

Public Agenda Pack



Notice of Meeting of

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 24 January 2024 at 2.00 pm

John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton TA1 1HE

To: The members of the Standards Committee

Chair: Councillor John Bailey
Vice-chair: Councillor Brian Smedley

Councillor Hugh Davies	Councillor Martin Dimery
Councillor Frances Nicholson	Alan Hemsley
Paul Hooper	Robin Horton
David Stripp	Vacancy

For further information about the meeting, including how to join the meeting virtually, please contact Democratic Services democraticservicesteam@somerset.gov.uk.

All members of the public are welcome to attend our meetings and ask questions or make a statement **by giving advance notice** in writing or by e-mail to the Monitoring Officer at email: democraticservicesteam@somerset.gov.uk by **5pm on Thursday, 18 January 2024**.

This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A: Access to Information.

The meeting will be webcast and a recording made.

Issued by (the Proper Officer) on Tuesday, 16 January 2024

AGENDA

Standards Committee - 2.00 pm Wednesday, 24 January 2024

Public Guidance Notes contained in Agenda Annexe (Pages 5 - 6)

Click here to join the online meeting

1 Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of Interest

To receive and note any declarations of interests in respect of any matters included on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

(The other registrable interests of Councillors of Somerset Council, arising from membership of City, Town or Parish Councils and other Local Authorities will automatically be recorded in the minutes: [City, Town & Parish Twin Hatters - Somerset Councillors 2023](#))

3 Public Question Time

The Chair to advise the Committee of any items on which members of the public have requested to speak and advise those members of the public present of the details of the Council's public participation scheme.

For those members of the public who have submitted any questions or statements, please note, a three minute time limit applies to each speaker and you will be asked to speak before Councillors debate the issue.

We are now live webcasting most of our committee meetings and you are welcome to view and listen to the discussion. The link to each webcast will be available on the meeting webpage, please see details under 'click here to join online meeting'.

4 Minutes from the Previous Meeting and Action Sheet (Pages 7 - 16)

To approve the minutes from the previous meeting and to consider the action sheet.

5 Code of Conduct Complaints - Quarterly Update (Pages 17 - 24)

To receive an update on the number of Code of Conduct complaints received since April 2023.

6 Register of Gifts and Hospitality (Pages 25 - 34)

To review whether the requirements and current level at which Members declare their acceptance or refusal of gifts and hospitality should be amended.

7 Work Programme and Actions (Pages 35 - 36)

To consider the Committee's Work Programme and to identify any actions arising from the meeting.

Exclusion of Press and Public

PLEASE NOTE: Although the main report for this item not confidential, supporting appendices available to Members contain exempt information and are therefore marked confidential – not for publication. At any point if Members wish to discuss information within this appendix then the Council will be asked to agree the following resolution to exclude the press and public:

Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider passing a resolution having been duly proposed and seconded under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting, on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, within the meaning of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972:

Reason: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Guidance notes for the meeting

Council Public Meetings

The legislation that governs Council meetings requires that committee meetings are held face-to-face. The requirement is for members of the committee and key supporting officers (report authors and statutory officers) to attend in person, along with some provision for any public speakers. Provision will be made wherever possible for those who do not need to attend in person including the public and press who wish to view the meeting to be able to do so virtually.

Inspection of Papers

Any person wishing to inspect minutes, reports, or the background papers for any item on the agenda should contact Democratic Services at democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk or telephone 01823 357628.

They can also be accessed via the council's website on [Committee structure - Modern Council \(somerset.gov.uk\)](#)

Members' Code of Conduct requirements

When considering the declaration of interests and their actions as a councillor, Members are reminded of the requirements of the Members' Code of Conduct and the underpinning Principles of Public Life: Honesty; Integrity; Selflessness; Objectivity; Accountability; Openness; Leadership. The Code of Conduct can be viewed at: [Code of Conduct](#)

Minutes of the Meeting

Details of the issues discussed, and recommendations made at the meeting will be set out in the minutes, which the Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting.

Public Question Time

If you wish to speak or ask a question about any matter on the Committee's agenda please contact Democratic Services by 5pm providing 3 clear working days before the meeting. (for example, for a meeting being held on a Wednesday, the deadline will be 5pm on the Thursday prior to the meeting) Email democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk or telephone 01823 357628.

Members of public wishing to speak or ask a question will need to attend in person or if unable can submit their question or statement in writing for an officer to read out, or alternatively can attend the meeting online.

A 20-minute time slot for Public Question Time is set aside near the beginning of the meeting, after the minutes of the previous meeting have been agreed. Each speaker will have 3 minutes to address the committee.

You must direct your questions and comments through the Chair. You may not take a direct part in the debate. The Chair will decide when public participation is to finish. If an item on the agenda is contentious, with many people wishing to attend the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

Meeting Etiquette for participants

Only speak when invited to do so by the Chair.

Mute your microphone when you are not talking.

Switch off video if you are not speaking.

Speak clearly (if you are not using video then please state your name)

If you're referring to a specific page, mention the page number.

There is a facility in Microsoft Teams under the ellipsis button called turn on live captions which provides subtitles on the screen.

Exclusion of Press & Public

If when considering an item on the agenda, the Committee may consider it appropriate to pass a resolution under Section 100A (4) Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, as defined under the terms of the Act.

If there are members of the public and press listening to the open part of the meeting, then the Democratic Services Officer will, at the appropriate time, ask participants to leave the meeting when any exempt or confidential information is about to be discussed.

Recording of meetings

The Council supports the principles of openness and transparency. It allows filming, recording, and taking photographs at its meetings that are open to the public - providing this is done in a non-disruptive manner. Members of the public may use Facebook and Twitter or other forms of social media to report on proceedings. No filming or recording may take place when the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting.



Minutes of a Meeting of the Standards Committee held in the Luttrell Room - County Hall, Taunton TA1 4DY, on Wednesday, 25 October 2023 at 2.00 pm

Present:

Cllr John Bailey (Chair)
Cllr Brian Smedley (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Hugh Davies
Alan Hemsley
David Stripp

Cllr Frances Nicholson
Robin Horton

Other Members present remotely:

Cllr Martin Dimery
Cllr Simon Coles
Cllr Tessa Munt

Paul Hooper
Cllr Liz Leyshon
Cllr Leigh Redman

25 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1

Apologies were received from Councillor Martin Dimery and Co-opted Member Paul Hooper who joined the meeting virtually.

26 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 2

There were no declarations of interest.

27 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 3

Jenny Kenton and Councillor Jason Baker had registered to speak.

