	a carrier bag of pears from members pear tree	0.00	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	05/12/2025	Quality street	5.00	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	10/12/2025	4 home made mince pies	3.00	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	10/12/2025	box of 6 sainsburys mince pies	1.25	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	12/12/2025	Small crate of clementines	5.00	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	12/12/2025	Victoria Biscuit selection	3.34	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	15/12/2025	400G BOX OF McVities family circle biscuits	4.25	Accepted
Redhill Leisure Centre	28/01/2026	Box of Heros and Foxes biscuits	4.99	Accepted
Leisure Services	05/06/2025	A bag with a variety of different things- dna testing kit, water bottle , skipping rope, grips, wristbands	80.00	Accepted
Property	13/10/2025	Book - The People and the Park. Part One of the Story of Arnolds Arnot Hill Park by Bob Massey	7.50	Accepted
Democratic Services	27/11/2025	Box of biscuits	5.00	Accepted
Democratic Services	10/12/2025	Tub of Quality Street	5.00	Accepted



Report to Standards Committee

Subject: Update to Register of Interests Requirements

Date: 25 June 2026

Author: Monitoring Officer

Purpose

This report is to raise awareness of changes to the requirements to provide home addresses on registers of interest.

Recommendation

THAT Committee:

- 1) Notes the report

1 Background

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 ("the Act") provides that relevant authorities are required to establish and maintain a Register of Interests for their members and co-opted members. For parish councils this register is maintained by the district council.
- 1.2 The Act also requires that the Register of Interests must include details of interests that are Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as defined by regulation. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) include any beneficial interest in land that a member or co-opted member holds within the authority's area. Members and co-opted members have therefore been required to disclose their home address, where they have a beneficial interest in the property within the District or Parish boundary on their Register of Interests.

- 1.3 As the Act requires that Register of Interests are published and available for public inspection, members and co-opted members home addresses, where disclosed as a DPI have been publicly available. The only exception to this is where a member or co-opted member has asked and the Monitoring Officer has agreed that their address be recorded as a sensitive interest. Sensitive interests as set out in s.32 of the Act can be excluded from the Register of Interests where the disclosure of that interest could lead to violence or intimidation of a member, co-opted member or their family.
- 1.4 On 29 June 2026, changes to the Act will come into effect which change the position in relation to the publication of members and co-opted members home addresses where these are a DPI. Section 32A is being inserted into the Act by virtue of section 65 of the English Devolution & Community Empowerment Act 2026. Under this provision, authorities are no longer required to publish home addresses of members and co-opted members in public registers of interests unless a member or co-opted member opts-in to the publication of their home address.
- 1.5 The changes to legislation have been implemented following growing concerns about the safety of members and the potential risks associated with publicly available information about home addresses. The non-publication of home addresses protects the privacy of members and co-opted members.
- 1.6 As a result of the changes to legislation, the Council has contacted all Councillors to advise them of the changes and specifically requested that any member or co-opted member wishing to publish their home address to provide their explicit consent. Members will still be required to disclose home addresses to the Council, and the Council will still be required to maintain a list of home addresses where they are DPIs, but the addresses will not be published without consent. The Council will also be updating register of interest forms to reflect the opt-in requirements in respect of home addresses. The same approach is being taken with parish councils with advice being issued to clerks.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed that Members note the content of this report including the changes to process for DPIs in respect of land. The same approach will be taken with members and co-opted members of parish councils who will be advised to “opt-in” if they require their address to be published.

3 Alternative Options

- 3.1 This change is mandated by the Localism Act from 29 June 2026 so there are no alternative options to consider.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 It is a legal requirement as detailed within the report that changes to Register of Interests are made. Any publication of home addresses will now require explicit consent from a member or co-opted member and the aim is to safeguard any potential risks associated with the publication of members home addresses and protect members and co-opted members privacy.

6 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct equality implications arising from this report.

7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications

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

8 Appendices

- 8.1 None

9 Background Papers

9.1 None.

10 Local Government Reorganisation

10.1 All authorities will be required to make the changes outlined within the report.

Statutory Officer approval

Approved by the Chief Financial Officer

Date:

Drafted by the Monitoring Officer



Report to Standards Committee

Subject: Code of Conduct Complaints Update

Date: 25 June 2026

Author: Monitoring Officer

Purpose

To inform members of the Standards Committee of complaints received between 19 March 2026 and 25 June 2026.

