

Standards Committee 04/11/24 - Allegations against members

Complaint 202400306

The conduct of a town council member at a Council meeting and in carrying out an allegedly unnecessary investigation into the conduct of officers who previously managed a business on behalf of the council.

Decision

Not to investigate. No sufficient evidence has been presented to support the allegations.

Complaint 202401290

That a town councillor failed to declare an interest at a meeting of the full council

Decision

Not to investigate. The issues raised in this complaint were already under investigation separately, and it would therefore not be in the public interest to investigate. The evidence will be considered as part of the existing investigation.

Complaint 202401291

That a town councillor failed to declare an interest and voted on a matter in which she was alleged to have a personal and prejudicial interest.

Decision

Not to investigate. The issues raised in this complaint were already under separate investigation, and would therefore not be in the public interest to investigate. The evidence will be considered as part of the existing investigation.

Complaint 202401342

Complaint that a town councillor disclosed confidential information during a council meeting by naming two council members under investigation by the Ombudsman.

Decision

While it was appreciated that the announcement may have caused concern and/or embarrassment to the members under investigation, in the Ombudsman's view, on balance, there was insufficient evidence to suggest that the Member shared private or confidential details of the complaints. The conduct described was considered not technically contrary to any provision of the Local Government Act and therefore did not contravene the Code.

Complaint 202403031

That a town council member had failed to leave the room when during a discussion on a matter on which he had declared an interest.

Decision

Although the conduct was suggestive of a breach of the Code it was decided not to investigate as a complaint against the member in relation to the interest was already under separate investigation, and would therefore not be in the public interest to investigate. The evidence will be considered as part of the existing investigation.

Complaint 202403620

That a town council member failed to declare an interest and participated in the discussion and vote on the matter.

Decision

Not to investigate. The issues raised in this complaint were already under separate investigation, and it would therefore not be in the public interest to investigate. The evidence will be considered as part of the existing investigation.

Complaint 202403617

A community council member pushed the complainant's front door open as he tried to close it and threatened physical violence.

Decision

Not to investigate. Despite being asked, the complainant did not provide sufficient evidence about the incident or to show whether the member was acting as a councillor or as a private individual at the time

Complaint 202404564

It was alleged by a member of the public that a town council member had breached the Code of Conduct by posting an inappropriate post on Facebook, on a community group page, which the complainant said was controlled by the member.

Decision

No supporting evidence had been provided to establish that the Member was responsible for the community page, or the post complained about. Although further evidence could have been sought, the issue was considered in the context of Article 10 of the Human Rights Convention, which protects freedom of expression. The Ombudsman did not condone the posting of controversial cartoon images of this nature, which appeared wholly out of

place and inappropriate on a community group page and could cause offence to members of the public. However, the post would not be considered so serious, highly offensive or rude to amount to a breach of the Code or to warrant a sanction being imposed, as this would not be considered a proportionate interference with the Member's freedom of expression under Article 10.