Their questions related to Code of Conduct complaints and the way they were handled. In response the Deputy Monitoring Officer made the following points:

- From February 2023 to date £2,750 had been spent in relation to Code of Conduct assessments and investigations.
- Of the complaints listed within the agenda report:

- None had been dealt with by both a Somerset officer and an outside consultant.
- None had waited four months or more to be completed.
- Since becoming a unitary authority the main change to the process was to the information and guidance provided, predominantly in terms of the language used and the inclusion of a process flow chart.
- If anyone feels that the process has not been correctly followed they should contact the monitoring officer.
- When a code of conduct complaint is completed the only people notified were the:
 - Complainant
 - Subject Councillor
 - Clerk - if the subject councillor was a member of a city, town or parish council
 - Independent Person – as part of the process
 - Standards Committee – in the form of anonymous data
- If a complaint progresses to a formal investigation and hearing, then the hearing would normally be held in public and the decision notice published. Where no breach was found following a hearing, the decision notice would only be published with the agreement of the Subject Councillor.

28 Action Sheet and Minutes from the Previous Meeting - Agenda Item 4

Resolved that the minutes of the Standards Committee held on 30th August 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

The Committee then considered the action plan and noted the following:

- Action 1 - The review of the committee/sub-committee membership was still ongoing with a target date of March 2024.
- Action 2 – On the agenda (agenda item7).
- Action 3 – That an Interim Service Director of Workforce was now in place and that an update should be available for 24th January 2024 meeting.
- Action 4 – The Deputy Monitoring Officer had recently provided details of the key contacts to Full Council and this action was now completed.
- Action 5 – On the agenda (agenda item 9).
- Action 6 – This was being considered at this meeting and could be removed.

- Action 7 – The Priority Groups had met.

29 Review of Gifts and Hospitality - Agenda Item 5

The Committee considered the work undertaken and recommendations from Priority Group 3 and noted that Priority Group 3 highlighted that:

- They had considered the trigger value for declaring gifts and hospitality: currently £50 for councillors, £25 for officers and £5 suggested by Cllr T Munt.
- They had considered the requirement under the Members Code of Conduct (Code) to register any gifts or hospitality valued at £50 or over either received or refused, and also to refuse gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence.
- They recommended that on the Gifts and Hospitality form there should be section for members to indicate whether or not they had accepted the gift or hospitality and their reasons for this.

Priority Group 3 members referenced their recommendations in the appendix and in particular :

1. That the trigger value for Members to register gifts and hospitality should be set at £10.
2. The declaration form should be amended, as shown in the report, so that members can indicate whether or not they have accepted or rejected an offer of gifts and hospitality, and if accepted why they believe it was appropriate to do so.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer advised the Committee that the current value of £50 adopted by Somerset Council had been based on the Local Government Association (LGA) Model Code of Conduct and this had been adopted by the majority of unitary, county and district councils. In addition it had also been adopted by many city, town and parish councils in Somerset.

Concerns were raised by some committee members that point 9.6 of the Code was not adopted by some of Somerset's city, town and parish councils.

Cllr T Munt addressed the Committee and stated her support for the £10 trigger value being recommended. Also, she stated that rather than 'gifts and hospitality' it should read 'gifts, benefits and hospitality' the Chair suggested that reference to 'benefits' be looked at further as part of the work being undertaken by Priority Group 2 on the adoption of the code.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer explained that the LGA and most councils used the term 'gifts and hospitality' to cover gifts and hospitality offered to a member acting in their role as a councillor, not Christmas presents from family, needed to be declared. He also stated that the Code did not require members to declare the reasons for acceptance or refusal of gifts and hospitality and therefore the proposed changes to the declaration form to include this would need approval to the requirements set out in the Code of Conduct.

The Committee discussed the proposed amendments and some concerns raised over deviating from the LGAs model code and the code being promoted to city, town and parish councils within Somerset.

They considered the trigger value at which gifts and hospitality need to be declared and agreed (3 votes to 1) that it should be amended from the current £50 to £10.

Next they considered the need for boxes on the declaration form (or radio buttons for forms completed online) for members to indicate whether or not they had accepted the gift or hospitality and the need for a box for members to give the reasons for accepting or declining the gift or hospitality offered. Noting that it was not a requirement within the Code to give reasons they believed that a box could be added but that it would not be right to make its completion mandatory.

It was then agreed (2 votes for, 1 vote against and 1 abstention) that:

1. Boxes be added to the form to indicate whether the gift and hospitality being declared had been accepted or not.
2. That a non-mandatory box be added to the form to allow members to give reasons, should they wish to do so, as to why they accepted or refused the gift or hospitality being declared.
3. The Council's Code of Conduct paragraphs 9.5 and 9.6 be amended to reflect the above recommendations 1 and 2.

Resolved

To recommend Full Council amend the Section 9 (Gifts and hospitality) of the Members Code of Conduct, Part H of Somerset Council's Constitution, as follows:

1. The value at which gifts and hospitality need to be declared by members be amended from the current £50 to £10.

2. Boxes be added to the form to indicate whether the gift and hospitality being declared had been accepted or not.
3. That a non-mandatory box be added to the declaration form to allow members to give reasons, should they wish to do so, as to why they accepted or refused the gift or hospitality being declared.
4. That paragraph 9.5 of the Members Code of Conduct be amended to 'I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £10 within 28 days of its receipt.'
5. That paragraph 9.6 of the Members Code of Conduct be amended to 'I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £10 that I have been offered but have refused to accept within 28 days of the offer. It is recommended that a member sets out their reasons for either refusing or accepting.'

30 Code of Conduct Complaints - Agenda Item 6

The Committee considered the quarterly update report from the Monitoring Officer on the number of code of conduct complaints received.

Concerns were raised over a complaint made by a co-opted member which due to confusion regarding which officer had picked it up, coupled with annual leave, had resulted in it slipping past the recommended timescales. They were advised that generally, getting information from all the parties involved in a complaint was one of the main factors that impacted upon the timescales. They were re-assured that whilst the majority of complaints were dealt with within the set timeframe, if for some reason it couldn't, the complainant was now informed and given the reason why and a new date given. An unresolved complaint from 2022 was also raised and it was agreed that this would be looked into outside of the meeting.

The Committee considered the need for the name of the officer dealing with each case or the external investigator to be listed in the report. But upon reflection decided that it would not be appropriate. However, they did request that within the table listing the number of complaints received each month it should state how many had been reconciled.

They noted that only one of the 18 complaints detailed related to a Somerset Councillor. The Deputy Monitoring Officer explained that there were well over 2,000

city, town and parish councillors within Somerset and that one of the advantages with them adopting the LGA code of conduct was that there was a significant amount of training and support available to them.

31 Code of Conduct Adoption - City, Town and Parish Councils - Agenda Item 7

The Committee considered the results of the short online survey sent out to all the city, town and parish councils within Somerset asking them to confirm what code of conduct they were using and to provide a link to the document.

With more qualitative data being available Priority Group 2 agreed to look into the survey results and also consider if there was anything else that could be done to increase the poor response rate.

