

16 October 2024 at 7pm

**Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Duke Street,
Chelmsford, CM1 1JE**

Membership

Councillor K. Franks (Chair)

and Councillors

I. Fuller, B. Massey, S. Rajesh, J. Sosin, M. Steel, and S.
Young

Parish Council Representatives

Councillor K. Bentley (South Woodham Ferrers Town Council)
Councillor K. Golla (Chelmsford Garden Community Council)
Councillor P. Jackson (Great Waltham Parish Council)

Local people are welcome to attend this meeting, where your elected Councillors take decisions affecting YOU and your City. There is also an opportunity to ask your Councillors questions or make a statement. These have to be submitted in advance and details are on the agenda page. If you would like to find out more, please telephone Jan Decena in the Democracy Team on Chelmsford (01245) 606523 or email jan.decena@chelmsford.gov.uk

Governance Committee

16 October 2024

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2024.

3. Declaration of Interests

All Members are reminded that they must disclose any interests they know they have in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they become aware of the interest. If the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they are also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting.

4. Public Question Time

Any member of the public may ask a question or make a statement at this point in the meeting. Each person has two minutes and a maximum of 15 minutes is allotted to public questions/statements, which must be about matters for which the Committee is responsible.

The Chair may disallow a question if it is offensive, substantially the same as another question or requires disclosure of exempt or confidential information. If the question cannot be answered at the meeting a written response will be provided after the meeting.

Any member of the public who wishes to submit a question or statement to this meeting should email it to committees@chelmsford.gov.uk 24 hours before the start time of the meeting. All valid questions and statements will be published with the agenda on the website at least six hours before the start time and will be responded to at the meeting. Those who have submitted a valid question or statement will be entitled to put it in person at the meeting, provided they have indicated that they wish to do so and have submitted an email address to which an invitation to join the meeting and participate in it can be sent.

5. Chair's Announcements

6. Monitoring Officer Report

7. Information Governance Update

8. Senior Responsible Officer's report in relation to the Council's RIPA arrangements

9. Complaints to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman – Annual Review

10. Annual Report of the Governance Committee 2023/24

11. Update on Register of Interests in City and Parish tier Councils

12. Work Programme

13. Urgent Business

To consider any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

MINUTES OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

6 March 2024 at 7pm

Present:

Councillor C. Davidson (Chair)

Councillors H. Clark, J. Sosin, and M. Steel

Also in attendance –

Parish Councillors K. Bentley

Independent Person –
Mr P Jeremiah

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor D. Eley, Councillor P. Jackson, Mrs Gosling, Mr Lamb, and Mrs Mills.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 17th January 2024 were confirmed as a correct record.

3. Declarations of Interest

All Members were reminded to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary interests or other registerable interests where appropriate in any items of business on the meeting's agenda. None were made.

4. Public Question Time

No questions or statements were received from members of the public.

5. Chair's Announcements

There were no announcements made.

6. Monitoring Officer Report

The Committee received an update on standards complaints since the May 2023 elections. It was noted that no new complaints have been received. However, since the publication of the agenda, one new complaint in relation to a parish-tier councillor had been received and in the process of facilitating a meeting with an Independent Person in due course. Members were advised of the allegations of the complaints including failure to register an interest.

In response to questions and statements from members, it was advised that;

- The details of the complaint cannot be released at this stage.
- The statistical information would be amended with the complaint received and this would be reflected when published on the Council website.

RESOLVED that the Committee;

- Noted the current statistical information as to complaints made, subject to the addition of the complaint received, and agreed for the report to be published on the Council's website.

(7.03pm to 7.06pm)

7. Annual Review of the Constitution

The Committee received an annual review of the Constitution. The Council's Monitoring Officer was required to keep the constitution updated and that one of the actions arising from the last Annual Governance Statement was to undertake its review. It was noted that parts of the constitution had been reviewed over the past few years.

Members were advised of the changes that have already been made and that minor amendments had been approved with consultation of the Chair of Governance Committee. There were no changes found that required approval from the Committee thus far but there were parts of the constitution that were identified for further review such as the Planning Code and Practice Notes. It was also advised that the contents of the Information Security Code of Conduct was also completed with the consultation of the Chair of Governance Committee.

RESOLVED that;

- The annual review of the Constitution was noted.

(7.06pm to 7.09pm)

8. Review of the Whistleblowing Policy

The Committee received an update in relation to the review of the Whistleblowing Policy. It was advised that the review would then align the Policy with the recent

updates to the Counter Fraud and Corruption Strategy and Fraud Response Plan. It was noted that whilst the Whistleblowing Policy was not in the constitution, it was accessible via the Council's website.

Members also heard that the other minor changes including updating organisation name, a job title, updating the links, removing gender references, and updating telephone contact number. It was noted that there were also updates in relation to the Financial Regulations and Practice notes. Members were also advised that there were also some work needed to realign the document as well as formatting edits.

In response to questions and statements from the Committee, it was advised that;

- Regarding grievance procedures and regarding bullying and harassment, it was advised that these were internal policies for employees and were not usually published with the Whistleblowing Policy. However, employees were also aware that these procedures were available via the Intranet.
- It was advised that around half a dozen whistleblowing incidents were received per year and these would be published in the Annual Whistleblowing Report in October 2024. It was also noted that most received were not whistleblowing incidents but that the form was used to make contact regarding complaints.
- The Whistleblowing Policy had never been in the Constitution and there was also no reference to it. However, having a Whistleblowing Policy would be a common practice in other local authorities.

RESOLVED that;

- The updates to the Whistleblowing Policy to be noted.

(7.09pm to 7.16pm)

9. Gifts and Hospitality Report

The Committee received a report in relation to the offers of gifts and hospitality made to councillors and officers. It was also noted that the Governance Committee assumed responsibility for these matters. It was advised that there were four declarations made by members and none from officers.

Members heard that there were several members and officers who were offered and accepted free tickets to Creamfields. It was advised that the offer was made available via the Council and treated as a generic event-based declaration in any event. It was noted that the two gifts and hospitality offered were below the threshold and the two were declined.

In response to the questions and comments from Committee members, it was advised that;

- In terms of offers from spam emails, it was advised that policy decision was for these not be treated as offers of gifts and hospitality. It was also advised that the

gifts or hospitality offered should be viewed as substantial to be declared which would be a question of judgement.

