

Standards Committee	
Meeting Date	24 March 2026
Report Title	Yearly update on complaints received under the Members' Code of Conduct
EMT Lead	Robin Harris – Monitoring Officer
Head of Service	
Lead Officer	
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. That the Committee note the update on complaints received under the Members' Code of Conduct.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on complaints, received under the Members' Code of Conduct, for the period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025. This is set out at Appendix I of the report.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires that all councils adopt a Code of Conduct and that the adopted Code must be based upon the Nolan Principles of Conduct in Public Life. This requirement also applies to parish and town councils in the Swale area and all have adopted a Code of Conduct.
- 2.2 Under the Localism Act 2011, the borough council ('Swale Borough Council') is responsible for dealing with any complaints made under the Members' Code of Conduct against borough, parish and town council Members throughout the Swale area. The arrangements for dealing with complaints that have been adopted by Swale Borough Council also apply in cases concerning parish and town councils.
- 2.3 Each year, the Monitoring Officer provides an update to the Standards Committee regarding Code of Conduct complaints. The update omits the identities of the complainant and the subject member because the Localism Act 2011 repealed the previous statutory process under which names were published. In the absence of that statutory process, the Data Protection Act 2018 requires the names to be kept confidential.
- 2.4 Swale Borough Council has resolved that oversight of the complaints process for Members falls within the remit of the Standards Committee.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The Committee is requested to note the update on complaints received in relation to the Members' Code of Conduct.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 The Committee may decide that they no longer wish to receive updates on complaints received in relation to the Code of Conduct. This is not recommended as it is part of the Committee's general oversight function.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 N/A

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	No implications identified at this stage.
Financial, Resource and Property	If a complaint proceeds to investigation, it may be carried out by an external investigator. If this is the case, there will be an irrecoverable cost to the Council.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	It is a requirement under the Localism Act 2011 that all councils adopt a Code of Conduct and that the adopted Code must be based upon the Nolan Principles of Conduct in Public Life. The Members' Code of Conduct can be found within Part 4 of the Council's Constitution. Gary Rowland – Team Leader Corporate Governance 10 March 2026
Crime and Disorder	No implications identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	No implications identified at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	No implications identified at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	No implications identified at this stage.

Risk Management and Health and Safety	No implications identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	No implications identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	Data will be held and processed in accordance with the data protection principles contained in the Data Protection Act 2018.

7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

Appendix I: Table of complaints received for the period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025.

8 Background Documents

N/A