32 Work Programme and Actions - Agenda Item 8

The Committee considered the work programme and agreed that the Annual Report should be co-presented and taken to the May 2024 Full Council meeting.

Members then noted the following new and updated actions:

	Actions	By Whom	By when
1.	<u>Matters arising from 28/6/23</u> Officer Code of Conduct to HR Carried forward	SW	Update 24/1/24
2.	<u>Agenda Item 5</u> 2.1 - £10 - Amend recommended level to Full Council. Code of Conduct - Sections - 9.5/9.6 to be amended 2.2 - Amend form and include reasons - to Full Council	SW SW	20/12/2023 20/12/2023
3.	<u>Agenda Item 6</u> 3.1 - Complaint No's (page 24) Add in reconciled to P.24 Two individual experiences of the complaint process were raised. - To be resolved individually	SW Individuals	Next quarterly update Next meeting

	- Also use as test of complaints efficiency	SC	24/1/24 Next meeting 24/1/24
4.	<u>Agenda Item 7</u> 4.1 - P2 - requested info on qualitative responses to Question 5 (survey) 4.2 - P2 - Look at improving response levels to survey and uptake of Code of Conduct	SW P2	Next meeting 24/1/24
5.	P2 - Requested consideration of diaries to be kept on SC calendar	P2	Next meeting 24/1/24

(The meeting ended at 4.19 pm)

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CHAIR

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Somerset Council
Standards Committee
Action Sheet



	Actions	By Whom	By When
1.	<p>Committee & Sub-Committee composition (28 June 23 – agenda item 6)</p> <p>1. To review committee/sub-committee membership (P2)</p> <p>2. Update on the recruitment of an additional Co-opted member</p>	<p>P2</p> <p>MO</p>	<p>27 March 2024</p> <p>24 January 2024</p>
2.	<p>Model Code of Conduct Adoption by City, Town & Parish Councils (25 October 2023 – agenda item 7)</p> <p>2.1 – P2 – requested info on qualitative responses to Question 5 (survey)</p> <p>2.2 – P2 – Look at improving response levels to survey and uptake of Code of Conduct</p>	<p>SW</p> <p>P2</p>	<p>ASAP</p> <p>Next meeting 24 January 2024</p>
3.	<p>Officer Code of Conduct (28 June 23 – agenda item 7)</p> <p>Service Director to share with Union reps and update Committee.</p>	<p>SW</p>	<p>24 January 2024</p>
4.	<p>Code of Conduct complaints (28 June 23 – agenda item 9) (25 October 23 – agenda item 6)</p> <p>4.1 - Complaint figures, with costings, to be circulated monthly to Committee members.</p> <p>4.2 - To be reviewed after 6 months.</p> <p>4.3 - Complaint No's (page 24) – add in reconciled to P.24</p>	<p>MO</p> <p>Committee</p> <p>SW</p>	<p>Monthly</p> <p>27 March 2024</p> <p>Next quarterly update</p>

	<p>Two individual experiences of the complaint process were raised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be resolved individually - Also use as test of complaints efficiency 	<p>Individuals</p> <p>SC</p>	<p>Next meeting 24 January 2024</p> <p>Next meeting 24 January 2024</p>
5.	<p>Gifts & Hospitality (25 October 23 – agenda item 5)</p> <p>2.1 - £10 – Amend recommended level to Full Council. Code of Conduct – Sections – 9.5/9.6 to be amended</p> <p>2.2 – Amend form and include reasons – to Full Council</p>	<p>SW</p> <p>SW</p>	<p>20 December 2023</p> <p>20 December 2023</p>
6.	<p>Work Programme and Actions (25 October 2023 – agenda item 8)</p> <p>P2 – Requested consideration of diaries to be kept on SC calendar</p>	<p>P2</p>	<p>Next meeting 24 January 2024</p>

Key

MO – Monitoring Officer

P1 – Priority Group 1 (Cllr Bailey (Chair), Cllr Smedley, Cllr Nicholson, D Stripp & P Hooper

P2 – Priority Group 2 (Cllr Nicholson (Chair), R Horton & A Hemsley

P3 – Priority Group 3 (Cllr Dimery (Chair), Cllr H Davies & A Hemsley

SC – Standards Committee

SW – Scott Wooldridge

Standards Committee
24 January 2024

Code of Conduct Complaints – Quarterly Update – Q3

Lead Officer: David Clark, Monitoring Officer

Authors: David Clark, Monitoring Officer

Contact Details: David.clark@somerset.gov.uk

1. Summary

- 1.1.** Following the creation and provision to the Committee of the monthly Code of Conduct complaint summaries (see Appendix 1) this report provides an update to the Committee regarding the number of complaints received, any themes emerging and the performance in respect of acknowledgment and substantive responses against our published timescales.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1.** That Committee note the update report at the end of quarter three in respect of Code of Conduct complaints and provide any associated comments, observations and direction.

3. Background

- 3.1.** Somerset Council adopted the LGA Model Code of Conduct following a decision of Full Council in February 2022 ahead of the elections in May 2022. That Code has transitioned to the new Somerset Council from April 2023.
- 3.2.** All Code of conduct complaints have been administered centrally from that point and following the end of December 2023 three whole quarters have been completed. This report, therefore, provides an update to Members in respect of volumes, performance and any identifiable trends. The purposes of the report is not to review any individual or groups of complaints but to consider the overall numbers, trends and performance.