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 2023/24 is set out in the table at Appendix 1. Since 19 March 2026, the Monitoring Officer has received one new Code of Conduct complaint. This complaint is ongoing.
- 1.2 Members may recall that at the last Committee, there were five complaints outstanding (from ten new complaints received). Of these five complaints, all have now concluded. All five of these complaints related to the conduct of Councillors of the former St. Albans Parish Council which dissolved on 31 March 2026. Prior to the dissolution of the parish, all complaints were concluded to initial assessment whilst councillors were still in office. In four of the complaints, at initial assessment stage a potential breach of the Code of Conduct was found. In all four cases, informal resolutions were proposed. In all four cases as far as the Council is aware the informal resolution was not completed and in one case it was rejected by the subject member complained about.
- 1.3 Given the very unique circumstances surrounding the former St. Albans Parish Council, in that it was to be dissolved at the time the complaints were considered, whilst initial assessment findings were made against councillors

when they were still in office, the timing to progress complaints was challenging. Where informal resolutions were not accepted or carried through, there was insufficient time to refer the matters for full investigation and hearing prior to the dissolution of the Council. In addition, as the Councillors no longer held office from 31st March 2026 for St. Albans Parish Council, and the Council itself ceased to exist, there was no authority in existence to impose sanctions in the event that an investigation and hearing resulted in findings of breach.

- 1.4 Some of the Councillors complained about have gone on to become Councillors on the two new parishes established of Deer Park Parish Council and St Albans Parish Council, however, as these are new Councils they do not have the authority to impose sanctions on Councillors of a previous authority. At the time of completing the assessments it was not known whether the councillors would stand again to be part of the new parishes.
- 1.5 Having considered the position in relation to the publication of findings, it is considered in the public interest that the outcome of the initial assessments, where a potential breach was found be published, as, at the time of the decision, all Councillors held office as Councillors for the former St. Albans Parish Council. A summary of the outcome of four of the complaints is shown at Appendix 2. The outcome of one of the complaints is shown at Exempt Appendix 3. Also at Appendix 3 is the outcome of a complaint which was referenced in the previous report to Committee in March but not published.

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 – Outcome of complaints x4

Appendix 3 – Exempt Appendices

9 Background papers

9.1 None identified.

10 Reasons for Recommendation

10.1 To keep Committee updated on Code of Conduct Complaints

11 Local Government Reorganisation

10.1 Any new authority must adopt a Code of Conduct for its Members and arrangements as to how complaints will be managed.