- There was a discussion regarding the wording of whether the offers of gift or hospitality should be declared as declined if ignored.

RESOLVED that;

- The gifts and hospitality report to be noted and published on the Council's website.

(7.16pm to 07.23pm)

10. Work Programme

The Committee received an update on the work programme for 2023-24. Members were informed that the June 2024 would also be the joint meeting with Audit & Risk Committee, with a Governance Committee meeting to follow afterwards.

It was also advised that planned constitutional items would be ready in time for the June 2024 Governance Committee meeting. The annual reports were also noted for the October 2024 meeting, and it was advised that there would be only one possible meeting between the January 2025 and the March 2025 meeting.

RESOLVED that the work programme of the Committee be noted.

(7.23pm to 7.25pm)

11. Urgent Business

There were no matters of urgent business.

The meeting closed at 7.25pm

Chair



Chelmsford City Council Governance Committee

16 October 2024

Monitoring Officer's Report

Report by:
Monitoring Officer

Officer Contact:
Lorraine Browne, Legal & Democratic Services Manager & Monitoring Officer,
email: lorraine.browne@chelmsford.gov.uk, tel: 01245 606560

Purpose

To update members on the current position in relation to standards complaints.

Recommendations

1. To note the current statistical information and agree that Appendix 1 should be published on the Council's website to confirm this.
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1. Standards Complaints

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

- 1.2. Members will see that the past few months have been busy in terms of receiving complaints. Most of the complaints have been concluded informally. There are 4 linked complaints that remain outstanding, these are currently held in abeyance.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Statistical information regarding complaints made

Background papers: Nil

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: It is good practice for statistical information to be provided to the Governance Committee. Where any complaints are referred to in the appendix, a summary of the complaint without any personal data is provided.

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: None

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: None

Consultees: None

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

Complaints Procedure

Standards Enquiries and Investigations Statistics – Localism Act 2011

March 2024 – to October 2024

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	9	9, 10, 13, 15-20/24	Parish tier	July/August 2024	Various allegations	Complaints invalid – complainant advised and NFA
2. No further action required after consultation with one of the Independent Persons	5	2/24	Parish tier	Mar 24	Alleged disrespect towards a councillor at a meeting	Below threshold to warrant action. NFA
		3 & 4/24	Parish tier	April 24	Various allegations	Most issues outside of MO jurisdiction/remaining below threshold for investigation. NFA
		6/24	City	May 24	Disrepute	Could not amount to breach – NFA
		14/24	Parish tier	Aug 24	Various allegations including disrespect	Below threshold for investigation NFA

Status of Complaint Categories	Total No.	Case No.	City, Parish tier Councillor	Date Issue First Raised	Alleged Breach or Issue Raised	Current Position
3. Other action after consultation with one of the independent Persons	8	1/24	Parish tier	Mar 24	Various allegations including declaration of interests	Councillor given opportunity to update their ROI. Completed. NFA
		5/24	Parish tier	May 24	Declaration of interests	Cllr asked to consider decision notice and revert with compliant approach for the future. Compliant approach provided. NFA
		7/24	Parish tier	June 24	Declaration of interests	Cllr asked to consider advice in decision notice. Provided assurance for future declarations and confirmed had received training. NFA
		8/24	Parish tier	June 24	Declaration of interests	Cllr asked to consider advice in decision notice. Provided assurance for future declarations and confirmed had received training. NFA
		11/24	Parish tier	July 24	Various allegations including disrespect	Other action - reminder of expectations of councillors. NFA
		12/24	Parish tier	July 24	Various allegations including disrespect	Other action – reminder of expectations of councillors. NFA

Status of Complaint Categories	Total No.	Case No.	City, Parish tier Councillor	Date Issue First Raised	Alleged Breach or Issue Raised	Current Position
		21/24	Parish tier	Aug 24	Improper advantage/failure to declare interest	Unclear whether breach. Information provided as to relevant tests. Below threshold for investigation. NFA
		22/24	Parish tier	Aug 24	Various allegations including disrespect and disrepute	Below threshold for investigation. Informal letter to councillor. NFA
4. Complaint on hold	4	23 -26	Parish tier & city	Sept 24	Various including disrespect, bullying & discrimination	Standards complaints held in abeyance pending police consideration.
5. Decision as to appropriate action still awaited	0					
6. Complaints being investigated	0					
Total	26					

Formal Complaint Outcomes

	Case No. and Councillor	Committee Date and Decision	Date Issue First Raised	Current Position
Outcome of Investigations				
Other Action				



Chelmsford City Council Governance Committee

16 October 2024

Information Governance Update

Report by:
Data Protection Officer

Officer Contact:

John Breen, Information Governance Manager & DPO, email:
john.breen@chelmsford.gov.uk, tel: 01245 606215

Purpose

To provide an annual update on the Council's approach to the assurance and management of information.

Recommendations

1. To note the contents of this report.
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Achievements and Further Developments

1. Statutory Requests – information requests comprise of Freedom of Information, Environmental Information Regulations and Data Protection Act Subject Access Requests. In 2023/24 the Information Governance Team, together with services, processed 934 requests and 93% were answered within statutory timescales. This compares with 874 requests received in 2022/23 where 90% were answered within timescale. Additionally, one case relating to these information requests was referred to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and the ICO upheld the Council's decision.

2. Data Breaches – the number of data breaches increased from 35 in 2022/23 to 38 in 2023/24. These breaches are categorised as following (with last year's data in brackets):
 - i. 24 email breaches (15) – consists of officers putting email addresses in the 'To' field instead of 'Bcc' field enabling individuals to see other individuals' email addresses, or officers sending emails to the wrong recipient.
 - ii. 11 enveloping breaches (11) – where two or more letters for different individuals are put in the same envelope or letters are sent to the wrong address.
 - iii. 1 security breaches (3) – a supplier security error which led to information appearing online. The issue was resolved shortly after.
 - iv. 2 other breaches (6) – other incidents which include errors in online forms and external reports.

All data breaches are investigated thoroughly in line with the Council's Data Breach Procedure. These investigations also provide the Council and officers with an opportunity to learn from the breaches. In addition, no cases relating to data breaches were referred to the ICO in 2023/24, the same as in 2022/23.