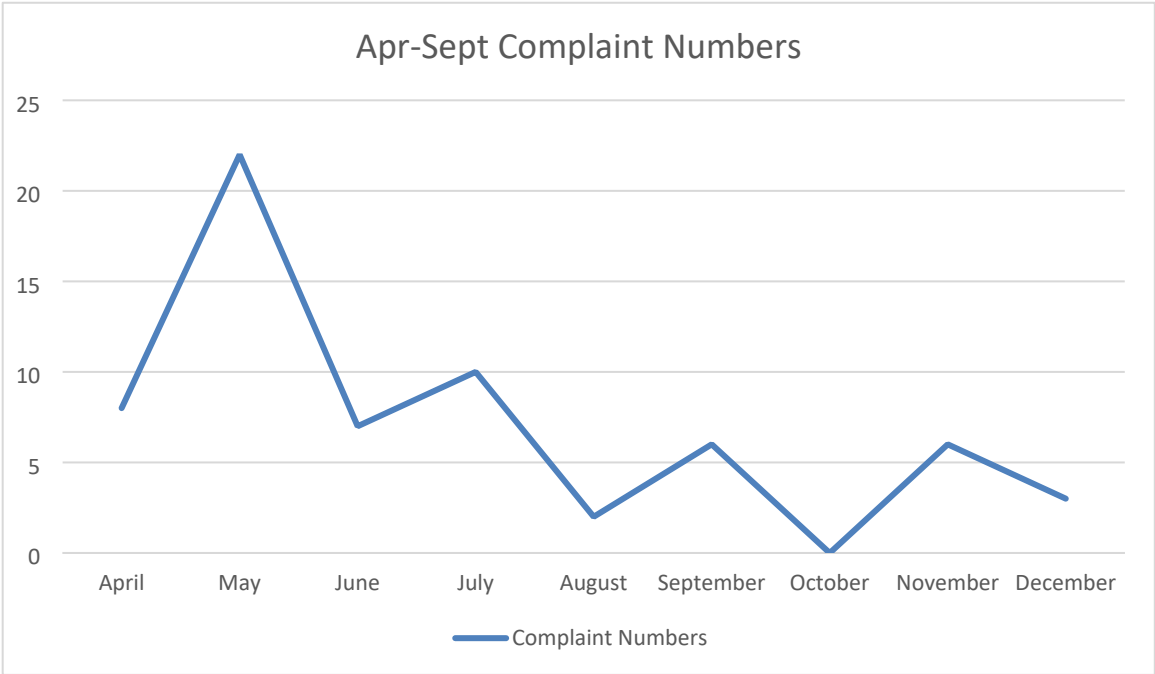
4. Analysis

4.1. Number of Complaints

Of the 64 complaints received some related to the same incident i.e. multiple complaints regarding the same subject members and the same alleged breach

of the code of conduct. Taking this into account there were 43 separate 'incidents' complained about. The monthly totals of complaints received are set out in the following table. The number of complaints received in May is over twice as many as any other month, otherwise the numbers remain at or below 10 which is closer to the volumes predicted prior to vesting day based on historical trends from the legacy councils.

Month	Number of Complaints
April	8
May	22
June	7
July	10
August	2
September	6
October	0
November	6
December	3



4.2. Acknowledgment

The Council's target to provide an acknowledgement of received complaints is 5 working days. After quarter three the Council achieved this target 81% of the time i.e. on 52 out of 64 occasions. The principal reason for failing to acknowledge within 5 working days remains annual leave and sickness.

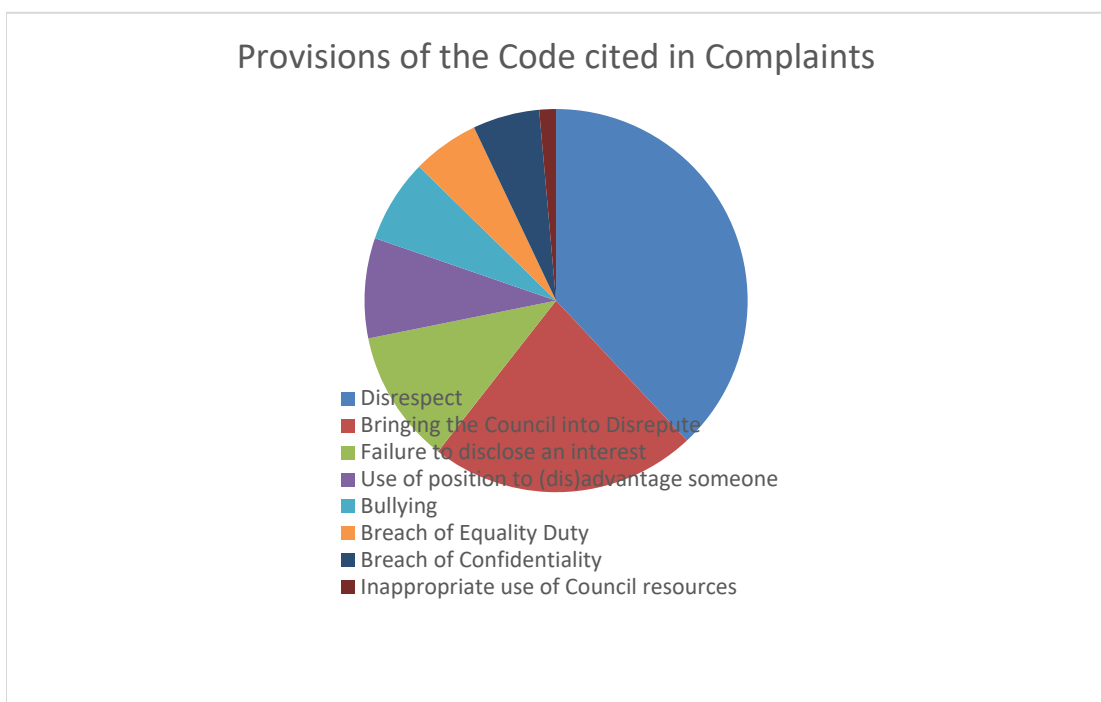
4.3. Substantive Response

The Council's target to provide a substantive response to a Code of Conduct complaint is 20 working days from the receipt of the complaint. After quarter two the Council achieved this target 34% of the time i.e. on 21 out of 61 occasions (3 complaints remain under consideration and within time at the time of report production). The reasons for regularly failing to meet this target are more complex as the timings are not wholly within the Council's control. The initial assessment period could require further information to be submitted by the complainant or a detailed response to be provided by the subject member and every proposed response has to be shared with the Independent Person. Looking a quarter 3 in isolation this target was met 50% of the time which is an improvement upon the quarter 1 and 2 performance.

4.4. Trends and Themes

Of the 64 complaints assessed 57 (89%) concluded No Further Action was required, 3 (5%) resulted in Further Action with 4 (6%) still in the assessment phase. No complaints have been deemed worthy of a formal investigation and/or a hearing.

The following table lists the areas of the code that were alleged to have been breached in the complaints, in many cases more than one potential breach was cited.



5. Implications

- 5.1.** This is the second code of conduct complaints report that has been brought before the Committee since vesting day. The committee may wish to indicate what additional or alternative data they would consider valuable.

6. Background papers

- 6.1.** Somerset Council Code of Conduct.
Somerset Council Code of Conduct Complaints form and guidance

Note For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author.

