

# STANDARDS AND ETHICS INDICATORS 2025

*Reporting Officer: Lloyd White, Head of Democratic Services*

## **SUMMARY**

This report sets out summary information on the following range of topics, by which to gauge the corporate the health of the authority in relation to Standards and Ethics:

- Public Interest Reports;
- Whistle Blowing Incidents;
- Challenges to Procurement Decisions;
- Employment Tribunal and Employment Appeal Tribunal Cases;
- Officer Declarations of Interest in relation to Council Contracts;
- Member Declarations of
  - Interest at Meetings
  - Gifts and Hospitality
- Local Government Ombudsman Complaints.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.**

## **INFORMATION**

The Committee has agreed to receive annual reports on a range of standards and ethics indicators and presenting this information in the public arena will demonstrate that the Council is conducting its business in a lawful, transparent manner and that any transgressions are dealt with according to due process. The figures below relate to the calendar year 2025.

### **1. PUBLIC INTEREST REPORTS 2025:**

There were no External Auditor Public Interest Reports received in 2025 (and none in 2024 or 2023). However, Members will be aware that the Council's External Auditors issued a S24 report containing statutory recommendations in July 2025.

This was submitted to both the Audit Committee in August and then Full Council in September in accordance with the required timetables:

[London Borough of Hillingdon - Agenda for Audit Committee on Thursday, 28th August, 2025, 5.10 pm](#) - see Item 163.

[London Borough of Hillingdon - Agenda for Council on Thursday, 11th September, 2025, 7.30 pm](#) - see item 26 and the council [response](#) to the report at the top of the page, published on 6 Nov 2025.

### **2. WHISTLE-BLOWING INCIDENTS REPORTED 2025:**

Nil (nil in 2024)

**3. CHALLENGES TO PROCUREMENT DECISIONS 2025:**

2 (nil in 2024).

- i) An informal challenge in September 2025 relating to Roofing Phase 5 - successfully defended.
- ii) A Service of claim under PA23 form in relation to a Highways tender issued September 25 - finalised in December 25.

**4. EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL (ET) AND EMPLOYMENT APPEAL TRIBUNAL (EAT) CASES RECEIVED AND/OR SETTLED AND/OR ONGOING 2025:**

3 Employment Tribunal cases were settled in 2025, and there were 3 active cases. They relate to redundancy and discrimination.

**5. OFFICER DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN RELATION TO COUNCIL CONTRACTS 2025:**

Nil (nil in 2024)

**6. MEMBER DECLARATIONS 2025:**

**i) Declarations of Interest made by Members at Meetings during 2025:**

Note: A Member with a *pecuniary* interest in any matter being considered must declare that interest, not speak or vote on the item and leave the meeting. A Member with a *non-pecuniary* interest must declare that interest but may remain in the meeting, speak and vote. If, however, a member of the public, knowing all the relevant facts, would view the non-pecuniary interest as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgment of the public interest, then that Member must declare that interest, not speak or vote on the item and must leave the room whilst that item is being considered.

**In 2025 the following declarations were made by Members:**

**Councillor:**

Bennett - 4  
Burles - 1  
Curling - 1  
Roy Chamdal - 1  
Davies - 1

Higgins - 2  
Mathers - 1  
D.Mills - 1  
Smallwood - 1  
Sweeting - 1  
Tuckwell - 1

**Broken down as follows:**

16th January 2025 - Council

9. Members' Questions

- Councillor Mathers – Non-Pecuniary - was employed by Bell Farm Christian Centre. Remained in the room during the consideration thereof.

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4th February 2025 - Children, Families and Education Select Committee

12. Brunel University London

- Councillor Smallwood OBE – Non-Pecuniary - was a trustee of the Union of Brunel Students.

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25th February 2025 - Health and Social Care Select Committee

5. Adult Social Care Early Intervention and Prevention - First Witness Session

- Councillor Burles - Non-Pecuniary - was on the management board at Citizens Advice Bureau. Remained in the room during the consideration thereof.