3. Phishing - in April the Council ran a phishing campaign which targeted employees for personal information. In the wider world these types of attacks continue to rise and become more sophisticated as time progresses. The simulation run by the Council was an imitation of a real attack to provide employees with more awareness to help them recognise real malicious attacks. As with all phishing simulations the outcome of this campaign has been carefully considered and is used to inform further the Council's response (including training and awareness) to cyber security risks.
4. Training and Awareness – the 'human factor' is often the weakest link in information security and therefore ensuring staff and Councillors are appropriately trained is a very important element of compliance for data protection and cyber security. In 2018/19, general GDPR eLearning training was delivered to all computer-based staff and the Council now launches a new training exercise for all staff and Councillors on an annual basis. The most recent training course was aimed at education through storytelling and Cyber Police series one was released to staff. The Council achieved a completion rate of 92% (up 9% from the training released the year before). Shortly, series two of Cyber Police will be launched to the organisation.
5. Cyber Security Review – once again cyber security work has been a significant focus for the Council and further improvements have been made. The Council's vCISO (virtual chief information security officer) service has been effective as we are working towards the new Cyber Assessment

Framework. Different kinds of cyber security training are being rolled out to the organisation, including “escape room” style training. We have also continued our technical advancements, including new hardware, upgrades (rollout of Windows 11) and patching of major systems, and continuing our journey to hosted products (either 3rd party or in our own dynamics 365 platform). The Council is still focussed on cultural elements, and we have seen progress in this area by refocusing messaging on data protection using examples from individuals’ personal lives as well as organisational scenarios. There are also some more tabletop exercises scheduled for the next 12 months. We also continue to apply and be successful in receiving government grants for our cyber security plans.

6. Policies – the Council have a number of policies which link to security and the protection of personal information which have been developed and reviewed in recent years. In the last year the Council has reviewed its suite of policies including the Information Governance Policy, Data Breach Policy, Social Media Policy and Information Security Code of Conduct.
7. Consents – the GDPR introduced more stringent rules around consents, meaning organisations were required to consider how the consents were obtained in order to determine if they were GDPR compliant. The Council has refined its marketing lists to ensure adequate consents under GDPR are in place and have worked on rebuilding its depleted marketing lists. The number of subscribers across GovDelivery [general marketing] and Dotdigital/Spektrix [Theatres marketing] is now over 77,000 as the number of subscribers continues to increase each year.
8. Privacy Notices – organisations are required to have privacy notices to inform users how they are going to use their data before receiving it. The Council now has 30 privacy notices in place across a range of different service areas, which are regularly reviewed and updated.
9. Risk Management – information governance risks have been developed and fit the Council’s revised risk management criteria. They are an important step in the Council’s maturing information governance framework and enable the Council to put more effort and resources into areas which carry a higher risk. An example of this has been the Council investing more resources in cyber security training and initiatives.
10. Contracts - one of the most difficult areas for the Council is ensuring that external suppliers are contractually aware of their legal responsibilities when handling information on our behalf, including whether they are complying with data protection law in delivering services for the Council. All contracts issued, including the standard Terms and Conditions, contain appropriate data protection clauses. Suppliers are required to agree to these terms before we purchase from them. OneCouncil now holds all contract records that result from sourcing processes dealt with by the Procurement Team. Smaller

contracts may still be put in place, by services, outside of our processes but the majority of these are covered by our standard Terms and Conditions.

11. Records Retention – managing records effectively is essential to the efficient running of an organisation. Over time, service areas improve the technology they work with, which has a positive effect on the management of records. To assist with the management of records, many authorities have introduced an email retention period in Microsoft Outlook. Management Team have recently agreed a retention period of seven years for emails stored in Outlook which becomes effective on 1st February 2025. This is an important step to reducing the amount of information an organisation holds and will lead to further improvements in the retention of records.

List of Appendices

Nil

Background papers:

Nil

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: These are set out in the report

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: None

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: None

Consultees: None

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

These are set out in this report



Chelmsford City Council Governance Committee

16 October 2024

Senior Responsible Officer's report in relation to the Council's RIPA arrangements

Report by:
Senior Responsible Officer

Officer Contact:

Lorraine Browne, Legal & Democratic Services Manager & Monitoring Officer,
lorraine.browne@chelmsford.gov.uk, 01245 606560

Purpose

To update members on the Council's RIPA arrangements.

Recommendations

1. To note the annual update for members.
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1. Background

- 1.1. RIPA relates to covert investigatory powers given to local authorities for specific and limited purposes. For local authorities such as Chelmsford City Council only three types of activity may be authorised and this includes directed surveillance, the use of covert human intelligence source and the acquisition of communications data. These powers are overseen by the Investigatory Powers

Commissioners Office (IPCO) who undertakes periodic RIPA inspections. Details of how these types of activity could be authorised by the Council are set out in detail in two policies – the RIPA policy and the RIPA social media policy.

- 1.2. In terms of number of authorisations granted, as has been the case for some years, the Council has not needed to obtain any RIPA approvals during the past year. However, the Council needs to make sure that it remains ready to do so if necessary and that staff are properly trained to ensure investigations continue to be undertaken in a lawful and appropriate way. Ongoing annual reviews of RIPA arrangements are undertaken to support this and provide assurance.
- 1.3. Inspections by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) usually take place every few years. An inspection was undertaken last year by way of a written response being provided to the inspectors for consideration. The inspectors were satisfied with the Council's arrangements and the response provided. The next inspection is due 3 years after the last inspection.

2. Annual Review 2024

- 2.1 Both the Council's RIPA and RIPA Social Media Policies were reviewed in some detail during the inspection in 2020. Further technical updating was subsequently necessary because of legislative changes under the CHIS (Criminal Conduct) Act 2021 and a new CHIS Code of Practice. Personnel updates have also been made because of the appointment of new Authorising Officers. The policy and appointment updates are made as necessary by the SRO under officer delegation.
- 2.2 Training of key personnel was completed in house last Autumn although new staff and refresher training is part of ongoing training reviews and is supplemented by external trainers. Further refresher training is planned to take place next year. RIPA policies together with training needs will continue to be reviewed at least annually together with any ongoing actions through the RIPA officer working group. Part of the annual review process also involves providing an assurance report to the Governance Committee, usually in the autumn.

