

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**STANDARDS
COMMITTEE**

21st March 2012

**REVIEW OF OPERATION OF THE COMMITTEE, WORK PROGRAMME
AND CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2012/13**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mark Bullivant
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Councillor Mark Bullivant
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	N/A
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

In light of the upcoming changes to the standards regime under the Localism Act 2011, Members are requested:

- 1.1 to review the general operation of the Committee and its Sub-Committees over the last twelve months;
- 1.2 to note the position in relation to the current Standards Committee's Work Programme; and
- 1.3 to note the dates set out in the Council's meetings calendar for the Standards Committee/any successor committee to the current Standards Committee for the 2012/13 Municipal Year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee note the report and comment on any aspects of this, as appropriate.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications associated with the contents of this report.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 There are no legal implications associated with the contents of this report.

Service / Operational Implications

Background

- 3.3 It is anticipated that the new standards regime under the Localism Act 2011 will come into force on 1st July 2012, at which point the current Standards Committee will cease to exist.
- 3.4 Full Council will, at its Annual Meeting on 16th May, decide whether a successor Standards Committee should be established and, if so, what the composition and Terms of Reference of any such committee should be.

Review of Operation of the Committee and its Sub-Committees

- 3.5 Since May 2009 Members have, on an annual basis, reviewed the general operation of the Standards Committee, for the preceding twelve month period. Such a review normally takes place at the March meeting; that being the final meeting of the municipal year and the last meeting prior to any change in district councillor membership of the Committee.
- 3.6 Reviewing the general operation of the Standards Committee and its Sub-Committees is beneficial as it provides Members and Officers with an opportunity to reflect on any key issues that may have arisen with regard to the Committee's practices and procedures over the preceding twelve months, and to consider whether any consequential changes are required in the light of such issues.
- 3.7 Notwithstanding the fact that the Committee will, in its current form, likely cease to exist as at 30th June 2012, Members are asked to review the operation of the Committee and its Sub-Committees over the last year. This will assist Officers in noting any particularly useful or successful elements which may be carried over to the new regime.

Work Programme

- 3.8 As detailed at paragraph 3.4 above, Full Council will decide upon any successor committee to the current Standards Committee and will agree the Terms of Reference of the committee. Any new committee will establish a Work Programme in accordance with the agreed Terms of Reference and the outstanding tasks on the current Committee's Work Programme will be reviewed to see whether they should continue under any successor committee.

Calendar of Meetings 2012/13

- 3.9 The Council meetings calendar for the 2012/13 Municipal Year includes the following meeting dates for Standards Committee (or any successor committee to the current Committee):
- Wednesday 13th June 2012;
 - Wednesday 25th July 2012;
 - Wednesday 19th September 2012;
 - Wednesday 28th November 2012;
 - Wednesday 23rd January 2013; and
 - Wednesday 20th March 2013.
- 3.10 All meetings are scheduled to commence at 6.00pm. Start times may, with the approval of the Committee, be subject to change in order to accommodate relevant Committee business.
- 3.11 In addition to the meetings detailed at paragraph 3.9 above, meetings of the Standards Committee's Sub-Committees and Final Determination Hearing panels may also be required to consider complaint allegations, as appropriate. Such meetings take place during the daytime or evening and in accordance with any statutory timeframes.
- 3.12 Members are asked to note that the meeting scheduled for 13th June 2012 would normally represent the first meeting of the Committee of the new municipal year. This meeting would usually include any newly appointed district councillor members following changes to the committee memberships after the Annual Meeting of Council in May. However, as the new standards regime is anticipated to come into force on 1st July, the 13th June meeting (should business necessitate this going ahead) will be a meeting of the current Standards Committee. The meeting scheduled to take place on 25th July will therefore be the first meeting of any successor Standards Committee.
- 3.13 Should it prove necessary for the June meeting to proceed the start time of this will be either 5.00pm or 5.30pm as training on the new Code of Conduct is scheduled to take place at 6.30pm the same evening.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.14 The Standards Committee is responsible for promoting and maintaining high standards of behaviour among Members and its work is therefore key to ethical governance arrangements in place within the Council.
- 3.15 Under the Localism Act 2011 the Council will still have a responsibility to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority.

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- 3.16 Reviewing the general operation of the Standards Committee and its Sub-Committees assists the Committee in being proactive in fulfilling its role in ethical governance under the local standards framework.
- 3.17 Equally, in terms of customer implications, a Work Programme assists Members, Officers and the public in highlighting the work being undertaken by the Committee, and in ensuring that the Council is an ethical organisation which is proactively working towards improvement.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

There are no risk implications associated with the contents of this report.

5. APPENDICES

None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

7. KEY

Not applicable

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