

A REVIEW OF THE COMPLAINTS RECEIVED UNDER THE MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT TO 22 FEBRUARY 2014

To: Constitution & Ethics Committee

Date: 3 March 2015

From: The Monitoring Officer

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: N/A **Key decision:** No

Purpose: To brief the Constitution and Ethics Committee on the number and nature of the complaints received about Members under the Code of Conduct from 12 November 2014 to 22 February 2015.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Constitution & Ethics Committee note the contents of this report.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Localism Act (“the Act”) places a statutory duty on the County Council to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst its Members and co-opted Members. This includes the obligation on the County Council to have in place a Code of Conduct setting out the standard of conduct expected of Members when acting in their capacity as County Councillors.
- 1.2. The requirements of the Act are supported by Part 3B-8 of the Council’s Constitution which also requires the Constitution & Ethics Committee to monitor the operation of the Code of Conduct.
- 1.3. This report serves to provide the Constitution & Ethics Committee with an overview of the complaints received under the Code of Conduct from 12 November 2014 to 3 March 2015.

2. OVERVIEW OF COMPLAINTS

- 2.1. Between 12 November 2014 and 22 February 2015, no new complaints against Members were received by the Monitoring Officer.
- 2.2. The complaint against Cllr Lay which had not been determined at the date of the last committee on 11 November 2014 has since been decided. The decision is summarised in Appendix 1 to this report.

Source Documents	Location
Cllr Lay Decision Notice dated 12 November 2014	Held by legal services, Shire Hall

Report to the Constitution & Ethics Committee**Overview of complaints made against Members****12 November 2014 to 22 February 2015****Cllr Alan Lay**

Complaint against:	Cllr Alan Lay
Date of Complaint:	26 October 2014
Complainant:	Mr Lloyd Forster
Allegation:	Cllr Lay breached the Code of Conduct in writing a letter which was published in the Fenland Citizen which allegedly contained libellous remarks about the Complainant
Current Status:	Decided
Outcome:	The Independent Person concluded that there had been no breach of the Code of Conduct by Cllr Lay. Although the comments made by Cllr Lay were not endorsed by the Council, they did not go beyond what might be expected as part of the political 'rough and tumble' between those of opposing political parties.
Date of final decision:	12 November 2014