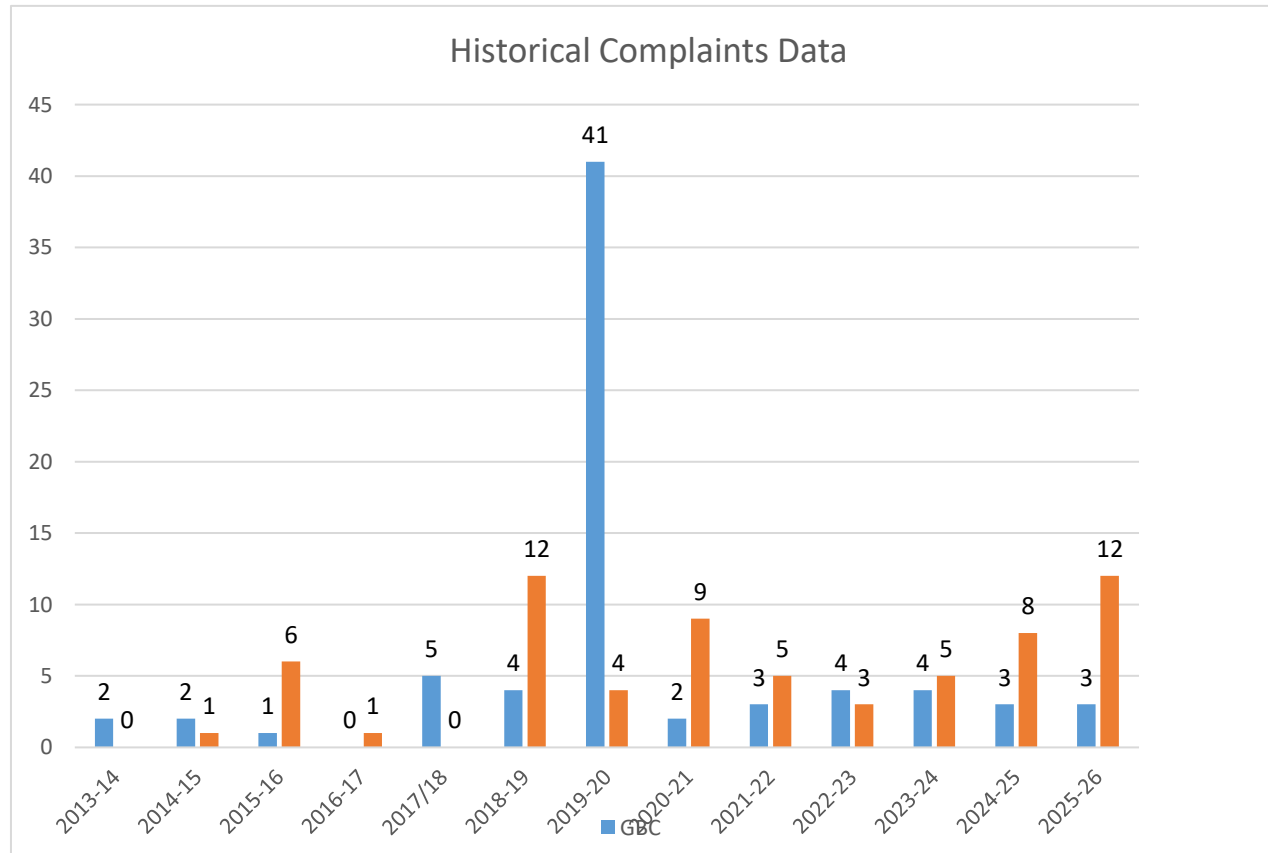
Statutory Officer approval

Approved by the Chief Financial Officer

Date:

Drafted by the Monitoring Officer

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Complaint Ref	Date received	GBC/Parish Council	Complainant	Decision	Date of decision
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	Investigation concluded – No breach, no	27/6/24

Complaint Ref	Date received	GBC/Parish Council	Complainant	Decision	Date of decision
			GBC)	further action	
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 Public	Potential breach identified – informal resolution proposed	17/08/23
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

Complaint Ref	Date received	GBC/Parish Council	Complainant	Decision	Date of decision
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
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

Complaint Ref	Date received	GBC/Parish Council	Complainant	Decision	Date of decision
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
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	Initial Assessment – Informal Resolution	20/11/25
STD005190	14/10/25	GBC	Councillor GBC	No further action – no breach	23/12/25
STD005192	14/10/25	St Albans Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	No further action – no breach	15/12/25
STD005193	14/10/25	St Albans Parish Council	Councillor (not GBC)	No further action – no breach	15/12/25
STD005231	3/11/2025	St Albans Parish Councillor	Councillor GBC	Initial Assessment - Potential Breach – Informal Resolution	23/3/26
STD005267	14/11/25	St Albans Parish Councillor	Member of the Public	Initial Assessment - Potential Breach – Informal Resolution	2/3/26
STD005270	2/11/25	GBC	Member of the	Not Valid Code Complaint	4/12/25

Complaint Ref	Date received	GBC/Parish Council	Complainant	Decision	Date of decision
			Public		
STD005462	16/1/26	St Albans Parish council	Councillor (not GBC)	Initial Assessment - Potential breach – Informal Resolution	30/3/26
STD005509	5/2/26	St Albans Parish Council	Member of the Public	Initial Assessment – Potential breach – Informal Resolution	25/3/26
STD005528	22/2/26	St Albans Parish Councillor	Councillor GBC	No further action – not acting in capacity	23/3/26
Complaints Received 2026/27					
STD005695	29/5/26	GBC	Councillor GBC	Ongoing	

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Decision Notice: Potential Breach – Informal Resolution

Reference: STD005231

Complaint

On 23rd March 2026, the Monitoring Officer, Francesca Whyley, in consultation with the Independent Person, David Walsh considered a complaint from a Gedling Borough Councillor, (“the complainant”) regarding an alleged breach of the St Albans Parish Council Member Code of Conduct by Councillor Boulby a parish councillor at St Albans Parish Council.

The complainant complains about the behaviour of Councillor Boulby as follows:

The complainant has complained that Councillor Sam Boulby of St Albans Parish Council has made posts on face book about the complainant that cast doubt on the complainant’s ability as a Councillor due to the complainant’s registered disability which Councillor Boulby has put in the public domain.

The complainant feels that the posts amount to harassment and discrimination and are contrary to the Equality Act 2010. The complainant has asked for an apology and for the messages to be deleted and this has been refused.