List of appendices:

Nil

Background papers:

Nil

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: These are set out in the RIPA policies referred to in the report. This report is provided to committee for assurance purposes as to the steps taken to ensure compliance and reduce risk of undertaking covert surveillance without appropriate consideration and authorisation.

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: See legal and constitutional paragraph above.

Equality and Diversity: None

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: None

Consultees: none

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

Current RIPA and RIPA social media policies



Chelmsford City Council Governance Committee

16 October 2024

Complaints to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman – Annual Review

Report by:

Director of Connected Chelmsford

Officer Contact:

Jan Decena, Democratic Services Officer, email: jan.decena@chelmsford.gov.uk,
telephone: 01245 606523

Purpose

This report provides information on complaints dealt with by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman about the City Council in 2023-2024 and the Annual Letter from the Commission dated 17th July 2024.

Recommendations

Subject to any comments members might have, the report be noted.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) investigates complaints about councils and certain other bodies. The LGO's aims are to promote good service delivery and customer care. It investigates complaints about most council areas of activities including housing and planning functions.

1.2 The service it provides is independent, impartial and free. The LGO looks at the process of decision making, rather than the decision itself and cannot investigate complaints where there are other means of obtaining redress such as via planning appeals or through the courts. The process requires people to use a council's

complaints procedures first before complaining to the LGO if they are dissatisfied with the response.

1.3 The duty of the LGO is to establish whether there has been maladministration or fault and, if so, whether it led to injustice. Maladministration means that a matter was not dealt with properly, for example because procedures were not correctly followed. Injustice means that the maladministration led to the complainant being unfairly treated.

1.4 A significant proportion of complaints to the LGO are not formally investigated as they are referred to local authorities to deal with through their local complaint arrangements if those have not been followed. Similarly, many complaints are not formally determined by the LGO because the complaint is settled during the course of the investigation ('local settlements') by being referred back to the local authority. The LGO encourages such local settlements whenever possible.

1.5 Each year, the LGO writes to each authority to summarise the work of the Commission in relation to that authority and its performance generally in comparison with other authorities. The letter and the information on complaints against the Council is submitted to this Committee for its consideration and comments. The letter for 2023-2024 is at **Appendices 1A and 1B** to this report.

2. Complaints Received in 2023-24

2.1 Year on year the number of enquiries and complaints fluctuates and, in 2023-24, 17 enquiries and complaints relating to this Council were received by the Commission, higher than the fourteen received in 2022-23 and in 2021-22. The number of complaints received does not necessarily tally with the number of complaints decided as the receipt and investigation of complaints can cover two annual periods.

2.2 In comparison with previous years, the number of complaints received last year reflected an increase over the past few years, the lowest during 2020-21 which was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Number of complaints since then were returning to pre-pandemic levels.

<u>2017/18</u>	<u>2018/19</u>	<u>2019/20</u>	<u>2020/21</u>	<u>2021/22</u>	<u>2022/23</u>	<u>2023/24</u>
18	13	13	6	14	14	17

2.3 During 2023-24, the Commission made decisions on seventeen complaints about the Council.

- Eleven complaints were closed after initial enquiries (nine were adjudged not to be warranted by alleged fault/injustice, in one had other appeal rights and, in one other complaint matters were raised which were not the function of the council);
- One complaint was not upheld;

- One complaint was considered incomplete/invalid due to insufficient information;
- Four complaints were deemed premature and were referred back to the council

2.4 The data provided by the Ombudsman is based on information held by that office and will not necessarily match that held by the Council. For example, the Ombudsman's numbers include enquiries from people signposted back to the Council after contacting the LGO, some of whom may never subsequently contact the Council.

2.5 A summary of those cases on which decisions were made and about which the Council is aware is set out in **Appendix 2**.

2.6 Seen in the context of complaints against other councils, Chelmsford is neither better nor worse than other authorities of a similar size and with similar responsibilities. Comparative information can be seen by following the link entitled Your Council's Performance on page 2 of the Annual Letter.

3. Conclusion

3.1 The Ombudsman's Annual Letter reveals no significant change in the number of complaints against the Council in 2023-24. The Ombudsman has expressed no concerns about the way in which the Council handles complaints or about its internal processes in general.

3.2 The Council is reviewing adoption of the Complaints Handling Code issued by the Ombudsman and referred to in the Annual letter. This may be considered in complaint casework dealt with by the Ombudsman from April 2026. In doing so the Council will also consider any further guidance and updates in this regard.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1A - Letter from Local Government Ombudsman dated 17 July 2024

Appendix 1B – Complaint statistics

Appendix 2 - Cases decided in 2023-24 of which the Council is aware.

Background papers:

The appendices to this report

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: It is good practice to report these matters to committee for consideration. The Terms of Reference for the Governance Committee include the maintaining oversight of complaints including those relating to the Local Government Ombudsman.

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: A failure to be aware of or to address complaints could result in unsafe or inadequate services being delivered to the detriment of those receiving them. The Council's reputation could also be damaged

Equality and Diversity:

Complaints are monitored by equalities representatives in each service to ensure that there is no disproportionate dissatisfaction by the different equality target groups. This data is considered as part of the assessment process to ensure that there is no discrimination in service delivery.

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: N/A

Consultees:

None

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

None are relevant

17 July 2024

By email

Mr Eveleigh
Chief Executive
Chelmsford City Council

Dear Mr Eveleigh

Annual Review letter 2023-24

I write to you with your annual summary of complaint statistics from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the year ending 31 March 2024. The information offers valuable insight about your organisation's approach to complaints, and I know you will consider it as part of your corporate governance processes. As such, I have sought to share this letter with the Leader of your Council and Chair of the appropriate Scrutiny Committee, to ensure effective ownership and oversight of complaint outcomes, which offer valuable opportunities to learn and improve. In addition, this year, we have encouraged Monitoring Officers to register to receive the letter directly, supporting their role to report the decisions we uphold to their council.

For most of the reporting year, Paul Najsarek steered the organisation during his tenure as interim Ombudsman, and I was delighted to take up the role of Ombudsman in February 2024. I look forward to working with you and colleagues across the local government sector to ensure we continue to harness the value of individual complaints and drive and promote systemic change and improvement across the local government landscape.