Appendix 1

April to December Code of Conduct Complaints Summary

Member Code of Conduct Complaints										
Reference	Date Received	Complainant	Council	Acknowledged on	Deadline to Respond (20 working days)	Decision notice sent on	Decision (Upheld/Dismissed)	Nature of Complaint	Notes	Time Spent on complaint
April 2023										
MO/23-24/1	18/04/23	Member of the Public	Martock Parish Council	25/04/23	21/04/23	23/05/23	Dismissed	Failure to treat with respect. Allegations of improperly, conferring an advantage/disadvantage and breach of social media policy.	Pre-vesting reference: 2023/MO/001. The code did not apply as not acting in their official capacity.	
MO/23-24/3	24/04/23	Member of the Public	Chard Town Councillors	02/05/23	25/04/23	24/05/23	case closed no response from complainant	Serial bullying and harrasment of council employees and members of the public.	Complaint form sent to complainant for further details	
MO/23-24/4	24/04/23	Member of the Public	Martock Parish Council	05/05/23	28/04/23	30/05/23	Dismissed	Prejudice under the protected characteristic of marriage. Disrespectful and bullying behaviour		
MO/23-24/2(a)	24/04/23	Member of the Public	Somerset Council	02/05/23	25/04/23	24/05/23	Dismissed	Verbal attack on another councillor, accusing a councillor of wanting her to resign. Failure to treat with respect and unprofessional behaviour	Written apology offered and given.	
MO/23-24/2@	25/04/23	Member of Staff	Somerset Council	03/05/23	27/04/23	25/05/23	Dismissed	Verbal attack on another councillor, accusing a councillor of wanting her to resign. Failure to treat with respect and unprofessional behaviour	Written apology offered and given.	
MO/23-24/2(b)	26/04/23	Member of the Public	Somerset Council	04/05/23	27/04/23	26/05/23	Dismissed	Verbal attack on another councillor, accusing a councillor of wanting her to resign. Failure to treat with respect and unprofessional behaviour	Written apology offered and given.	
MO/23-24/2(d)	28/04/23	Member of the Public	Somerset Council	05/05/23	28/04/23	30/05/23	Dismissed	Disrespectful and unprofessional behaviour	Written apology offered and given.	
MO/23-24/5	28/04/23	Member of the Public	Somerset Council & Chard TC	09/05/23	03/05/23	02/06/23	Dismissed	Failure to treat with respect and threatening and bullying behaviour	Not acting in his official capacity	
May 2023										
MO/23-24/2(e)	04/05/23	Member of the public	Somerset Council	12/05/23	09/05/23	06/06/23	Dismissed	Disrespectful and unprofessional behaviour	written apology offered and given.	
MO23-24/6 (a)	07/05/23	Clr	Chard Town Councillors	15/05/23	10/05/23	08/06/23	upheld	Failure to treat with respect and unprofessional behaviour	Found that he did fail to treat with respect but warned on future conduct	
MO/23-24/9	08/05/23	Member of the public	Somerset Council	15/05/23	10/05/23	08/06/23	case closed no response from complainant	Failure to treat with respect	No information returned from complainant in order to proceed with complaint.	
MO/23-24/7(c)	10/05/23	Member of the public	Chard Town Councillor	19/05/23	15/05/23	12/06/23	upheld	Bringing council into disrepute	Found that she failed to comply with Media policy but policy not clear therefore guidance given to the Clerk to review.	
MO/23-24/7 (d)	10/05/23	Member of the public	Chard Town Councillor	19/05/23	11/05/23	12/06/23	upheld	Bringing council into disrepute	Found that she failed to comply with Media policy but policy not clear therefore guidance given to the Clerk to review.	
MO/23-24/6 (b)	10/05/23	Member of the public	Chard Town Councillors	17/05/23	11/05/23	09/06/23	upheld	Failure to treat with respect and unprofessional behaviour	Found that he failed to treat with respect but not in the public interest to investigate.	
MO/23-24/6(c)	10/05/23	Member of the public	Chard Town Councillors Somerset Council	17/05/23	10/05/23	09/06/23	upheld	Unprofessional conduct, bullying behaviour and bring the council into disrepute	Found that he failed to treat with respect but not in the public interest to investigate.	
MO23-24/4 (a)	10/05/23	Member of the public	Martock Parish Council	17/05/23	17/05/23	15/06/23	Dismissed	Failure to treat with respect		
MO/23-24/8	10/05/23	Member of the public	Somerset Council	19/05/23	15/05/23	12/06/23	Dismissed	Bringing council into disrepute	No breach of the code	
MO/23-24/7(a)	12/05/23	Clr	Chard Town Councillor	19/05/23	15/05/23	12/06/23	upheld	Bringing council into disrepute	Found that she failed to comply with Media policy but policy not clear therefore guidance given to the Clerk to review.	
MO/23-24/7(b)	12/05/23	Clr	Chard Town Councillor	19/05/23	15/05/23	12/06/23	upheld	Bringing council into disrepute	Found that she failed to comply with Media policy but policy not clear therefore guidance given to the Clerk to review.	
MO/23-24/6(d)	14/05/23	Member of the public	Chard Town Councillor	19/05/23	15/05/23	12/06/23	upheld	Unprofessional conduct, bullying behaviour and bring the council into disrepute	Found that he failed to treat with respect but not in the public interest to investigate.	

