

Member complaints - Overview and Scrutiny Committee January 2024

Update Four – 7th June 2024

This page provides an update on the complaints made to the Council about the comments made by three councillors during the debate at the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25 January 2024.

We will be updating our Frequently Asked Questions information periodically.

What stage has the investigation reached?

The investigation is reaching its conclusion. We are anticipating that the independent investigator will share the final investigation reports with the Council's Monitoring Officer on 11th June 2024. Thereafter the Monitoring Office will consider the reports and finalise the Decision Notices (one in respect of each of the three councillors) which we expect will be published on the Council's website by Friday 14th June.

What is a Decision Notice?

A Decision Notice is the formal outcome of the investigation produced by the Council's Monitoring Officer.

Where will the Decision Notices be published?

The Decision Notices will be published on this page of the Council's website where we have provided FAQs and information updates periodically throughout the process.

How many complaints were received about the three councillors?

284* complaints referenced all three councillors and the comments that they made during the debate on the SEND Analysis item at the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25th January 2024.

**Figure updated on 18/7/24 from 281 to 284 following a final reconciliation of the numbers*

How many complainants formed the representative sample?

26 complaints formed the representative sample. The 26 complainants were invited to speak to the independent investigator as part of the investigation process.

How was the representative sample selected?

The representative sample was selected by identifying the first 26 complaints referencing all three councillors that were received by date and time order.

Is there a right of appeal for those not included within the representative sample?

There is no right of appeal for those complainants not included within the representative sample. However, we can provide assurance that the independent investigator has reviewed all complaints received as part of the process to ensure that no key themes were missed from the scope of the investigation.

What happens if complainants are unhappy with the outcome of the investigation?

There is no right of appeal to the Council against the Decision Notices or the outcome of the investigation which has been carried out by an independent investigator.

If complainants are dissatisfied with the way in which the complaints have been handled a complaint can be made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. More information can be found here - <https://www.lgo.org.uk/>

Has the investigation been carried out within budget?

In Update 2 (11th March 2024) we confirmed that we expected the cost of the investigation to be £20,000 - £30,000, which will be funded from the Council's Core Legal budget. The cost to the Council of undertaking the independent investigation has been £24,225.