The complainant is also concerned that Councillor Boulby publicly states in his posts that 'Parish Councils are crap!' This does nothing to maintain the public trust and the complainant feel these actions fall well below the standard required by Councillor Boulby’s office.

The complainant has alleged that he feels the comments by Councillor Boulby show a lack of respect and amount to bullying and harassment and discrimination. In addition the complainant the comments about parish council’s cast doubt on such authorities abilities to function and may amount to disrepute. As such I consider that the rules of the Code of Conduct relevant to this complaint are as follows: para 7 rule 2:

2. Bullying, harassment, and discrimination

As a councillor:

2.1 I do not bully any person.

2.2 I do not harass any person.

2.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person

I have also considered para 7 rule 1.

1. Respect

As a councillor:

1.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.

And rule 5:

5. Disrepute

As a councillor:

5.1 I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute.

Decision

Section 27(2) of the Localism Act 2011 requires all relevant authorities to "adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting in that capacity."

St Albans Parish Council has adopted such a Code of Conduct which reflects this and states:

"5.2 This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:

- you misuse your position as a councillor
- your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a councillor.

5.3 The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements, and comments.

The conduct complained about arose from social media posts. The posts, whilst not clearly made by Councillor Boulby as a parish councillor initially do follow a thread where the complainant references that Councillor Boulby is a parish councillor and that is accepted.

Given that the comments stem from reference to Councillor Boulby's role as a parish Councillor and his view on the complainant's attendance at parish meetings, it is clear from the exchange that Councillor Boulby is a parish councillor and his continued engagement on that basis would give the impression that he was acting in his capacity as a councillor.

In accordance with Sections 28 (6) and (7) of the Localism Act 2011, having carefully considered the allegation in accordance with the Council's Arrangements for Dealing with Complaints about breach of the Code of Conduct, and taking into account:

- a) The complainant's account and social media posts
- b) Councillor Boulby's response
- c) The St Albans Parish Council Code of Conduct
- d) The Local Government Associations Guidance on Code of Conduct
- e) Relevant case law and Article 10 right to freedom of expression

I have determined that on balance, there is a potential breach of the Code of Conduct in this instance. Councillor Boulby has made comments about the complainants ability to perform his role as a Councillor due to PTSD and whilst I have considered Councillor Boulby's right to freedom of expression and the higher threshold extended to Councillors in line with case law, I do consider the comments are personal and suggest that the complainant is incapable due to his PTSD which is on balance disrespectful and does not promote equality, such comments could also potentially be considered discriminatory.

I also consider that the comment made about parish councils being "crap" undermines the public's confidence in the effectiveness of parish councils and could on balance bring the authority into disrepute, as could the disrespectful comments about PTSD.

I do not consider that a further investigation is necessary into this matter as the complaint relates to posts which have been provided. Investigation is disproportionate in light of the resources required which would likely come to the same conclusion.

I consider that this matter can be resolved through a public apology. I would also suggest that Councillor Boulby attend some training in relation to social media usage and equality, diversity and inclusion and how both link to the Code of Conduct.

Decision Notice: Potential Breach Informal Resolution

Reference: STD005462

Complaint

On 30th March 2026, the Monitoring Officer, Francesca Whyley, in consultation with the Independent Person, David Walsh considered a complaint from a St Albans Parish Councillor, Councillor King ("the complainant") regarding an alleged breach of the St Albans Parish Council Member Code of Conduct by Councillor Dylan Jones a parish councillor at St Albans Parish Council

The complainant complains about the behaviour of Councillor Jones is summarised below:

Councillor Jones has made comments on social media which are contrary to the code of conduct and this is following a previous finding of potential breach against Councillor Jones in February 2025.

The complainant has submitted posts to support his complaint which are attached. The complainant alleges that the use of vulgar language and criticism of Council officers could bring the Council into disrepute.

In one post Councillor Jones identifies himself as the Chair of the parish Council then uses the word "shite" in the post.

In a further post Councillor Jones states:

"Council officers went to stop us planting flowers and making areas look nice we just rise up and fight back. For some reason they have a hate boner against beautifying areas that have been neglected and full of weeds and litter."

The complainant has alleged that he feels the comments by Councillor Jones show a lack of respect and bring the Council into disrepute. As such I consider that the rules of the Code of Conduct relevant to this complaint are as follows: para 7 rule 2:

I have also considered para 7 rule 1.

2. Respect

As a councillor:

2.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.