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12th March 2025 - Hillingdon Planning Committee

8. Dyson Drive, Uxbridge - 78464/APP/2024/3196

- Councillor Bennett - Non-Pecuniary - lived close to the application site. Left the room during consideration of the item and did not take part in the discussion or voting on the matter.

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26th March 2025 - Pensions Committee – all items

- Councillor Douglas Mills - Non-Pecuniary - had family members on the pension scheme. Remained in the room for all items.

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9th April 2025 - Hillingdon Planning Committee

6. 18 & 20 Wilmar Close, Hayes - 67410/APP/2024/2641

- Councillor Davies - Non-Pecuniary - had been in discussion with petitioners on the matter. Left the room and did not participate in the discussion or voting on this item.

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9th April 2025 - Hillingdon Planning Committee

7. 44 Frays Avenue, West Drayton - 35220/APP/2024/3046

8. 10 Frays Avenue, West Drayton - 5235/APP/2025/188

- Councillor Sweeting - Non-Pecuniary - lived in the road in question.

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7th May 2025 - Hillingdon Planning Committee

8. St Andrews Park - 585/APP/2024/1879

9. Former Cinema Building, St Andrews Park - 85/APP/2024/1799

- Councillor Bennett - Pecuniary - owned a property on the St Andrews development. Left the room during discussion of agenda items 8 and 9.

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8th May 2025 - Council

3. Election of Mayor 2025 / 2026

- Councillor Curling - Non-Pecuniary - was a member of Hillingdon Radio, one of the current Mayor's nominated charities. Remained in the room during the consideration thereof.

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17th July 2025 - Hillingdon Planning Committee

7. 18 & 20 Wilmar Close, Hayes - 67410/APP/2024/2641

- Councillor Higgins - Non-Pecuniary - as he had not been present when this item had previously been discussed and deferred for a site visit on 9

April 2025. Left the room while this item was being discussed and did not vote on this item.

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4th September 2025 - Hillingdon Planning Committee

6. Dyson Drive, Uxbridge 78464/APP/2024/3196

- Councillor Bennett - Non-Pecuniary - lived close to the application site. Left the room during consideration of the item and did not take part in the discussion or voting on the matter.

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2nd October 2025 - Hillingdon Planning Committee

6. 5 The Meads, Cowley - 27254/APP/2025/1529

- Councillor Roy Chamdal - Non-Pecuniary - had previously spoken with the applicant. Left the prior to this matter being discussed and did not partake in the voting on this item.

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9th October 2025 - Petition Hearing - Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Growth

4. Request for Traffic calming Measures - The Fairway HA4

- Councillor Tuckwell - Non-Pecuniary - as was Ward Councillor for South Ruislip.

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5th November 2025 - Hillingdon Planning Committee

6. Land to the rear of 18 Moor Park Road, Northwood - 74971/APP/2025/780

- Councillor Higgins - Non-Pecuniary - as he had met the applicant during a local Ward Surgery. Left the room during discussion of agenda item 6.

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## ii) Member Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality during 2025:

In 2025, 26 declarations were received (4 in 2024, 6 in 2023, 20 in 2022 and 17 in 2021) from:

### **Councillor Abby**

- 25.02.25 - receipt of book - value unknown - retained.

### **Councillor Bianco**

- 23.01.25 - Hillingdon Chamber of Commerce annual dinner - guest. Estimated value £60 - accepted.
- 19.06.25 - Myson Ltd - 2x fish and chip lunch - value unknown - as a thank you for those attending Triscott House and Barr Lodge refurbishment completions - accepted.
- 16.09.25 - The London Real Estate Forum - reception (approx £50) and free attendance at conference - accepted.

### **Councillor Bridges**

- 26.06.25 - meal at Sahara City Restaurant, Uxbridge - approx' £35 - accepted

### **Councillor Edwards**

- 26.03.25 - Hayes Muslim Centre - Iftar meal and 5kg box of Medjool dates - accepted
- 14.05.25 - West London Corporate Leaders Action Group dinner provided by Andrew Dakers, West London Business - £75 - attended

- 16.07.25 - MCC - Lords - finger buffet - £40 - accepted.
- 23.10.25 - Debbi King (resident) - copy of the Daily Telegraph and a book by Viktor Frankl called 'Man's Search For Meaning' - £14.50 - retained.

