

UPDATE ON COMPLAINTS

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform members of complaints that have been assessed or concluded since the last such report to Committee in October 2014. The complaints are set out below.

2. Complaints

2.1 Complaint 3/11

An investigation into an allegation that statements made by a councillor in a newsletter had brought the Council into disrepute has concluded that the statements had not been made by the member concerned in their capacity as a councillor and were therefore not subject to the Code of Conduct.

2.2 Complaint 13/12

An investigation into an allegation that a councillor had posted comments on facebook to the effect that certain third parties were racists has concluded that the comments had not been made and even if they had been, there was nothing to indicate that they had been posted by the member in their official capacity. No breach of the Code of Conduct had therefore occurred.

2.3 Complaint 2/14

A member of the public alleged that a councillor had referred to their wife as a racist. On assessment, it was determined that no further action should be taken. If the comment had been made, there was nothing to suggest that it had been made in the councillor's official capacity.

2.4 Complaint 4/14

A former officer of the Council alleged that a councillor criticised her inappropriately in front of colleagues and representatives of partner organisations. This matter has been referred for investigation.

2.5 Complaint 1/15

An individual from an external organisation alleged that a councillor had attempted to bypass the organisation's internal procedures and had used their position as a councillor improperly. On assessment of the complaint, it was concluded that no information had been provided to

suggest that the councillor had acted inappropriately and so no further action was taken.

2.6 Complaint 2/15

A complaint from a member of the public alleged that a Hetton Town Councillor had made statements regarding their behaviour at a meeting and that the statements were inaccurate. There was no information provided to indicate that the Town Councillor concerned had identified the complainant as the person whose behaviour they had referred to. No further action was therefore taken on this matter.

3. Recommendation

3.1 That the Committee notes this report.

Background Papers

None.