And rule 5:

5. Disrepute

As a councillor:

5.1 I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute.

Decision

Acting in capacity as a Councillor

Section 27(2) of the Localism Act 2011 requires all relevant authorities to "adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting in that capacity."

St Albans Parish Council has adopted such a Code of Conduct which reflects this and states:

"5.2 This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:

- you misuse your position as a councillor
- your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a councillor.

5.3 The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements, and comments.

The conduct complained about arose from social media posts. In one of the posts, Councillor Jones does indicate that he is the Chair of the parish Council and uses the word "shite". I am satisfied that Councillor Jones does not give the impression he is acting in his capacity as a Councillor and as such the Code of Conduct is engaged.

Another post is made on the Be Kind in Bestwood, Top Valley and Rise Park page. This is specifically in reference to planting flowers which Councillor Jones frequently posts about in his capacity as Councillor. Again, it is not clear in what capacity this particular post was made and the post has since been edited to remove reference to the offensive terms. I recognise that Councillor Jones is the administrator of the page so would have had opportunity to edit it. Again, looking at the post and the context I have considered whether he is acting in his capacity as a Councillor or whether he "appears" to the public to be doing so. It is unclear who he is referencing as "us" in the post and which Council officers he refers to, although it appears to relate to the City Council. I do consider the language used in the post to be inappropriate and offensive and disrespectful to officers of whichever authority. On balance, given that he is talking about planters in the parish and the post makes reference to "us" and that within this particular page he appears to be referring to Council business that he could be perceived by the public as acting in his capacity as a Councillor.

In accordance with Sections 28 (6) and (7) of the Localism Act 2011, having carefully considered the allegation in accordance with the Council's Arrangements for Dealing with Complaints about breach of the Code of Conduct, and taking into account:

- f) The complainant's account and social media posts and messages
- g) The St Albans Parish Council Code of Conduct
- h) The Local Government Associations Guidance on Code of Conduct
- i) Relevant case law and Article 10 right to freedom of expression

I have determined that on balance, there is a potential breach of the Code of Conduct in this instance. Councillor Jones's language on social media, predominantly his use of a swear word and inappropriate language in a post in which he identifies himself as a parish councillor shows a lack of respect to the wider public. By extension, this undermines public confidence in his office and as such potentially brings his role and his Council into disrepute.

In addition, a post he makes about planting flowers in which he refers to council officers having a "hate boner" does, demonstrate a potential lack of respect as this terminology is unprofessional and offensive. In addition, as the comment is made about council officers (although unclear which council) this could bring that authority into disrepute and, as a Councillor, using such offensive terminology reflects negatively on the office of Councillor and arguably brings that office into disrepute.

I have considered what action to propose in relation to this complaint. I am concerned, as is highlighted by the complainant that this is not the first finding of a breach of the Code of Conduct in relation to this Councillor and whilst previously (February 2025) an informal resolution including an apology was given, the same issue was being considered, essentially inappropriate and disrespectful language used on social media.

I am, however, acutely aware that as of 31st March 2026 St Albans Parish Council will be dissolved and Councillor Jones will no longer be a parish councillor. In considering whether this matter should proceed to full investigation, I was mindful that any investigation and ultimately any hearing would not conclude until after 31st March 2026 investigations can take up to six months. In addition, whilst ultimately an investigation and hearing panel (if called) may find a breach and recommend sanctions, it is only the Parish council who can ultimately agree and impose sanctions on parish councillors under the current regime.

In the absence of the current St Albans Parish Council for which Councillor Jones is a Councillor and without the knowledge as to whether Councillor Jones would be a Councillor in the future, whilst full investigation may have been warranted, at this stage it is unclear whether any sanctions would be realistic.

I do consider that the behaviour falls below the standard expected of a councillor and given current circumstances I do consider it appropriate that some action is taken in relation to this matter. Under the options available to me given the dissolution of the parish I propose that this matter be dealt with by way of local resolution. I recommend that Councillor Jones expresses his regret and apology publicly for his use of disrespectful language on social media.

I also recommend that Councillor Jones attends training on the Code of Conduct including the use of social media if he is to continue as a parish Councillor. The decision in relation to this matter will be published at the next Standards Committee. Whilst I appreciate Councillor Jones may not be a Councillor at that point, I do consider that it is in the public interest for his conduct in office to be reported publicly to the Standards Committee.