While I know this ambition will align with your own, I am aware of the difficult financial circumstances and service demands that make continuous improvement a challenging focus for the sector. However, we will continue to hold organisations to account through our investigations and recommend proportionate actions to remedy injustice. Despite the challenges, I have great confidence that you recognise the valuable contribution and insight complaints, and their swift resolution, offer to improve services for the public.

Complaint statistics

Our statistics focus on three key areas that help to assess your organisation's commitment to putting things right when they go wrong:

Complaints upheld - We uphold complaints when we find fault in an organisation's actions, including where the organisation accepted fault before we investigated. We include the total number of investigations completed to provide important context for the statistic. This year, we also provide the number of upheld complaints per 100,000 population.

Compliance with recommendations - We recommend ways for organisations to put things right when faults have caused injustice and monitor their compliance with our recommendations. Failure to comply is rare and a compliance rate below 100% is a cause for concern.

Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority - In these cases, the organisation upheld the complaint and we agreed with how it offered to put things right. We encourage the early resolution of complaints and give credit to organisations that accept fault and find appropriate ways to put things right.

Finally, we compare the three key annual statistics for your organisation with similar authorities to provide an average marker of performance. We do this for County Councils, District Councils, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary Councils, and London Boroughs.

Your annual data, and a copy of this letter, will be uploaded to our interactive map, [Your council's performance](#), on 24 July 2024. This useful tool places all our data and information about councils in one place. You can find the detail of the decisions we have made about your Council, read the public reports we have issued, and view the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

Supporting complaint and service improvement

In February, following a period of consultation, we launched the [Complaint Handling Code](#) for councils, setting out a clear process for responding to complaints effectively and fairly. It is aligned with the Code issued to housing authorities and landlords by the Housing Ombudsman Service and we encourage you to adopt the Code without undue delay. Twenty councils have volunteered to take part in an implementation pilot over the next two years that will develop further guidance and best practice.

The Code is issued to councils under our powers to provide guidance about good administrative practice. We expect councils to carefully consider the Code when developing policies and procedures and will begin considering it as part of our processes from April 2026 at the earliest.

The Code is considered good practice for all organisations we investigate (except where there are statutory complaint handling processes in place), and we may decide to issue it as guidance to other organisations in future.

Our successful complaint handling training programme continues to develop with new modules in Adult Social Care and Children's Services complaint handling available soon. All our courses include practical interactive workshops that help participants develop their complaint handling skills. We delivered 126 online workshops during the year, reaching more than 1,700 people. To find out more visit www.lgo.org.uk/training or get in touch at training@lgo.org.uk.

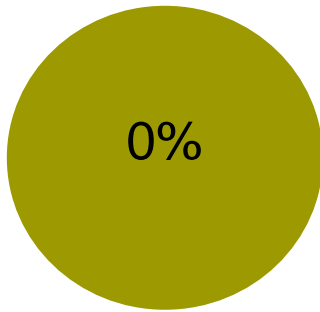
Returning to the theme of continuous improvement, we recognise the importance of reflecting on our own performance. With that in mind I encourage you to share your view of our organisation via this survey: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ombudsman/>. Your responses will help us to assess our impact and improve our offer to you. We want to gather a range of views and welcome multiple responses from organisations, so please do share the link with relevant colleagues.

Yours sincerely,



Amerdeep Somal
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Complaints upheld



0% of complaints we investigated were upheld.

This compares to an average of **63%** in similar organisations.

0
upheld decisions

This is 0 upheld decisions per 100,000 residents.

The average for authorities of this type is 1.2 upheld decisions per 100,000 residents.

Statistics are based on a total of **1** investigation for the period between 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Compliance with Ombudsman recommendations

No recommendations were due for compliance in this period

Satisfactory remedies provided by the authority

The Ombudsman did not uphold any complaints in this period

Reference	Authority	Category	Received
23002320	Chelmsford City Council	Planning & Development	22/05/2023
23003567	Chelmsford City Council	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	27/07/2023
23003889	Chelmsford City Council	Planning & Development	29/06/2023
23004807	Chelmsford City Council	Housing	07/07/2023
23005113	Chelmsford City Council	Highways & Transport	27/07/2023
23008283	Chelmsford City Council	Planning & Development	01/09/2023
23011012	Chelmsford City Council	Housing	13/10/2023
23011960	Chelmsford City Council	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	03/11/2023
23012111	Chelmsford City Council	Highways & Transport	06/11/2023
23012117	Chelmsford City Council	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	06/11/2023
23012513	Chelmsford City Council	Planning & Development	10/11/2023
23013524	Chelmsford City Council	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	27/11/2023
23013843	Chelmsford City Council	Planning & Development	06/02/2024
23014169	Chelmsford City Council	Highways & Transport	06/12/2023
23014727	Chelmsford City Council	Highways & Transport	15/12/2023
23015221	Chelmsford City Council	Benefits & Tax	11/01/2024
23018543	Chelmsford City Council	Housing	28/02/2024

Reference	Authority	Category	Decided	Decision	Decision Reason	Remedy	Service improvement recommendations
22009160	Chelmsford City Council	Housing	12/04/2023	Not Upheld	no fault		
23002320	Chelmsford City Council	Planning & Development	08/06/2023	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		
23003567	Chelmsford City Council	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	30/08/2023	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		
23003889	Chelmsford City Council	Planning & Development	11/07/2023	Closed after initial enquiries	26(6)(b) appeal to Minister		
23004807	Chelmsford City Council	Housing	07/07/2023	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given		
23005113	Chelmsford City Council	Highways & Transport	27/07/2023	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given		
23008283	Chelmsford City Council	Planning & Development	03/10/2023	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		
23011012	Chelmsford City Council	Housing	19/10/2023	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		
23011960	Chelmsford City Council	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	03/11/2023	Incomplete/Invalid	Insufficient information to proceed and PA advised		
23012111	Chelmsford City Council	Highways & Transport	13/12/2023	Closed after initial enquiries	No worthwhile outcome achievable by investigation		
23012117	Chelmsford City Council	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	05/12/2023	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged injustice		
23012513	Chelmsford City Council	Planning & Development	12/12/2023	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		
23013524	Chelmsford City Council	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	27/11/2023	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given		
23013843	Chelmsford City Council	Planning & Development	06/02/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		
23014169	Chelmsford City Council	Highways & Transport	06/12/2023	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given		
23014727	Chelmsford City Council	Highways & Transport	25/01/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	S26(1) Not an admin function of authority		
23015221	Chelmsford City Council	Benefits & Tax	12/02/2024	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault		

Complaints decided by the Ombudsman in 2023-24 of which the Council is aware

Complaint reference

22009160

Category

Housing

Summary of decision

The Ombudsman found no fault in how the Council decided Miss X's priority on the housing register. The Council properly considered her circumstances when she first applied to the housing register and requested a health and housing award. It also reviewed her banding when she asked it to, all while following its allocations policy.

