

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

23 APRIL 2026

Present:

Councillors Bullivant (Chair), Henderson (Vice-Chair), Nutley, Clarence, Palethorpe and Nuttall

Independent Person: H Elliot & S Genender

Members in Attendance:

Councillors MacGregor

Officers in Attendance:

Charlie Fisher, Democratic Services Manager and Monitoring Officer

Christopher Morgan, Assistant Democratic Services Officer

41. MINUTES

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Nuttall, **SECONDED** by Councillor Nutley and unanimously

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting on Thursday 8th January 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Palethorpe declared an interest in FS-CASE-718913067 as the subject of the complaint. During this item he presented his case and then left the room.

43. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS UPDATE

The Committee reviewed the list of Code of Conduct complaints. It was considered that the number of open cases had reduced significantly to 7, of which only 3 were ongoing.

The Committee noted the update.

44. MEMBER TRAINING LOG

Councillor Bullivant asked for members to be reminded to advise Democratic Services of any external training they had undertaken so that their training records could be updated.

45. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

Councillors noted that the following alleged breaches had been received in 2025/26:

- 31 complaints received about Member Conduct (this includes District, Town and Parish Councillors)
- 22 were resolved through no further action or were invalid complaints
- 2 were resolved through informal resolution
- 1 proceeded to formal investigation
- 1 was determined by the Governance Committee
- 6 are currently at different stages within the process to be resolved

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Palethorpe, **SECONDED** by Councillor Nuttall and unanimously

RESOLVED

That the Committee:

- (1) Approve the Governance Committee Annual Report 2025/2026 and recommend its adoption at Full Council.
- (2) Agree for the Democratic Services Manager and Monitoring Officer to make any necessary updates and amendments to the Annual Report before it is submitted to Full Council, in consultation with the Chair.

46. CONSTITUTION REVIEW WORKING GROUP UPDATE

The Committee received an update on the work of the Constitution Review Group, which held its final session on 16 April 2026.

Councillors Bullivant and Palethorpe, both on the review group, thanked Officers and CFGS for their assistance.

47. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 - EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting of the particular item(s) on the grounds that it involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

48. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE DETERMINATION OF CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

a) **FS-CASE-718913067**

The Chair and Monitoring Officer introduced the item to the Committee.

The complaint concerned the conduct of Councillor Palethorpe in 2 emails to Cllr J Taylor. The complaint alleges that the emails were contrary to sections 2, 4, and 5 of the Code of Conduct (Bullying and harassment, breaching confidentiality, and bringing the Council into disrepute). The complainant for this application was Councillor Macgregor.

The Chair invited Councillor Macgregor to speak. He stated that the investigators report should be ignored due to its heavy focus on the Full Council meeting the previous year and asked the Committee to investigate further.

The Chair also invited Councillor Palethorpe to speak. He stated that he had sought to defend officers from unsubstantiated claims.

The two Councillors then left the room whilst the Committee deliberated.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Nuttall, **SECONDED** by Councillor Nutley and unanimously

RESOLVED

That the Committee:

- (1) Accepts the report of the Independent Investigator.
- (2) Determines there was no breach of the Code of Conduct and agrees to no further action.
- (3) In its deliberations, agrees with the Independent Investigator that Councillor Palethorpe in his letter to the Police and Crime Commissioner and writing "in [his] capacity as Deputy Leader of Teignbridge District Council" was inappropriate and should not have been sent.

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.56 am.

CLLR P BULLIVANT
Chairman

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