

## **Item 7 (d) - Monitoring Officer's Annual Report**

The attached report was considered by the Standards Committee, relevant minute extract below:

### Standards Committee - 9 February 2016 (Minute 3)

The Monitoring Officer presented her eleventh Annual Report, which provided an overview of the work of the Monitoring Officer, the Standards Committee and the general governance arrangements within the Council during 2015. Although there had been 18 complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman over the year, only one was upheld, which was due to a delay within the Council. No compensation payments had been made and there was no finding of maladministration. Members were notified that ethical standards at the Council were high and the Council had remained lawful.

The Monitoring Officer provided details on the six complaints of Member misconduct received during 2015 and summarised within the report. Five of the complaints related to Town or Parish Councils and one to a District Councillor but one had subsequently been withdrawn by the complainant and none of the complaints had gone forward for investigation. Member training and development had continued to be well received and the Council had 17 new Members following the elections in May 2015. Members had also received guidance on completing their Register of Interest forms following the election. Members were advised that there were no ethical problems with any Member of the Council or the Parish or Town Councils.

A Member enquired how long each complaint of Member misconduct took to process. Officers advised that each investigation took approximately four hours, which was considerably less than the time taken to deal with complaints prior to the reforms of Localism Act 2011.

### Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the report be noted and recommended to Council.