Remedy

N/A

Complaint reference

23002320

Category

Planning and Development

Summary of decision

The Ombudsman decided not to investigate Mrs X's complaint about the Council's handling of a retrospective planning application which included the creation of an off-street parking space. There is not enough evidence of fault to justify investigating.

Remedy

N/A

Complaint reference

23003567

Category

Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation

Summary of decision

The Ombudsman decided not to investigate this complaint the Council's licensing inspection at Ms X's business premises. This is because we are unlikely to find evidence of fault by the Council sufficient to warrant an investigation.

Remedy

N/A

Complaint reference

23003889

Category

Planning and Development

Summary of decision

this complaint about how the Council dealt with the complainant's planning application. This is because he had the right to appeal to the Planning Inspector.

Remedy

N/A

Complaint reference

23008283

Category

Planning and Development

Summary of decision

The Ombudsman decided not to investigate Mr X's complaint about the Council's decision not to take enforcement action for an alleged unauthorised use of a building near his home. This is because there is not enough evidence of fault by the Council.

Remedy

N/A

Complaint reference

23011012

Category

Housing

Summary of decision

The Ombudsman decided not to investigate this complaint that the Council has unreasonably decided to end a homeless woman's interim accommodation booking. The woman has separate review and appeal rights she can use to challenge the Council's referral of her case to another council. Also there is no sign of fault in its decision to end its accommodation duty in those circumstances.

Remedy

N/A

Complaint reference

23012117

Category

Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation

Summary of decision

The Ombudsman decided not to investigate Mr X's complaint about the Council not entirely emptying one of his bins, not returning to complete the collection, and offering a resolution which would cause him to incur expenses. The matters complained of do not cause a sufficient significant personal injustice to Mr X to warrant us investigating.

Remedy

N/A

Complaint reference

23012513

Category

Planning and Development

Summary of decision

The Ombudsman decided not to investigate this complaint about the Council's decision not to accept a late request to review a Community Infrastructure Levy charge. We have seen no evidence of fault in the way the Council made its decision.

Remedy

N/A

Complaint reference

23014727

Category

Highway repair and Maintenance

Summary of decision

The Ombudsman decided not to investigate this complaint about highway maintenance because the Council complained about is not responsible for the issue being raised.

Remedy

N/A

Complaint reference

23013843

Category

Planning & Development

Summary of decision

The Ombudsman decided not to investigate this complaint about a grant of planning permission as there is no evidence of fault by the Council.

Remedy

N/A

Complaint reference

23014727

Category

Highway repair and maintenance

Summary of decision

The Ombudsman decided not to investigate this complaint about highway maintenance because the Council complained about is not responsible for the issue being raised.

Remedy

N/A

Complaint reference

23015221

Category

Benefits and Tax

Summary of decision

The Ombudsman decided not to investigate this complaint about an unsuccessful application for a Discretionary Housing Payment. This is because there is insufficient evidence of fault by the Council.

Remedy

N/A

Note: No details were provided on Complaints Reference 23004807, 23005113, 23011960, 23012111, 23013524, and 23014169. It is assumed either that the complainants went directly to the Ombudsman and were advised to contact the Council to enable the complaints to be dealt with through its internal complaints procedure, were matters on which the Ombudsman has no jurisdiction or were matters not worthy of investigation.



Chelmsford City Council Governance Committee

16 October 2024

Annual Report of the Governance Committee 2023/24

Report by:
Monitoring Officer

Officer Contact:
Lorraine Browne, Monitoring Officer, tel: 01245 606560, email:
lorraine.browne@chelmsford.gov.uk

Purpose
To report on the work of the Governance Committee in 2023/24

Recommendations

1. That the Council is recommended to approve the Committee's Annual Report 2023/24 for subsequent publication

1. Background

- 1.1. The Council annually adopts a Code of Corporate Governance and Annual Governance Statement, which reflect the Council's approach to governance arrangements;
 - On how well the Council has achieved these in the relevant year and targets set in the previous year for improvement; and then

- Identifies future targets for creating a more robust set of arrangements and compliance with them.

1.2 The suite of documents for 2023/24 was reported for approval to the Joint Audit and Governance Committee that met earlier this evening.

1.3 Annual reports on the Audit and Overview & Scrutiny functions have tended to be presented to and agreed by Full Council at its July meeting. However, this year it was agreed for them to be dealt with at December Council. There is no statutory requirement to produce an annual report by the Governance Committee but it is recognised as good practice, and Full Council approved the first of such reports in December 2016. This report seeks approval of the Annual Report for the Municipal year which appears at the Appendix to this report.

1.4 Members views are sought on the content and to recommend that Full Council approves the Committee's Annual Report for subsequent publication.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Annual Report on the work of the Governance Committee 2023/24

Background papers:

Nil

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: These are set out in the report

Financial: The cost of managing the statutory arrangements for dealing with complaints and undertaking standards investigations is borne by the City Council

Potential impact on climate change and the environment: None

Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030: None

Personnel: None

Risk Management: This is set out in the report

Equality and Diversity: None

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: None

Consultees:

Chair of the Governance Committee and Former Chair of Governance Committee (who was the Chair during the period of the Annual report)