Decision Notice: Potential Breach Informal Resolution

Reference: STD005509

Complaint

On 25th March 2026, the Monitoring Officer, Francesca Whyley, in consultation with the Independent Person, David Walsh considered a complaint from a resident, (“the complainant”) regarding an alleged breach of the St Albans Parish Council Member Code of Conduct by Councillor Dylan Jones a parish councillor at St Albans Parish Council

The complainant complains about the behaviour of Councillor Jones as follows:

The complainant has complained that Councillor Jones of St Albans Parish Council has made a number of posts on social media which are offensive due to the language used. The complainant has also alleged that the Councillor Jones directly messaged a comment which was of a sexual nature and amounts to sexual harassment of the complainant.

In response to the complaint Councillor Jones has demonstrated remorse for his actions. He has accepted that some of his language in the social media posts was not as measured as it should have been and he regrets that. He explains that the comments on social media were as a result of an increasingly heated discussion with the complainant on local issues.

In relation to the allegation of sexual harassment, Councillor Jones does not accept his conduct amounted to sexual harassment. He states it was an isolated comment made in the context of a heated exchange. He indicated it was a flippant remark, a sarcastic use of a turn of phrase and not as a genuine or serious comment. Councillor Jones states he accepts it may have been misinterpreted and regrets any offence caused.

Councillor Jones recognises that ongoing engagement via private messaging was not appropriate, accepts it was a mistake and states that he will ensure his future use of social media reflects the standard expected of his role.

The complainant has alleged that he feels the comments by Councillor Jones show a lack of respect and amount to sexual harassment. As such I consider that the rules of the Code of Conduct relevant to this complaint are as follows: para 7 rule 2:

2. Bullying, harassment, and discrimination

As a councillor:

2.1 I do not bully any person.

2.2 I do not harass any person.

2.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person

I have also considered para 7 rule 1.

3. Respect

As a councillor:

3.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.

And rule 5:

5. Disrepute

As a councillor:

5.1 I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute.

Decision

Acting in capacity as a Councillor

Section 27(2) of the Localism Act 2011 requires all relevant authorities to "adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting in that capacity."

St Albans Parish Council has adopted such a Code of Conduct which reflects this and states:

"5.2 This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:

- you misuse your position as a councillor
- your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a councillor.

5.3 The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements, and comments.

The conduct complained about arose from social media posts and private messages. In the posts, Councillor Jones does indicate that he is a Councillor and whilst the discussions relate to local issues, and aren't all specifically linked to parish matters, Councillor Jones has made his role clear. It is following on from public posts that Councillor Jones moves to privately messaging the complainant. I am satisfied that Councillor Jones does give the impression he is acting in his capacity as a Councillor and as such the Code of Conduct is engaged.

In accordance with Sections 28 (6) and (7) of the Localism Act 2011, having carefully considered the allegation in accordance with the Council's Arrangements for Dealing with Complaints about breach of the Code of Conduct, and taking into account:

- j) The complainant's account and social media posts and messages
- k) Councillor Jones's response
- l) The St Albans Parish Council Code of Conduct
- m) The Local Government Associations Guidance on Code of Conduct
- n) Relevant Case law and Article 10 right to freedom of expression and the Equality Act 2010

I have determined that on balance, there is a potential breach of the Code of Conduct in this instance. Councillor Jones's language on social media, predominantly his repeated use of swear words in posts and the way he addresses the complainant publicly calling him a strange fella is not appropriate, shows a lack of respect to the complainant and the wider public and by extension undermines public confidence in his office and as such brings his role and his Council into disrepute. In addition Councillor Jones makes comments about officers (linked to St Albans Parish council) which are not respectful.

In addition, on balance, Councillor Jones's private messages to the complainant asking whether the complainant "had the hots" for him, could be considered to amount to sexual harassment and as such would potentially amount to a breach of the Code of conduct. In addition, throughout the private messages, whilst the complainant may have been persistent in his exchanges, the response from a Councillor in public office was disproportionate and showed a continued lack of respect to the complainant which could also be perceived as bullying.

I have considered Councillor Jones's right to freedom of expression and the higher threshold extended to Councillors in line with case law, however, whilst these comments in some instances may have been linked to political debate, this was not a Council debate but an interaction both publicly and privately with a member of the public and I consider, the comments were contrary to the Code of Conduct.