Appendix 1

Reference	Date Received	Complainant	Council	Acknowledged on	Deadline to Respond (20 working days)	Decision notice sent on	Decision (Upheld/Dismissed)	Nature of Complaint	Notes	Time Spent on complaint
MO/23-24/6 (e)	16/05/23	Member of the public	Chard Town Councillor	23/05/23	16/05/23	14/06/23	upheld	Failure to treat with respect	Found that he failed to treat with respect but not in the public interest to investigate.	
MO/23-24/7(e)	16/05/23	Member of the public	Chard Town Councillor	23/05/23	16/05/23	14/06/23	upheld	Bringing council into disrepute	Found that she failed to comply with Media policy but policy not clear therefore guidance given to the Clerk to review.	
MO/23-24/8(a)	16/05/23	Member of the public	Somerset Council	23/05/23	16/05/23	14/06/23	Dismissed	Bringing council into disrepute	No breach of the code	
MO/23-24/10	16/05/23	Clr	Street Parish Council	23/05/23	18/05/23	15/06/23	Dismissed	Failure to treat with respect	No breach but warning given	
MO/23-24/10(a)	16/05/23	Clr	Street Parish Council	23/05/23	18/05/23	15/06/23	Dismissed	Failure to treat with respect	No breach but warning given	
MO/23-24/10(b)	19/05/23	Clr	Street Parish Council	26/05/23	19/05/23	19/06/23	Dismissed	Failure to treat with respect	No breach but warning given	
MO/23-24/10(c)	19/05/23	Clr	Street Parish Council	26/05/23	19/05/23	19/06/23	Dismissed	Failure to treat with respect	No breach but warning given	
MO/23-24/12	22/05/23	Member of the Public	Minehead Parish Council	30/05/23	12/06/23	10/07/23	Dismissed	Using position, breach of confidentiality and bringing council into disrepute		
Mo/23-24/13	22/05/23	Member of the Public	Minehead Parish Council	30/05/23	12/06/23	10/07/23	Dismissed	Breach of confidentiality and bringing the council into disrepute		
MO/23-24/14	24/05/23	Clr	Horton Parish Council	01/06/23	25/05/23	22/06/23	Dismissed	Failure to treat with respect	Written apology sent from Member to Complainant. Complainant satisfied.	
June 2024										
MO/23-24/6(f)	06/06/23	Member of the public	Chard Town Council	08/06/23	05/07/23	15/06/23	upheld	Failure to treat with respect	Found that he failed to treat with respect but not in the public interest to investigate.	40 mins
MO/23-24/11	02/06/23	Member of the public	Martock Parish Council	06/06/23	04/07/23	23/06/23	Dismissed	Failure to treat with respect and breach of confidential information	No breach but warned of future conduct on social media	2 hrs 45 mins
MO/23-24/12	22/05/23	Member of the public	Minehead Parish Council	12/06/23	10/07/23	10/07/23	Dismissed	Using position, breach of confidentiality and bringing council into disrepute		3 hrs 40 mins
Mo/23-24/13	22/05/23	Member of the public	Minehead Parish Council	12/06/23	10/07/23	10/07/23	Dismissed	Breach of confidentiality and bringing the council into disrepute		3 hrs 40 mins
MO/23-24/15	13/06/23	Member of the public	Mudford Parish Council	13/06/23	11/07/23	17/07/23	upheld	Failure to treat with respect discussing a member of the public's private information	Written apology and training recommended.	4 hrs 55 mins
MO/23-24/16	19/06/23	Member of the public	Crewkerne Town Council	11/07/23	09/08/23	22/09/23	dismissed but training will be given	Breach of equality duty	Anonymity granted due to her employment situation.	4 hrs 30 mins
MO/23-24/16 (a)	20/06/23	Member of the public	Crewkerne Town Council	11/07/23	09/08/23	22/09/23	dismissed but training will be given	Breach of equality duty		4 hrs 30 mins
MO/23-24-16(b)	20/07/23	Member of the public	Crewkerne Town Council	24/07/23	21/08/23	22/09/23	dismissed but training will be given	Using position to advantage others		4 hrs 30 mins
MO/23-24/17	20/06/23	Member of the public	Crewkerne Town Council	11/07/23	09/08/23	22/09/23	dismissed but training will be given	Failure to declare interest		6 hrs 10 mins
MO/23-24/18	22/06/23	Clr	Bridgwater Town Council		20/07/23	07/08/23	dismissed	failure to declare interest	Complainant has asked for anonymity, request rejected. Evidence shows interest declared.	
July 2024										
MO/23-24-16(b)	20/07/23	Member of the public	Crewkerne Town Council	24/07/23	21/08/23	22/09/23	dismissed but training will be given	Using position to advantage others		4 hrs 30 mins
MO/23-24-17(a)	20/07/23	Member of the public	Crewkerne Town Council	24/07/23	21/08/23	22/09/23	dismissed but training will be given	Using position to advantage others and failure to declare interest		6 hrs 10 mins
MO/23-24/19	13/07/23	Clr	Chard Town Council	20/07/23	17/08/23	30/08/23	partially upheld	Bringing the Council into disrepute and using posn to adv/disadvantage others		4 hrs
Mo/23-24/20	13/07/23	Clr	Chard Town Council	20/07/23	17/08/23	30/08/23	dismissed	Bringing the Council into disrepute and using posn to adv/disadvantage others		4 hrs
MO/23-24/21	16/07/23	Member of the public	Ilton Parish Council	20/07/23	17/08/23	03/08/23	dismissed	Failure to treat with respect		2hrs
MO/23-24/22	17/07/23	Member of the public	Ilton Parish Council	20/07/23	17/08/23	03/08/23	dismissed	Failure to treat with respect		2 hrs
MO/23-24/23	16/07/23	Member of the public	Chard Town Council	21/07/23	18/08/23			Failure to treat with respect		
MO/23-24/24	20/07/23	Member of the public	Crewkerne Town Council	24/07/23	21/08/23	22/09/23	dismissed but training will be given	Using position to advantage others		4 hrs
MO/23-24/25	24/07/23	Member of the public	Bishops Lydeard & Cothelstone Parish Council	02/08/23	31/08/23	25/08/23	dismissed	Bringing the council into disrepute, failure to treat with respect and failure to declare an interest		6 hrs
MO/23-24/26	26/07/23	Member of the public	Bridgwater Town Council	04/08/23		04/09/23	dismissed	Failure to declare interest	Further information requested from complainant as he has asked for anonymity. Failed to give sufficient information to consider anonymity.	4 hrs 10 mins

Appendix 1

Reference	Date Received	Complainant	Council	Acknowledged on	Deadline to Respond (20 working days)	Decision notice sent on	Decision (Upheld/Dismissed)	Nature of Complaint	Notes	Time Spent on complaint
August 2024										
MO/23-24/27	02/08/23	Member of the public	Porlock Parish Council	04/08/23	18/08/23	22/08/23	Dismissed	Failure to treat with respect and bullying behaviour		3 hrs 15 mins
MO/23-24/34	22/08/23	Member of the Public	Somerset Council	22/08/23	19/09/23			Bringing Council into disrepute		
September 2024										
MO/23-24/28	06/09/23	Member of the public	Shepton Mallet Town Council	15/09/23		15/09/23	Dismissed	No breach identified by complainant. Unfa	Failed jurisdictional test. Not acting in official capacity	
MO/23-24/29	07/09/23	Clr	Chard Town Council	15/09/23	05/10/23	26/09/23	Failed juris test	Failed to treat with respect and defamed Clr	Failed jurisdictional test. Not acting in official capacity	45 mins
MO/23-24/30	08/09/23	Member of the public	Leigh on Mendip Parish Council	15/09/23	06/10/23	27/09/23	Failed juris test	Participated in a meeting with an interest	Failed jurisdictional test. Dispensation granted by the clerk	20 mins
MO/23-24/31	04/09/23	Member of the public	Creesh St Michael Parish Council	15/09/23	03/10/23			Failure to treat with respect		
MO/23-24/32	27/09/23	Member of staff	Shepton Mallet Town Council	27/09/23	25/10/23			Bringing the authority into disrepute, Using her position for unfair advantage, inappropriate use of council resources		
MO/23-24/33	28/09/23	member of the public	Yeovil Town Council	29/08/23	27/10/23			Failure to declare interest		
October 2023										
N/A										
November 2023										
MO/23-24/35	08/11/23	Member of the public	Wincanton Town Council	16/11/23					Complainant didn't wish to proceed but wanted the complaint left on file as Clr has resigned	5 mins
MO/23-24/36	13/11/23	Member of the public	Old Cleeve Parish Council				Dismissed	dissatisfied with decision of the parish	Some of the complaint was too old and the rest was a dissatisfaction with a council decision no evidence provided of complaint against individual cllrs	3 hrs 30 mins
MO/23-24/37	15/11/23	Member of another public	Somerset	16/11/23	14/12/23	21/11/23	dismissed	Inappropriate racist comments	outside of jurisdiction	40 mins
MO/23-24/38	15/11/23	Employee	Ilminster Town Council	16/11/23	14/12/23		Dismissed	Failure to treat with respect and inappropriate comments on Facebook		3 hrs 30 mins
MO/23-24/39	24/11/23	Employee	Meare Parish Council	28/11/23	28/12/23		Dismissed	Failure to treat with respect and bring the council into disrepute		3 hrs 10 mins
MO/23-24/40	29/11/23	CPRE	Charlton Horethorne PC	30/11/23	02/01/24					
December 2023										
MO-23-24/41	12/12/23	Clr	Somerset Council	19/12/23	12/01/23			Breach of Confidentiality	Self-report	
MO/23-24/42	16/12/23	Clr	Mudford Parish Council	02/01/24	29/01/24			Failure to declare an interest	Complainant agreed complaint would be progressed in January 2024	
Mo/23-24/43	31/12/23	Clr	Chard Town Council	08/01/24	02/02/24			Failure to treat with respect and bullying behaviour		

