

Standards Complaint Statistics – 1.4.24 to 31.3.25

Updated 2 September 2025

North Yorkshire Council (NYC) is a unitary authority which came into being on 1 April 2023 (Vesting Day) following local government reorganisation. There is therefore no recorded information held for North Yorkshire Council prior to 1 April 2023 as NYC was not in existence at that time.

The Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer support the Council's Standards and Governance Committee in promoting high standards of conduct within the authority, including the handling of complaints that an elected/voting co-opted Member of North Yorkshire Council or one of the parish and town councils in the county may have breached the relevant code of conduct for Members ("standards complaints"). References throughout to "the Monitoring Officer" include reference to the Deputy Monitoring Officer.

Within North Yorkshire there are currently:

729 Individual Parishes
412 Parish and Town Councils, including Harrogate and Scarborough
160 Parish Meetings
90 NYC councillors

National context

- NYC has the largest number of parish and town councils of any local authority in the country
- The next nearest council has 327 – Somerset Council
- 51% have less than 30
- 97.5% of councils have less than 200
- There are only 6 councils with over 200 parish councils
- Only 2 councils have over 300 parish councils

North Yorkshire context

NYC is one of the largest local authorities in the country, in terms of geographic area, and there is a significant number of the smallest form of parish sector organisations, parish meetings (24%). Overall, parish sector organisations are generally smaller and charge a smaller precept (if any) than other similar councils. This uniquely larger number of parish sector organisations are spread over a significantly large rural area and generally have very limited resources.

- Within the NYC area the average precept charge is 75% less than the national average (£20,212)
- 46.6% of Parish Councils have total annual precept income less than £5k
- Only 5.6% (28) Parish Councils have total annual precept income more than £100k
- Only 4 (0.8%) Parish Councils have total annual precept income more than £300k

Context for statistics

Complaints are recorded individually. The complaints recorded can therefore represent the same complaint from the same complainant against several members of the same council.

All complaints that a Member may have breached the relevant authority's code of conduct for Members ('standards complaints') are considered by the Monitoring Officer to ascertain they are suitable to progress to formal assessment by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with an Independent Person for Standards, in accordance with the Council's standards complaints procedure. The procedure explains the circumstances whereby a complaint will not generally progress to a formal assessment. The initial consideration by the Monitoring Officer will ensure that there is an appropriate, proportionate, balance between maintaining high ethical standards and protecting the public purse and Council resources in terms of officer, Member and Independent Person time spent in handling standards complaints. For the purposes of the statistics, the pre-assessment consideration outcomes by the Monitoring Officer are included in the figures for overall assessment outcomes.

On a formal assessment, the Monitoring Officer will consider, in consultation with the Independent Person, whether a complaint falls within jurisdiction, disclosing a potential breach of the Code and, if so, whether the complaint warrants any further action being taken in relation to it. The Council's standards complaints procedure provides wherever possible the Monitoring Officer will seek to resolve a complaint informally without the need for formal investigation or referral to the Standards and Governance Committee.

The assessment is not an investigation and makes no determination as to the truth or otherwise of the allegations. All formal standards complaints must go through this initial filter stage (unless the substance of the complaint has previously been considered under the Standards and Governance Committee Protocol regarding Unreasonably Persistent/Vexatious Complainant behaviour).

The Standards and Governance Committee would only be involved at assessment stage if the Monitoring Officer had a conflict of interests or if the Monitoring Officer considered that assessment by the full Committee would be appropriate. This is set out in the standards complaints procedure, further information is published on the Council's website - [Councillors' code of conduct | North Yorkshire Council](#).

The Council's standards complaints procedure also provides that for matters referred for investigation, the officer nominated to investigate the matter will produce a report which is sent to the parties and the Monitoring Officer. The report will conclude with a recommendation as to whether, on the balance of probabilities, it is considered that there is evidence of a breach of the Code.

Where evidence of a potential breach of the Code is found by the investigating officer, the Monitoring Officer will review the report and consult the Independent Person and parties as to whether local resolution may be possible. If any suggested resolution is not agreed, the complaint will be referred to a Hearings Panel of the Standards and Governance Committee for consideration and determination.