#### **Councillor Lavery**

- 23.01.25 - Hillingdon Chamber of Commerce Awards Dinner - £120 - accepted

#### **Councillor Mathers**

- 16.05.25 - gift of small paperweight from 4th Hillingdon Boys Brigade Company - £16 - accepted.

#### **Councillor D.Mills**

- 11.12.25 - Hillingdon Stroke Association - Christmas lunch and small gifts - approx' £40 – accepted

#### **Councillor O'Brien**

- 26.11.25 - spray of flowers from Hillingdon Adult Learners - £25 - retained and placed in Group Office.

#### **Councillor Punja**

- 04.11.25 - dinner with Labour Women's Network - value £250

#### **Councillor Riley**

- 08.05.25 - Meal and overnight stay - Tudor Hotel, Eastcote - £110 - accepted.

#### **Councillor Sweeting**

- 16.11.25 - Chair of West Drayton & Iver cricket club - 2 plants, box of chocolates and cake - approx' £45 - accepted.

#### **Councillor Tuckwell**

- 04.05.25 - West London Corporate Leaders Action Group dinner provided by Andrew Dakers, West London Business - £75 - attended.
- 28.05.25 - Andy Bugler Homes Ltd - dinner - £45 - accepted.
- 16.07.25 - MCC - Lords - finger buffet - £40 - accepted.
- 12.09.25 - Visiting trade delegation of Indian MPs organised by the FICCI & Hillingdon Chamber of Commerce - San-Cha Tea Boutique gift set - approx' £25. Donated to mayor's Charity
- 16.09.25 - The London Real Estate Forum reception hosted by Opportunity London, the Crown Estate and Lendlease - approx' £30 - attended.
- 04.10.25 - gift of takeaway hamper and bouquet of flowers from Shree Krishna Vada Pav restaurant. - approx' £25 - accepted.
- 07.11.25 - Hillingdon Chamber of Commerce dinner - approx' £40 - accepted
- 26.11.25 - All Party Parliamentary Group - Immigration - round table discussion and dinner - approx' £45 - accepted.
- 09.12.25 - Landpro & Weston Homes - Hosted by Lord Baily of Paddington - Housing round table discussion - approx' £75 - attended.
- 22.12.25 - anonymous donation of Vinoir Merlot - approx' £10 - donated to Mayor's Charity.

## **7. OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINTS RECEIVED/SETTLED 2025**

Complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) continue to be dealt with within required timescales and in accordance with the Council's Corporate Complaints Policy.

The Policy was reviewed and updated by Cabinet in 2015 with the result that the process has been streamlined and made more efficient for complainants, with less time spent on complaints about 'policy' or complaints that could be labelled frivolous.

### **Complaints to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman Service during 2025:**

In 2025, the Housing Ombudsman Service and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman concluded 52 complaints, (57 for 2024, 36 for 2023, 89 in 2022, and 34 in 2021) The figures for 2025 are as follows:

Service Area	Total complaints	Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld	Did not investigate
Finance	8	0	0	4	4
Adult Social Care	3	0	0	0	3
Children Services	1	0	0	0	1
Place	40	4	0	3	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>41</b>

The number of Ombudsman Investigations is slightly lower than 2024 (57) but it is envisaged that the volume of complaints to the Ombudsman will rise. This is because on 1 April 2024, the Housing Ombudsman Service and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman introduced new Complaint Handling Codes which removed informal complaints as a category and replaced it with "Service Request".

This profound change is having an impact on the handling of complaints as the Council now registers more formal complaints and this means more complaints escalating to the Ombudsman. Please note that of the 52 complaints concluded by the Ombudsman in 2025, 79% (41) they did not investigate, which is a highly significant number of investigations concluded in this way.