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Standards Committee

24 January 2024

Register of Gifts and Hospitality

Lead Officer: David Clark, Monitoring Officer

Authors: Scott Wooldridge Head of Governance & Democratic Services and Steve Taylor, (Committee Manager, Democratic Services)

Contact Details: steve.taylor@somerset.gov.uk

1. Summary

- 1.1. Following consideration of a report on Members declarations of Gifts and Hospitality at the meeting of 30 August 2023, the Committee asked for a review of the level at which Members should declare acceptance or refusal of gifts and hospitality.
- 1.2. Priority Group 3 reviewed the Council's current requirements and reported their findings and recommendations at the Committee's meeting of 25 October 2023.
- 1.3. The Committee then made the following recommendations to Full Council:
 1. *That paragraph 9.5 of the Members Code of Conduct be amended to 'I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £10 within 28 days of its receipt.'*
 2. *That paragraph 9.6 of the Members Code of Conduct be amended to 'I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £10 that I have been offered but have refused to accept within 28 days of the offer. It is recommended that a member sets out their reasons for either refusing or accepting.'*
 3. *Amendments to the declaration form so that elected members indicate whether the gift and hospitality being declared had been accepted or not.*
 4. *That a non-mandatory box be added to the declaration form to allow members to give reasons, should they wish to do so, as to why they accepted or refused the gift or hospitality being declared.*

The report to Full Council is attached as Appendix 1.

- 1.4. Full Council considered the Committee's recommendations at its meeting on 20 December. Full Council

RESOLVED to send the report back to the Standards Committee to reconsider Section 9 (Gifts and Hospitality) of the Members Code of Conduct.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1.** 1. To consider the options set out in paragraph 3.10 of this report in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and also consider if any changes are required to the Gifts & Hospitality form.

3. Background

- 3.1.** Somerset Council adopted the LGA Model Code of Conduct following a decision of Full Council in February 2022 ahead of the elections in May 2022. That Code has transitioned to the new Somerset Council from April 2023.
- 3.2.** Hospitality can be defined as any food, drink, accommodation or entertainment freely provided or heavily discounted.
- 3.3.** The LGA's work on the Model Code of Conduct in relation to Gifts and Hospitality recognised that in order to protect a Member's position and the reputation of the local authority, they should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which they reasonably believe to be) offered to them because they are a councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case a Member could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, Members do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to their role as a councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with their duties as a councillor.
- 3.4.** The Code of Conduct sets out the requirement that Somerset Council Members should declare any gifts or hospitality either accepted or rejected by a member over the value of £50. As per the Model Code of Conduct, those declarations must be within 28 days of receipt.
- 3.5.** The general rule is, if in doubt as to the value of a gift or hospitality, Members should register it, as a matter of good practice and in accordance with the principles of openness and accountability in public life. They may therefore have to estimate how much a gift or hospitality is worth. For example, if they attend a dinner as a representative of the authority which has been pre-paid by the sponsors they would need to make an informed judgment as to its likely cost.

3.6. Cllr Tessa Munt, Lead Member for Children & Families, spoke in respect of Agenda Item 5 – Register of Gifts and Hospitality at the Committee’s meeting on 30 August.

She explained that, because it was something particularly important to her, she had asked the Constitution and Governance Committee to consider reducing the threshold for which gifts and hospitality that had to be declared from £50 to £0. Hence the request from that Committee to the Standards Committee. However, she now accepted that £0 may be too low and was asking for this Committee to consider a reduction from £50 to £5. She also raised the following points:

- There should be more continuity of reporting. That she believed that the Council’s Constitution and Code of Conduct referred to ‘gifts, benefits and hospitality’ and not just ‘gifts and hospitality’ referred to in the declaration form.
- Under 3.1 (1) of the Code members are required to state whether they had accepted or refused a gift or hospitality and this should be shown in the report.
- If someone declared gifts or hospitality of under £50 it should be included within the report.

3.7. Priority Group 3 reviewed the Council’s requirements for Members to declare Gifts and Hospitality. Their report and findings are set out in Appendices 2 and 3.

3.8. The Standards Committee requested that Full Council amend Section 9 (Gifts and Hospitality) of the Members Code of Conduct. The report is set out in Appendix 1.

3.9. Full Council’s considered the recommendations at its meeting on 20 December and resolved to send the report back to the Standards Committee to reconsider Section 9 (Gifts and Hospitality) of the Members Code of Conduct.

The following points were raised during the debate:

- £10 was too low.
- The acceptance or non-acceptance of items such as a coffee and a cake or invitations to events with buffets, would need to be declared and the problems in estimating the value if you did not attend.
- The increase in workload for both members and Democratic Services staff with the additional reporting the change would cause.
- The considerable increase in workload for the Chair of Council.
- There was no requirement to provide details of the amounts you spend in your role as a councillor e.g. raffle tickets.

- Members should have been consulted over these changes.

The following written response was also received:

I am concerned that the original proposal highlighted a potential legal flaw. The DPA carries forward the principle that data collection should be minimised, and that any data collection or processing should be purposeful. The words at Council felt to me like a "trawl", in case something interesting turned up. That's not legal, you have to show cause and proportionality.

Clearly the underlying intent is to demonstrate that there is not a link between "hospitality" or "gifts" received and Council related outcomes, and that offers of such are made evident so that it is obvious if someone tries to bribe or to influence multiple members.

Firstly, our system should not intrude into those parts of private, business or family life which can have no direct link to the Council.

It should also recognise the difference between providing sustenance - such as providing sandwiches and coffee at a working lunch - and "hospitality" which is clearly intended to develop relationships. There should also be a recognition of reciprocity, for example where two people alternate who pays. I accept, for example, that a "reception" with the Chamber of Commerce where there is a finger buffet should be declared (it's clearly intended to influence/inform) but it would be daft to insist on refusing the hospitality, we need to meet the people - and these things happen at lunchtime or in the evening, and frankly, I need to eat! That's an accept and declare.