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

The Councillor Code of Conduct and associated complaints procedure



CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE 2023/24

**Councillor Chris Davidson
(Chair of Governance Committee from May 2023 to May 2024)**

www.chelmsford.gov.uk

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1. **Background**

Statutory and Procedural requirements under the Standards Regime

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 places all local authorities under a duty to promote high standards of conduct by Councillors. Councils are required to adopt a Code of Conduct which is consistent with the principles set out in the Act, historically known as the “Nolan Principles”, namely: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. The City Council adopted the LGA Model Code of Conduct without amendment and this is [Part 5.1.1 of the Constitution](#) and was adopted in 2022.
- 1.2 Local authorities must also have in place arrangements for dealing with any allegations that the Code has been breached. The adopted Complaints Procedure, in [part 5.1.2 of the Council’s Constitution](#), deals with how complaints made about City Councillors, and those of the Parish Tier Councils in its administrative area, will be handled.
- 1.3 The Council’s Monitoring Officer is Lorraine Browne, the Legal & Democratic Services Manager, and they have appointed a deputy, Mr William Butcher, the Legal Services Manager.
- 1.4 The Monitoring Officer has considerable responsibilities under the standards regime including duties to:
 - i. Maintain a register of interests for the City and Parish Tier Councillors, who are all required to declare such interests to them.
 - ii. Consider the best course of action in relation to alleged breaches of the Code, including the responsibility for informally resolving complaints where appropriate in their view.
 - iii. Consult an Independent Person at various stages in the Complaints Procedure.
 - iv. Liaise with the Police where the allegation concerns an alleged breach of the Disclosable Pecuniary Interests requirements.
- 1.5 As part of the Complaints Procedure, the Council is required to establish a committee, which is responsible for dealing with standards issues that cannot be dealt with by the Monitoring Officer or on which they decide Councillors’ views are important. This includes where a formal hearing is necessary to determine if a breach has occurred and if so, what penalties are appropriate. The City Council chose in 2012 to comply with this requirement by establishing the Governance Committee.
- 1.6 The Council is also obliged to appoint at least one Independent Person. Their role is to ensure that the Council is appropriately applying the statutory requirements and its adopted Policies and Procedures in dealing with any complaints received. They:
 - i. Must be consulted before the Council makes a finding as to whether a Councillor has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct or to decide on appropriate sanctions or other measures to be taken in respect of that Councillor;

- ii. May be consulted at other stages of the Complaints Procedure by the Council or by a member or co-opted member of the councils covered by that Procedure.

Other Statutory, Governance Responsibilities and Terms of Reference

- 1.7 In establishing the Governance Committee, the Council allocated a wide set of governance roles and responsibilities, which is broader than dealing with the standards regime alone. The Committee's Terms of Reference are set out in [Part 3.2.3\(c\) of the Council's Constitution](#). These include:
- i. Oversight of the Council's arrangements for dealing with all complaints.
 - ii. Reviewing the use of the powers exercised by the Council under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)
 - iii. Approving and monitoring the Code of Corporate Governance and Annual Governance Statement together with the Audit Committee
 - iv. Making recommendations on proposed changes to the Council's Constitution.
- 1.8 Whilst the Committee is "politically balanced", in that membership across all committees are drawn from all the parties represented on the Council and in the same proportions, decisions taken, especially those related to the standards regime, are not taken on a political basis. In particular, the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Leader of the Council cannot be members of the Committee and no more than two members of the Cabinet can sit on the committee at any time.

Membership of the Committee

- 1.9 The Committee consists of 7 City Councillors and 3 Parish tier Councillors. In 2023/24, the membership of the Committee comprised the following:

Liberal Democrats: Councillors Hazel Clark, Chris Davidson (Chair), Donna Eley, Smita Rajesh and Jannetta Sosin

Conservatives: Councillors Jannette Potter, and Mike Steel

Parish-Tier Councillors:
Keith Bentley – South Woodham Ferrers Town Council
Kuldeep Golla – Chelmsford Garden Community Council
Peter Jackson – Great Waltham Parish Council

- 1.10 **Parish-Tier Council representatives** – At least one must be present when issues affecting a Parish Tier Councillor are discussed. They cannot vote but they provide a valuable perspective and insight into how those organisations and their councillors are expected to behave.
- 1.11 **Independent Members** – They are also invited to attend Committee meetings. They receive an allowance for the services they provide. Whilst they attend the

Governance Committee, when standards issues are to be debated or decided, they too have no voting rights. Nevertheless, their input is invaluable to give assurance that the procedures are being correctly applied. The Independent Persons during 2023/24 were Mrs Clarissa Gosling, Mr Phil Jeremiah, Mr Danny Lamb and Mrs Paula Mills. Their contribution is much appreciated by the Monitoring Officer and the Governance Committee.

Programme of Meetings

- 1.12 The Committee receives regular reports on the areas for which it has responsibility. In 2023/24, the Committee met on four occasions and the remainder of this report addresses how the Committee approached its work during the year.

Publication of Information

- 1.13 The agendas for the Committee’s meetings are published on the Council’s website not later than five clear days before the date of each meeting. This is a requirement of the Local Government Act 1972, which is explained in and complies with the Access to Information Rules in [Part 4.6 of the Council’s Constitution](#). The minutes of each meeting are also [published on the website](#) as soon as possible after each meeting has taken place.

2. Work Programme 2023-24

- 2.1 The main areas of activity considered by the Committee during the municipal year (May to May) 2023-24 were as follows:

<u>Issues addressed</u>	<u>Meetings</u>
Code of Corporate Governance and the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 considered by the Joint Audit and Governance Committee	21 June 2023
Proposed Amendments to the Constitution	21 June 2023
Annual Report of the Governance Committee	21 June 2023
Parish Tier Council Representatives on the Committee	21 June 2023
Monitoring Officer Report	18 October 2023
Senior Responsible Officer’s Report in relation to Council’s RIPA arrangements	18 October 2023
Information Governance Update	18 October 2023
Complaints to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman – Annual Review	18 October 2023
Annual Whistleblowing Report	18 October 2023
Proposed Amendments to the Constitution	18 October 2023
Update on Register of Interests in City and Parish-Tier Councils	18 October 2023
Monitoring Officer Report	17 January 2024

Polling District and Polling Places Review 2024	17 January 2024
Proposed Changes to the Constitution	17 January 2024
Monitoring Officer's Report	6 March 2024
Annual Review of the Constitution	6 March 2024
Review of the Whistleblowing Policy	6 March 2024
Gifts and Hospitality Report	6 March 2024

3. Complaints About Councillors

- 3.1.1 The Monitoring Officer regularly reports to the Governance Committee regarding complaints received. The statistical information is then published on the Council's website.
- 3.1.2 For period May 2023 to May 2024, six new complaints were received. None of these complaints required investigation and they were dealt with by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with an Independent Person, as necessary.

4. Future Work Programme

- 4.1 The work of the Committee as regards the Standards Regime is reactive. There are, however, annual reports as well as reviews on the main areas for which the Committee is responsible and these are reflected in paragraph 2.1 above.