Total number of Standards complaints brought for the period

1.4.24 – 31.3.25

Complaints by type of subject member

119 complaints received which related to parish/town councillors

14 complaints received which related to NYC councillors

Assessment outcomes

123 complaints were assessed to require no action:
108 regarding parish/town councillors; 13 regarding NYC councillors

1 complaint was dealt with by way of informal resolution
re a parish councillor

4 complaints were referred for investigation regarding two town
councillors

1 complaint was not pursued, withdrawn, or otherwise
closed concerning an NYC councillor

Number of complaints referred for investigation

4 complaints referred for investigation regarding two parish councillors

Outcome of Investigation Reports

3 complaints about the same matter against 1 Town Councillor:

the Investigating Officer concluded that there was evidence of a breach of the code by the subject member who had since resigned. In accordance with section 9 of the North Yorkshire Council standards complaints procedure, the Deputy Monitoring Officer consulted the Independent Person for Standards and the parties and was satisfied the matter could reasonably be resolved informally without the need for a Hearing.

1 complaint brought against a Town Councillor:

the Investigating Officer concluded that there was no evidence of a breach of the code by the subject member The Deputy Monitoring Officer and Independent Person reviewed the Report and concluded that there had been a thorough

investigation and a clear, evidenced Investigation Report provided, with a clear rationale for the Investigating Officer’s findings, conclusions and recommendations, which were accepted.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer and Independent Person were both of the view that the investigation and Investigation Report were sufficient and that no further action should be taken in relation to this matter, in accordance with the Investigating Officer’s findings and recommendations.

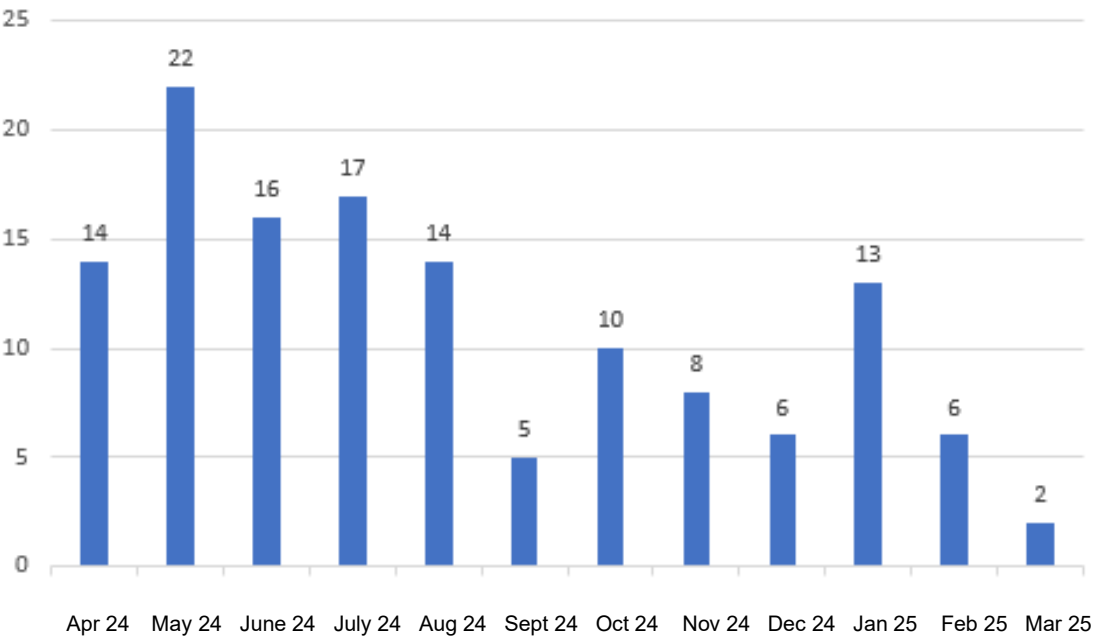
Determinations by Standards and Governance Committee Hearings Panel

