SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO:	Standards Committee	20 June 2012
AUTHOR/S:	Executive Director (Corporate Services) / Legal and Democratic Services Manager	

LOCAL INVESTIGATIONS, HEARINGS AND REFERENCES MADE TO STANDARDS FOR ENGLAND

Purpose

1. To update members on local investigations and hearings.

2. On 10 December 2008 the Standards Committee resolved that cases in which no breach of the Code of Conduct has been found or no further action is to be taken should be anonymised for the purposes of reporting back to the Committee and that only in cases where a breach has been found should the relevant member be identified to the Committee.

Recommendations

3. That the report be noted.

Cases

CORCOM 4929 and 4934 (Standards Committee Local Assessment Panel 17 February 2012)

4. As reported to the Standards Committee on 5 April 2012, two allegations about two district councillors were received on 8 and 15 February 2012 and the Assessment Panel referred both matters to the Monitoring Officer for investigation. The investigations, which are being conducted by an external investigator, are underway.

CORCOM 4945 (Standards Committee Local Assessment Panel 9 March 2012)

5. An allegation about a district councillor was received on 21 February 2012. The Assessment Panel has decided to take no further action. The complainant requested a review of this decision and the Review Panel upheld the decision to take no further action.

CORCOM 35, 36, 38 and 39 (Standards Committee Local Assessment Panel 2 May 2012 and 11 June 2012)

6. Four allegations about the same parish councillor were received in mid-April 2012. The Assessment Panel initially referred the allegations for investigation as one matter but, following notification to the Monitoring Officer of further developments, the Monitoring Officer returned the matter to the Assessment Panel for reconsideration, in line with the Council's protocol. The Assessment Panel, having considered the further information, again referred the allegations for investigation as one matter.

CORCOM 45 and 46 (Standards Committee Local Assessment Panel 11 June 2012)

7. Two allegations were received about a member who is both a district and parish councillor, one relating to District Council business and one to Parish Council business. The Assessment Panel has referred the allegations for investigation as one matter.

CORCOM 51 and 52

8.   Two allegations about two parish councillors at the same authority were received in late April and early May 2012. The Monitoring Officer advised the complainant that allegations relating to administrative matters should be considered by the parish council's own complaints process; guidance was supplied on the Code of Conduct and the standards process. No further complaint has been submitted.

CORCOM 53

9.   An allegation about a district councillor was received on 23 May 2012. The Monitoring Officer requested on the same day that the complainant supply the evidence referred to in the complaint before the allegation can be considered by the Assessment Panel. The evidence has not yet been received.

CORCOM [to be assigned]

10.   An allegation about a district councillor was received on 6 June 2012. The Monitoring Officer has provided guidance on the Code of Conduct and the standards process, and advised that the complaint as submitted does not fall within the remit of the Standards Committee.

Conclusion

11.   Since 1 April 2012, the Monitoring Officer has received seven allegations about four parish councillors from three parish councils and three allegations about the conduct of two district councillors, one of whom is also one of the four parish councillors.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Local Assessment Panel and Local Review Panel Decision Notices
Local Authorities (Code of Conduct) (Local Determination) Regulations 2003
Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008
SCDC Constitution

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