I have considered what action to propose in relation to this complaint. I recognise that Councillor Jones has expressed remorse for his actions in his response to the complaint, I also recognise that it was not his intention to sexually harass the complainant. Whilst this is some mitigation, I am concerned that this is not the first finding of a breach of the Code of Conduct in relation to this Councillor and whilst previously (February 2025) an informal resolution including an apology was given, the same issue was being considered, essentially inappropriate and disrespectful language used on social media.

I am concerned that any local resolution to this matter may be inadequate given that Councillor Jones does not appear to have learned from previous decisions and resolutions.

I am, however, acutely aware that as of 31st March 2026 St Albans Parish Council will be dissolved and Councillor Jones will no longer be a parish councillor. In considering whether this matter should proceed to full investigation, I am mindful that any investigation and ultimately any hearing would not conclude until after 31st March 2026. In addition, whilst ultimately an investigation and hearing panel (if called) may find a breach and recommend sanctions, it is only the Parish council who can ultimately agree and impose sanctions on parish councillors under the current regime.

In the absence of the current St Albans Parish Council for which Councillor Jones is a Councillor and without the knowledge as to whether Councillor Jones would be a Councillor in the future, whilst full investigation might have been warranted, at this stage it is unclear whether any sanctions would be realistic.

I do consider that the behaviour falls below the standard expected of a councillor and given current circumstances I do consider it appropriate that some action is taken in relation to this matter. Under the options available to me given the dissolution of the parish I propose that this matter be dealt with by way of local resolution. I recommend

that Councillor Jones expresses his regret and apology publicly for his use of disrespectful language on social media. I also recommend that Councillor Jones issues a private written apology to the complainant through the Monitoring Officer.

I also recommend that Councillor Jones attends training on the Code of Conduct including the use of social media. The decision in relation to this matter will be published at the next Standards Committee. Whilst I appreciate Councillor Jones may not be a Councillor at that point, I do consider that it is in the public interest for his conduct in office to be reported publicly to the Standards Committee.

Decision Notice: Potential Breach Informal Resolution

Reference: STD005267

Complaint

On 2nd March 2026, an officer appointed by the Monitoring Officer to carry out an initial assessment in consultation with the Independent Person David Walsh, considered a complaint from the Locum Clerk of St Albans Parish Council (“the complainant”) regarding an alleged breach of the St Albans Parish Council Code of Conduct by Councillor Jason King a parish councillor of St Albans Parish Council.

The complaint is, in summary, that Councillor King has engaged in a sustained pattern of disrespectful, intimidating and inappropriate behaviour towards the complainant in his capacity as Clerk to the Council. The complainant alleges that Councillor King’s conduct has undermined his professional integrity, caused personal distress, and contributed to a hostile and unsustainable working environment and that Councillor King’s behaviour amounts to bullying and harassing the clerk.

The complainant provided evidence to support his allegations including recordings of a parish council meeting in which the complainant was absent but Councillor King challenged the complainant’s advice and his appointment as clerk. In addition email evidence was submitted which in some instances had been sent to a number of other parish councillors.

Decision

Acting in Capacity

Section 28(2) of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to adopt a code of conduct “dealing with the conduct that is expected of members ... when they are acting in that capacity”. The Council’s code is expressed to apply whenever a member is acting in the capacity as a member or co-opted member or claiming to act or giving the impression of acting as a representative of the authority.

The complaint relates to emails sent by Councillor King and his conduct in Parish Council meetings. The majority of emails are sent by the subject member using his email address and on the occasions when he uses his business email address he copies in his councillor email address. Corresponded is signed off as “Councillor Jason King St Albans Parish Council.” The subject member was accordingly clearly acting in an official capacity as a parish councillor in his email exchanges with the clerk, and the Code of Conduct was accordingly engaged. Similarly, when he commented in parish council meetings he was acting as a parish councillor and the code was engaged.

Bullying and harassment

Whilst the content of each email, if taken in isolation, might potentially be considered to be raising legitimate concerns as to parish council matters, I consider that the scale of the exchanges, their frequency, their tone and their content could be considered to constitute bullying and harassment particularly given the frequent “demands” for the clerk to act in accordance with the subject member’s directives within specified timescales and

the fact that the clerk's advice and actions are frequently questioned (in one instance writing WRONG in capital letters).

In addition, the subject member's actions in undermining the clerk at public meetings, in one instance doing so in his absence, could also be deemed to constitute bullying and harassment.

The code gives the following guidance on bullying:

"Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting or humiliating behaviour, an abuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, undermined, humiliated, denigrated or threatened".