5. Training and Development

- 5.1 The Monitoring Officer provides advice and assistance throughout the year to Councillors, members of the public and Parish-tier clerks in relation to the Standards regime. This has resulted in the development of Practice Notes which reflect this advice and the processes and procedures in place. In addition, they provide advice to the Committee and by extension, the public, at Committees by way of open and frank discussion.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The arrangements the Council has put in place to promote high standards of behaviour are well established but improvements have been identified and the approach updated to address these to make it clearer. The transparency of the Processes and Procedures is being continually reviewed and guidance issued to assist understanding.
- 6.2 As is evidenced by queries and complaints received, there is a good understanding of the availability of the complaints process and few cases are sufficiently serious to warrant investigation. Complaint casework is dealt with efficiently and the parties are kept informed. The Committee members and the Independent Persons have been a key part in achieving this.
- 6.3 The Committee's focus on its other responsibilities is clear through the use of a published work programme and regular updates. As was set out in the Code of

Corporate Governance and Annual Governance Statement adopted in the summer, there are many examples of good practice and transparency.



Chelmsford City Council Governance Committee

16 October 2024

Update on Register of Interests in City and Parish tier Councils

Report by:
Monitoring Officer

Officer Contact:
Lorraine Browne, Legal & Democratic Services Manager & Monitoring Officer,
lorraine.browne@chelmsford.gov.uk, 01245 606560

Purpose
To update members on the register of interest forms in City and Parish tier authorities.

Recommendations
1. To note update.

1. Background

1.1. To help improve oversight and increase compliance in relation to the completion of the members register of interest an annual assurance report was introduced in 2022. This was with a view to laying the foundations for further development and improvements after City and Parish elections which took place in May 2023.

1.2. One of the improvements which was implemented after the May 2023 elections for city councillors was the introduction of an online form to update the register of interests. This was well received, and all city councillors completed the

register of interest process by June 2023. This enabled some initial consistency checks to be raised with Group Leaders and further work to be undertaken to improve the quality of the responses in the future.

- 1.3. It should also be noted that most parish tier authorities in Chelmsford have adopted the LGA Model Code of Conduct. This includes one parish tier authority which had initially decided against doing so. Further work is being undertaken with parish tier councils in relation to this to encourage adoption and the city council has made available new register of interest forms as well as an accessible version of the code of conduct to ease this decision. The potential to extend the online form process to parish tier councils in the future has been explored but this is dependent upon the adoption of the model code and the parish tier council wishing to ask all councillors to resubmit their register of interest forms. Currently, twin hatted councillors at city and parish tier must complete two separate forms, one online for city and one for parish tier authority.
- 1.4. Set out below is the position as at the time of writing the report in relation to the completion of register of interest forms. These have been RAG (red/amber/green) rated.
- 1.5. An annual reminder for City members to review and update their register of interests will be added from the end of 2024. The responsibility for completing and updating the register of interest and any gifts & hospitality will continue to rest with councillors personally, but it is good practice and helpful to issue reminders. It is planned for this to tie in with annual reminder to officers and the reporting of gifts and hospitality.

2. Table detailing returned forms

Council	Amount of Cllrs (excl Vacancies)	Amount of submitted ROI Forms
Chelmsford City	57	57
Boreham	12	12 (complete)
Broomfield	13	13 (complete)
Chelmer Village	15	13 (2 vacancies) (complete)
Chelmsford Garden Community Council	13	13 (complete)
Chignal	7	6 (1 vacancy) (complete)
Danbury	12	12 (complete)
East Hanningfield	7	7 (complete)
Galleywood	9	9 (complete)
Good Easter	7	6 (1 vacancy) (complete)

Great & Little Leighs	10	8 (2 vacancies) (complete)
Great Baddow	15	14 (1 vacancy) (complete)
Great Waltham	11	11 (complete)
Highwood	7	6 (1 outstanding)
Little Baddow	9	9 (complete)
Little Waltham	7	7 (complete)
Margaretting	7	6 (1 vacancy) (complete)
Pleshey	7	7 (complete)
Rettendon	9	9 (complete)
Roxwell	7	6 (1 vacancy) (complete)
Runwell	13	12 (complete) (1 vacancy)
Sandon	8	7 (1 vacancy) (complete)
South Hanningfield	12	12 (complete)
South Woodham Ferrers	20	20 (complete)
Springfield	13	13 (complete)
Stock	9	9 (complete)
West Hanningfield	8	6 (2 vacancies) (complete)
Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre	9	9 (complete)
Writtle	15	15 (complete)

List of appendices:

Nil

Background papers:

Nil

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: These are set out in the report.

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: None

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: None

Consultees: None

Relevant Policies and Strategies:
None



Chelmsford City Council Governance Committee

16th October 2024

Work Programme

Report by:
Monitoring Officer

Officer Contact:
Lorraine Browne, Monitoring Officer, tel:01245 606560, email:
lorraine.browne@chelmsford.gov.uk

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to receive members' comments on the Committee's future work programme.

Recommendations

1. Members are invited to comment on the Committee's work programme, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, and make any necessary amendments to it.
-

1. Background

- 1.1. The Work Programme is reviewed by the Committee at each meeting. The current version is attached at Appendix 1 to this report and includes the proposed work for future meetings, based on the Programme content for recent years.

2. Conclusion

- 1.1. Members are invited to comment on the Committee's work programme and make any necessary amendments to it.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Governance Committee Work Programme

Background papers:

Nil

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: None

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: None

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: None

Consultees:

None

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

Not applicable

Governance Committee Work Programme

Appendix 1

16 October 2024

Monitoring officer report

Annual Information Governance/SIRO report

Annual ROI report

Annual Ombudsman report

Annual SRO RIPA report

Annual Report of the Governance Committee 23/24

Work programme

15th January 2025

MO report

Update in relation to Officer and Member codes of conduct

Annual Whistleblowing report for 2024

Annual Gifts/hospitality report for 2024

Work programme

5th March 2025

Possible committee training session (eg for standards hearings)

June 2025

MO report

Annual constitution review report

Local Government Ombudsman complaint handling code

Annual Report of the Governance Committee 24/25

Work programme

Ad hoc reports

- Training
- Politically exempt officer posts