

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All
REPORT TITLE Annual Monitoring of Code of Conduct Complaints Against Members 2024-25	
REPORT OF Borough Solicitor	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Standards Committee	DATE 7 July 2025
SUMMARY OF REPORT This report provides an update on Code of Conduct complaints against Members. Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information No documents that require listing have been used in the preparation of this report. Contact Officer: Cheryl Hardman Principal Democratic Services Officer Camden Town Hall Judd Street London WC1H 9JE 020 7974 1619 cheryl.hardman@camden.gov.uk	
RECOMMENDATIONS That Standards Committee notes and comment on the contents of the report.	

Signed: 

Borough Solicitor

Date: 25 June 2025

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. Standards Committee is responsible for promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by councillors. As part of this work, it is responsible for the local consideration, investigation and determination of complaints. This report provides information on Code of Conduct complaints against Members in the year between 1st July 2024 and the end of May 2025. The last complaints report¹ was submitted to Standards Committee on 21 October 2024 and covered the period 26th June 2023 to 30th June 2024.

2. Feedback from Recent Complaints

- 1.2. There are relatively few complaints made about Members in Camden, which is a positive indication of the conduct of Camden's councillors. The low number of complaints has remained steady over recent years. Between 1st July 2024 and 31 May 2025, 11 complaints were received (an anonymised summary of the closed cases is included at Appendix A). This can be compared with data from recent annual reporting on complaints to Standards Committee as follows:

Date range	Number of complaints
1 st July 2024 – 31 May 2025	11
26 th June 2023 – 30 June 2024	11
29 th June 2022 – 26 June 2023	9
29 th June 2021 – 29 th June 2022	9

- 1.3. The Borough Solicitor and an Independent Person decided that none of the complaints required a formal investigation as the behaviour described in the complaints would not have constituted a breach of the Code of Conduct. It remains important that such complaints remain confidential so any comment on them needs to bear this in mind. No decisions by the Borough Solicitor not to investigate those complaints were successfully appealed at the Local Government Ombudsman.
- 1.4. The most significant trend among the small number of complaints received was an alleged failure to act on issues raised and/or to engage in correspondence. It is noted that the Code of Conduct does not cover the perceived quality of work and that service delivery is not the responsibility of Members. While not a breach of the Code, Members are well advised to ensure that, as far as they can, correspondence is replied to. It is clear that this is a matter of complaint and also that it is taken as a lack of care by residents. Should Members feel they can assist an individual no longer, they should be clear that this is their position and draw the correspondence to a close. Should this not be accepted the Borough Solicitor will and has in the past intervened.
- 1.5. The annual data presented has previously reflected when the report has come to Committee, resulting in some inconsistency. It is proposed that over the next few years, annual reporting will gradually seek to reflect the municipal year while avoiding any significant reduction in comparability.

¹ <https://democracy.camden.gov.uk/documents/s121185/Complaints%20report.pdf> [accessed: 21 May 2025]

3. Politically motivated complaints

- 1.6. It should be noted that Camden has traditionally avoided politically motivated complaints, which has continued to be the case and has contributed to the numbers remaining very low.

4. Independent Persons

- 1.7. Our Independent Persons, who were recently reappointed by Council for another year, continue to be extremely helpful both in constructively inputting into the Borough Solicitor's decisions as to whether or not to investigate a complaint, and generally by making themselves readily available and being quick to provide responses. This outside view is extremely important and helpful in coming to a sensible decision on the complaints that are received.

5. Finance Comments of the Executive Director Corporate Services

- 1.8. There are no financial impacts resulting from this report.

6. Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor

- 1.9. This is a report of the Borough Solicitor and there are no other legal comments.

7. Environmental Implications

- 1.10. There are no environmental implications.

8. Appendices

Appendix A: Anonymised summary of complaints 2024/25

REPORT ENDS

Appendix A

Anonymised summary of complaints (2024/25)

Substance of complaints	Reason not to investigate
That a councillor had failed to act on an issue raised and not engaged in correspondence.	Not covered by the Code of Conduct. Councillors can determine whether to engage with constituents, while service delivery is an officer responsibility.
That a councillor used their position to confer advantage on somebody else.	Case closed due to a lack of correspondence from the complainant.
That a councillor had failed to act on an issue raised and not engaged in correspondence.	Not covered by the Code of Conduct. Councillors can determine whether to engage with constituents. Taken forward as a service complaint.
That councillors had conducted harassment and bullying.	Lack of supporting evidence for historic allegations. Not in the public interest to investigate.
That a councillor's business dealings were inappropriate.	The councillor would not have been acting as a councillor in the situation complained about.
That a councillor's behaviour had been rude and offensive.	The councillor apologised for the behaviour. Not in the public interest to investigate further.
That a councillor had not engaged in correspondence.	The complaint was withdrawn.
That a councillor failed to uphold reasonable adjustments agreed and not engaged in correspondence.	Not covered by the Code of Conduct. Reasonable adjustments were a service issue. Councillors can determine whether to engage with constituents.
That policy proposals were not appropriate.	The complaint was withdrawn and taken forward as a service complaint.
That a councillor made misleading statements.	Not covered by the Code of Conduct. The complaint referenced a difference in opinion.
That councillors had failed to act on an issue raised.	The complaint was withdrawn and taken forward as a service complaint.