N/A to date

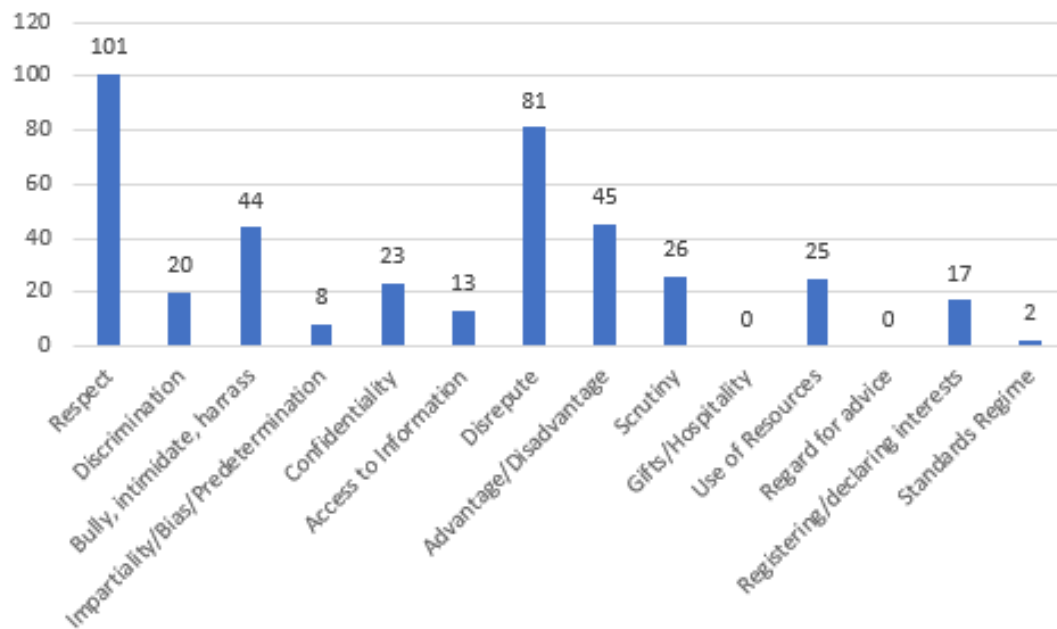
Sanctions by Standards and Governance Committee Hearings Panel

