

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**  
**Audit and Scrutiny Committee**  
**20 June 2013**

Agenda Item	9
Report No	AS/15/11

**STANDARDS COMMISSION: COUNCILLORS' CODE OF CONDUCT**  
**INVESTIGATION INTO COMPLAINTS**

**Report by the Assistant Chief Executive**

**Summary**

This report provides information in relation to complaints received by the Standards Commission during the period 2011/12 and 2012/13 in relation to alleged breaches of the Councillors' Code of Conduct by Members of Highland Council and the outcome of the Standards Commission's investigations into these complaints.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Committee is advised on a regular basis of complaints against Members of the Highland Council alleging breaches of the Councillors' Code of Conduct which have occurred since the inception of the Code in May 2003.
- 1.2 The previous report to the Committee, in June 2011, detailed the outcome of complaints up to 31 March 2011. In every case it was noted that the Commission had taken the view that the Members concerned had not contravened the Code of Conduct.
- 1.3 Since March 2011, the Public Standards Commissioner has dealt with seven complaints against Members of the Highland Council and the outcomes of these are detailed at [www.publicstandardscommissioner.org.uk](http://www.publicstandardscommissioner.org.uk). The Commissioner referred one complaint to the Standards Commission and the details of this are detailed at [www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk](http://www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk).

**2. Complaints to the Standards Commission – 2011/12 & 2012/13**

- 2.1 During this period there were three complaints against Members of Highland Council which we not considered to be a breach of the Code and which were not investigated by the Public Standards Commissioner.
- 2.2 A further three complaints were investigated but not upheld.
- 2.3 One complaint was investigated and upheld, and this has previously been reported to Highland Council at its meeting on 9 May 2013.
- 2.4 Details of all the complaints lodged, together with the outcomes, are detailed in **Appendix One**.

## Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note that, in respect of the complaints against Highland Council Members, dealt with during 2011/12 and 2012/13, the Standards Commission has upheld just one complaint.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive

Date 3 June 2013

## Appendix One

Case Ref	Complaint Subject	Date Received	Outcome	Outcome Date
LA/H/1121/JM	Cllr George Farlow	8 April 2011	Not upheld	3 August 2011
LA/H/1231	Cllr Kenneth MacLeod	14 March 2012	Upheld	25 March 2013
LA/H/1245/HW	Cllr John Laing	26 April 2012	Not investigated	26 April 2012
LA/H/1265/AM	Cllr Jimmy Gray	21 June 2012	Not investigated	25 July 2012
LA/H/1277/AM	Cllrs Eddie Hunter, Brian Murphy, Allan Henderson (and former Cllrs Donald Cameron and Michael Foxley)	19 July 2012	Not investigated	23 November 2012
LA/H/1298/JM	Cllr Roderick Balfour	1 October 2012	Not upheld	14 November 2012
LA/H/1314/JM	Cllr Maxine Smith	12 November 2012	Not upheld	4 March 2013
LA/H/1366/JM	Cllr Alex Graham	18 March 2013	In progress	