

Request

1. In the last 5 years how many complaints has your council received against members of the council?
2. Can you give the above figure broken down by year?
3. How many complaints were progressed to an investigation?
4. How many complaints led to some form of standards hearing?
5. In those cases that progressed to a standards hearing, what were the charges/allegations/complaints and how many of those were upheld/found to be proved against the councillor?
6. Where allegation were upheld/found to be proved, what sanctions, penalties or punishments were imposed?
7. Please can you break the answers to 3-6 down by year or give dates for the investigations and hearings?

Response

1. The Council records complaints made under the Members Code of Conduct in financial years not calendar years i.e., 1st April to 31st March the following year. Since 1st April 2019 until current date the council has received 99 complaints
2. By year
 - 2019/20 - 24 complaints
 - 2020/21 - 18 complaints
 - 2021/22 - 24 complaints
 - 2022/23 - 17 complaints
 - 2023-to-date - 16 complaints
3. There have been 8 investigations
4. 6 Standards Sub Committee Hearings were arranged. However only two proceeded to a hearing as the others were withdrawn by the complainant (1), not progressed by the complainant (1) and two were resolved through local resolution
5. Both hearings that progressed found that the member had breached the Members Code of Conduct . The breaches related to bullying/abusive behaviour and inappropriate use of their position.
6. Sanctions included a recommendation for training , an apology to be given and extension of further sanctions that had previously been imposed on the member related to the use of Brighter Borough funding and the ability to sit on Committees.
7. 2019/20 - a recommendation for 4 hearings (two occurred) and 5 investigations
2020/21 - 1 investigation 1 hearings recommended
2021/22 - 2 investigations. 2 hearings recommended
2022/23 - 0 investigations and hearings
2023/24 - no investigations nor hearings

It should be noted that 14 matters resulted in local resolutions