N/A to date

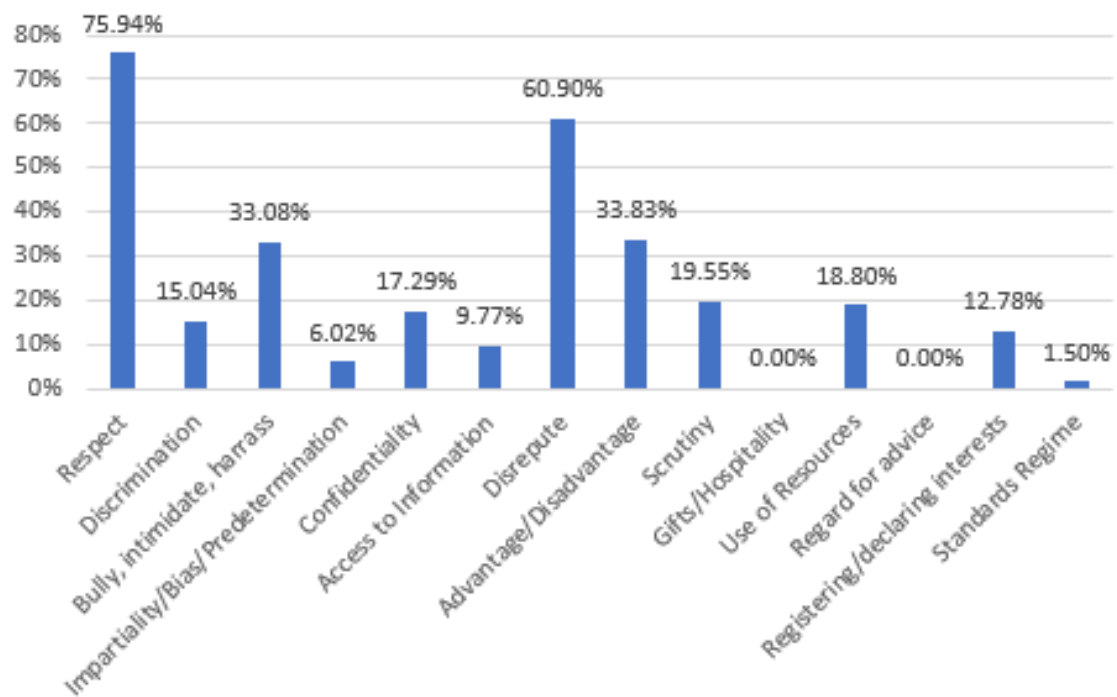
Standards complaints received by month



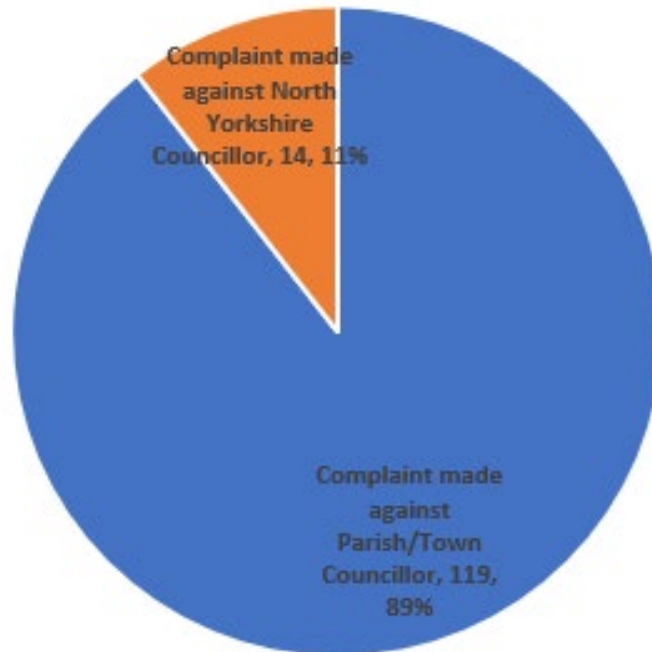
Number of complaints Standards Complaints referencing these Code paragraphs



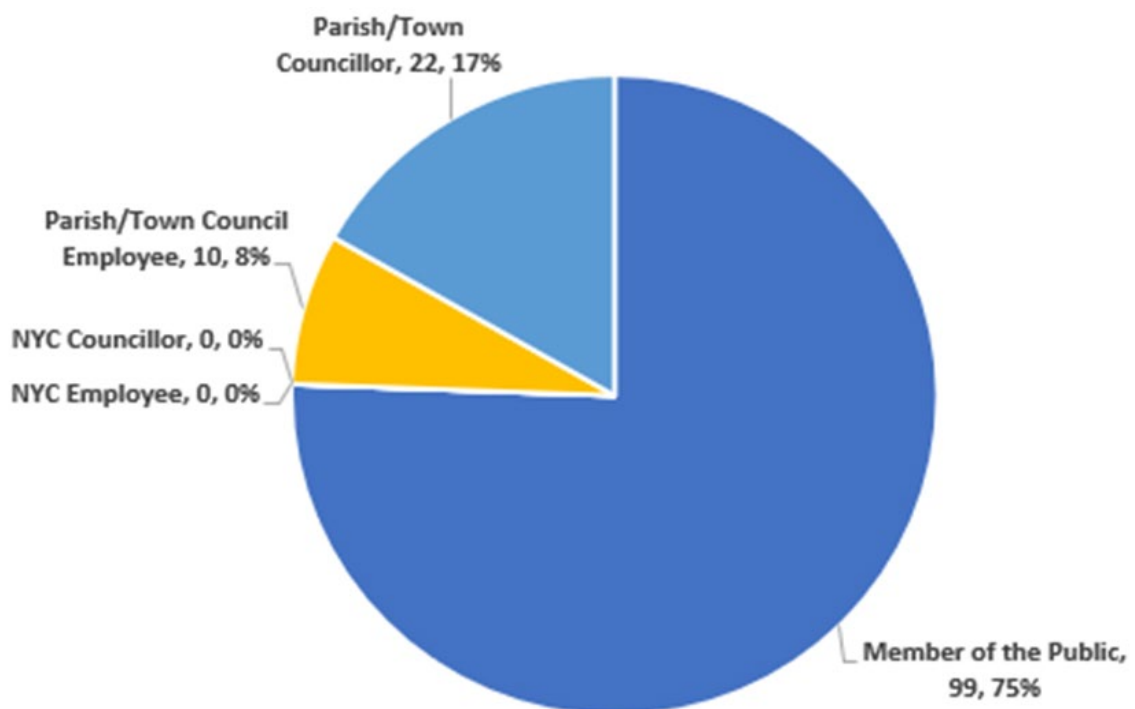
Percentage of Complaints Referencing these Code Paragraphs



Comparison of Complaints made against North Yorkshire Councillors and Parish/Town Councillors



Complaints by Type of Complainant



Complaint Assessment Outcomes – all complaints