Examples of bullying behaviour include overbearing or intimidating levels of supervision, inappropriate comments about someone's performance, abuse of power, such as placing unreasonable expectations on someone in relation to their job, responsibilities or hours of work or coercing someone to meet such expectations and sending detrimental material. On occasion the subject member copied others into his email exchanges. The clerk pointed out to the subject member that his was only a part time role. The frequent "demands" to take specified actions and the frequency of those demands could therefore be deemed to be unreasonable.

Raising concerns as to the clerk's performance in shared email exchanges and in public meetings was not the appropriate manner in which to do so.

The guidance goes on to say that *"such conduct is usually part of a pattern of behaviour which attempts to undermine an individual or group of individuals, is detrimental to their confidence and capability and may adversely affect their health."*

I have concluded that the conduct described by the complainant falls within the description of bullying set out in the guidance to the code.

The code suggests that a protocol be adopted by parish councils including acceptable times to contact the clerk. Had the Parish Council not been impacted by the community governance review this would have formed a recommendation to the parish council arising from the consideration of the complaint.

The guidance to the code provides that harassment can include unnecessarily repetitive, intrusive questioning, intimidation and overbearing or intimidating levels of supervision together with inappropriate comments about someone's performance and placing unreasonable expectations on someone in relation to their job, responsibilities, hours of work, or coercing someone to meet such expectations, all of which are described by the complainant and evidenced in the email exchanges.

Respect

The content of the email exchanges, including questioning the clerk's advice and describing it as "wrong" and describing his actions in the budget process as "inadequate", and the subject member's actions in "advising" the clerk on procedural matters, together with the subject member's conduct in publicly seeking to undermine the complainant in meetings could amount to a failure to treat him with respect.

The code provides that *"failure to treat others with respect will occur when unreasonable or demeaning behaviour is directed by one person against or about another."*

In some cases that criticism took place in the public domain at public meetings. Some email exchanges were copied to other councillors and third parties. Failure to treat with respect can include nit picking and fault finding.

The guidance states “ *recent case law has confirmed that local authority officers should be protected from unwarranted comments that may have an adverse effect on good administration and states that it is in the public interest that officers are not subject to offensive, abusive attacks and unwarranted comments that prevents them from carrying out their duties or undermine confidence in the administration.*”

Disrepute

I am further of the view that the subject member’s conduct could amount to disrepute. The constant references to procedural irregularities, potential fraud and flawed advice, in the public domain and to third parties in email exchanges, in the absence of evidence to substantiate those references, could impact on the reputation of the council and reduce public confidence in councillors and the council being able to fulfil their role.

Conclusions

I have concluded there is prima facie evidence of code of conduct breaches on the part of the subject member, namely failing to treat the clerk with respect, bullying and harassment and disrepute.

Whilst I would normally have recommended that the complaint be referred for formal investigation, I am mindful that St Albans Parish Council will cease to exist on 31st March 2026 and it is unlikely that an investigation would be completed prior to its dissolution. Given the particular circumstances, I have considered whether informal resolution might be appropriate, rather than recommending that the complaint be referred for formal investigation at this stage.

Informal Resolution

The Council’s arrangements provide that, in appropriate cases, the Monitoring Officer may seek to resolve the complaint informally, without the need for a formal investigation. The arrangements provide as follows:

Such *informal resolution may involve the Subject Member accepting that his/her conduct was unacceptable;*

- *offering an apology;*
- *agreeing to attend a training course;*
- *agreeing to engage in a process of conciliation; or*
- *the Council introducing some other remedial action (such as changing procedures).*

Where the Subject Member makes a reasonable offer of informal resolution, but the Complainant is not willing to accept that offer, the Monitoring Officer will take account of this in deciding whether the complaint merits formal investigation.

Where the Monitoring Officer recommends informal resolution, but the Subject Member is not willing to accept his/her conduct was unacceptable or not willing to accept the informal resolution proposed, the Monitoring Officer will take account of this in deciding whether the complaint merits formal investigation.

Conclusions

Whilst my recommendation would normally have been to refer the complaint for formal investigation, I am mindful that St Albans Parish Council will cease to exist on 31st March 2026.

In the circumstances my recommendation is that informal resolution be explored.

I consider that an appropriate remedy would be for the subject member to offer a formal apology to the complainant.

Should informal resolution not be successful the initial assessment decision will need to be revisited with a view to deciding on next steps.

NB Councillor King did submit late representations he also would not agree to apologise. Given the dissolution of the parish the decision was taken not to investigate.

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

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