I am bound to refuse and record as a civil servant, but it's very specific about context of the job.

These aren't costed events (there's no ticket price) and presently the intent of the national thresholds recognises that these are about openness, not bribery.

To be honest, a publication based on a value isn't a strong concept. Especially if "friends/family" is involved. As there isn't a record of undeclared gifts/hospitality, it's only where other evidence is available (e.g. photos) that the Member is . This declaration isn't good (or relied on) for the Bribery Act.

I can support £50, not £10 or £25. At £50 the test of significance is met, at £10 I have to declare (and decline) at least three times a week, and have to avoid hospitality given without any intent by community groups, etc. I don't

have enough time and presently trade out the time to claim any expenses - a very good deal for the Taxpayer!

- 3.10.** The Committee is invited to review its previous recommendations and either :
- i) Make further amendments and agree to recommend these back to Full Council; OR
 - ii) Acknowledge the referral back from Full Council and focus on further work that could be done through the Monitoring Officer to promote the current requirements and consider any further work that could be done to embed these i.e. guidance and training
- 3.11.** When considering the options in 3.10, the Committee is reminded that the current requirements are derived from the Local Government Association Model Code of Conduct and are adopted by most councils. Officers would recommend option (ii) to the Committee.

4. Options Considered and Consultations undertaken

- 4.1.** The options available include undertaking further work to promote and embed the current requirements or to agree to recommend to Full Council that amendments are made to the requirements relating to declarations of Gifts and Hospitality.

5. Implications

- 5.1.** Reducing or increasing the level at which declarations need to be made will place a greater or lesser reliance on Members to ensure they make declarations.
- 5.2.** Democratic Services administers the Register of Gifts and Hospitality and any changes to the current requirements would require some procedural and administration changes to be made.

6. Background papers

- 6.1.** Somerset Council Constitution and Code of Conduct.

Note For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author

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Somerset Council

Full Council
20 December 2023



Report of the Standards Committee – members’ declaration of gifts and hospitality

Chair of the Standards Committee: Councillor John Bailey

Lead Officer: David Clark, Service Director – Governance, Democratic and Legal Services

Authors: Scott Wooldridge and Steve Taylor, Democratic Services

Contact Details: steve.taylor@somerset.gov.uk

1. Summary

1.1 The Standards Committee reviewed the level at which Gifts and Hospitality are declared by elected members under the Members Code of Conduct (Part H) of Somerset Council’s Constitution.

1.2 The Committee recommend to Council that the level at which Gifts and Hospitality be declared by elected members be reduced from the current £50 to £10 and that the form members complete be amended, to further improve openness and transparency.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Full Council amend the Section 9 (Gifts and hospitality) of the Members Code of Conduct, Part H of Somerset Council’s Constitution, as follows:

1. That paragraph 9.5 of the Members Code of Conduct be amended to ‘I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £10 within 28 days of its receipt.’
2. That paragraph 9.6 of the Members Code of Conduct be amended to ‘I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £10 that I have been offered but have refused to accept within 28 days of the offer. It is recommended that a member sets out their reasons for either refusing or accepting.’

3. Amendments to the declaration form so that elected members indicate whether the gift and hospitality being declared had been accepted or not.
4. That a non-mandatory box be added to the declaration form to allow members to give reasons, should they wish to do so, as to why they accepted or refused the gift or hospitality being declared.

3. Background

- 3.1 Somerset Council adopted the Local Government Association (LGA) Model Code of Conduct following a decision of Full Council in February 2022 ahead of the elections in May 2022. That Code was incorporated into the new Council's Constitution that was approved in February 2023. This has transitioned to the new Somerset Council from 1 April 2023.
- 3.2 The Members' Code of Conduct sets out the requirement that Somerset Council Members should declare any gifts or hospitality either accepted or rejected by a member over an estimated value of £50. Many councils have adopted that approach for their councillors to declare any gifts or hospitality.
- 3.3 The Committee reviewed the current requirements at its meetings on 30 August 2023 and 25 October 2023 where the Committee's Priority Group 3 made recommendations regarding revisions to the current arrangements for members to declare any gifts and hospitality.

4. Implications

- 4.1 Changing the estimated value for declarations from £50 to £10 represents a significant change from the LGA Model Code of Conduct **and** from the Model Code of Conduct which the Council, and its predecessor Councils, had all been encouraging all the city, town and parish councils in Somerset to adopt.
- 4.2 Reducing or increasing the level at which declarations need to be made will place a greater or lesser reliance on Members to ensure they make declarations.
- 4.3 Democratic Services administers the Register of Gifts and Hospitality and any changes to the current requirements would require some procedural and administration changes to be made.

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 The Constitution and Governance Committee's report to Full Council on 22 February 2023. [Constitution & Governance Committee report](#)
- 5.2 The report considered by the Standards Committee on 25 October 2023 ([Review of Gifts and Hospitality - Updated report and appendices](#))

Note For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author

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Agenda Item 7

Standards Committee – Work Programme 2023 – 2024 (allocated 25 October 23)

	Work Item	By Whom	Committee Meeting
1.	Minutes and Action Plan (standing item)	DS	24 January 2024
2.	Work Programme (standing item)	DS	24 January 2024
3.	Model Code of Conduct Adoption by City, Town & Parish Councils – Report back on the survey results and what could be done to improve response levels and uptake of the Code of Conduct.	P2	24 January 2024
4.	Minutes and Action Plan (standing item)	DS	27 March 2024
5.	Work Programme (standing item)	DS	27 March 2024
6.	Standards Committee Annual Report to Full Council (22 May 2024)	SC	27 March 2024
7.	Gifts and Hospitality Register and to review the Monitoring Officer’s maintenance of the Members’ and officers’ registers of interests and gifts and hospitality	DS	27 March 2024
8.	Media Plan review & costings	P1	27 March 2024
9.	Review the operation and effectiveness of the Members’ Code of Conduct and recommend any changes considered necessary to the Council for approval	P2	27 March 2024
10.	Keep under review the operation and effectiveness of the Standards Committee and Standards Hearing Sub-Committee arrangements and to recommend any changes considered necessary to the Council for approval.	P2	27 March 2024
11.	Review the Monitoring Officer’s arrangements for the investigation of allegations of breaches of the Council’s Code of Conduct by Members and co-opted Members and to make recommendations for appropriate changes to the Monitoring Officer	P1	27 March 2024

Key

DS – Democratic Services

P1 – Priority Group 1 (Cllr Bailey (Chair), Cllr Smedley, Cllr Nicholson, D Stripp & P Hooper

P2 – Priority Group 2 (Cllr Nicholson (Chair), R Horton & A Hemsley

P3 – Priority Group 3 (Cllr Dimery (Chair), Cllr H Davies & A Hemsley

SC – Standards Committee