Chelmsford City Council Governance Committee

18 November 2026

Monitoring Officer report

Report by:
Monitoring Officer

Officer Contact:
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Purpose
To update members concerning code of conduct complaints received and in relation to other relevant areas, including the LGSCO (Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman) complaints handling code compliance.

Recommendations
1. To note the current statistical information and agree that Appendix 1 should be published on the Council's website to confirm this.
2. To note the other updates set out in this report.

Summary of Key Points
This is a routine report to provide a redacted update on any standards complaints received since the previous report. The report is sometimes accompanied by other brief updates for members where a separate report to committee is unnecessary.

1. Introduction

1.1. To update members on the current position in relation to standards complaints and in relation to other relevant areas, update in relation to compliance with LGSCO complaint handling code compliance

2. Standards complaints against councillors

2.1. The Appendix to this report sets out the latest statistical data related to standards complaints.

2.2. Members will see that there have been 9 new complaints since the last report in June 2026. The details of the current position in relation to the complaints are set out in the attached appendix. This includes a further update concerning complaint 8/25 where training with the Monitoring Officer was undertaken with the Monitoring Officer in June 2026 and censure reported to July Council.

3. Update in relation to the LGSCO complaint handling code

3.1. The Council adopted the complaints handling code earlier this year and had complied with all relevant actions save for the development of an annual complaints report. During the summer the decision was made as a result of stretched resources due to LGR not to develop the annual report (and in effect await the new Unitary Council to make appropriate arrangements). With the news of a pause to LGR (followed more recently by a further update that LGR would proceed and a minded to decision is awaited) it has been decided to pause this work and await the further update on LGR after which the position will be reviewed.

4. Conclusion

4.1. It is recommended that members approve the usual update in relation to complaints for the publication on the website and note the update in relation to the LGSCO complaint handling code.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – code of conduct complaints reported

Background papers:

LGSCO complaint handling code

Corporate Implications

Corporate Implication	Response
Legal/Constitutional	It is good practice for statistical information (and other updates) to be provided to Governance Committee. Where any complaints are referred to in the appendix, a summary of the complaint without any personal data is provided. The other updates are provided so that committee members are aware of recent developments.
Financial	None
Potential impact on climate change and the environment	None
Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030	None
Personnel	None
Risk Management	None
Equality and Diversity	No EIA necessary for this report.
Health and Safety	None
Digital	None
Other	None

Consultees:

None

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

Member Code of Conduct and Complaints Procedures

Statistical data in relation to Code of Conduct Complaints against councillors under the Localism Act 2011

Appendix 1 June 2026 – November 2026

Status of Complaint Categories	Total No.	Case No.	City, Parish tier Councillor	Date Issue First Raised	Alleged Breach or Issue Raised	Current Position
1. No formal complaint, invalid or withdrawn						
2. No further action required after consultation with one of the Independent Persons	5	4/26	Parish	June 26	Alleged disrespect, bullying and disrepute	Informal resolution – misunderstanding likely between parties - reminder to councillor. NFA of relevant LGA guidance.
		5/26	Parish	July 26	Alleged disrepute and breach of confidentiality	Breach of code unlikely NFA
		6/26	City	July 26	Alleged disrespect, disrepute, improper use of position	Breach of code unlikely NFA
		7/26	Parish	July 26	Alleged ROI had not been updated	Invalid complaint. Advice sought on register prior to complaint and no action necessary.

Status of Complaint Categories	Total No.	Case No.	City, Parish tier Councillor	Date Issue First Raised	Alleged Breach or Issue Raised	Current Position
		8/26	Parish	Sept 26	Various	Initially held in abeyance pending further information from complainant – further information not provided and the case now closed
3. Other action after consultation with one of the independent Persons						
4. Complaint on hold						
5. Decision as to appropriate action still awaited	3	10/26 11/26 12/26	Parish Parish Parish	Oct 26 Oct 26 Oct 26	Various Various Various	Initial assessment pending Initial assessment pending Initial assessment pending

Status of Complaint Categories	Total No.	Case No.	City, Parish tier Councillor	Date Issue First Raised	Alleged Breach or Issue Raised	Current Position
6. Complaints being investigated	1	9/26	Parish tier	October 26	Various	Decision to refer for investigation. Investigator to be appointed.
Total						

Formal Complaint Outcomes

	Case No. and Councillor	Committee Date and Decision	Date Issue First Raised	Current Position
Outcome of Investigations	8/25 – Cllr Paul Clark	11/3/26 Governance Committee	June 2025	Decision made by Committee that there was a breach of the code of conduct. Councillor notified of outcome which has also been published on website Training by Councillor completed in June 2026. Censure report to Full Council completed in July 2026. Complete and matter now closed
Other Action				