

Role of the Parish Representative on the Standards Committee and Deputy/Co-opted Parish Representative

1. Attendance at Meetings of the Standards Committee

The Local Government Act 2000 requires there to be at least one parish representative on a principal authority's Standards Committee who must be present at any meeting when parish matters are to be considered. Bromsgrove District Council has decided that there should be one parish representative on its Standards Committee.

The Parish Representative is therefore required to attend meetings of the Standards Committee. There are 6 scheduled meetings each year generally starting at 6pm which work to a Work Programme, the current version of which is attached for information (Note: this is reviewed and revised on a regular and ongoing basis).

(Note: If the Parish Representative is unable to attend, one of the Deputy Parish Representatives may carry out this function on behalf of the Parish Representative and may vote at the meeting.)

The Deputy Parish Representatives are encouraged to attend meetings of the Standards Committee. Whilst they may participate in the meetings, they have no voting rights.

2. Attendance at Meetings of Standards Sub-Committees

Complaints that district or parish councillors may have breached their authority's Code of Conduct are now referred to the Standards Committee for local assessment. The Standards Committee will refer such complaints to an assessment sub-committee which will decide whether or not the complaint should be investigated.

If the assessment sub-committee decides that the complaint should not be investigated, the complainant may request that that decision should be reviewed; the Standards Committee will refer that decision to a separate sub-committee (the membership of which must be different to that of the assessment sub-committee).

If the assessment sub-committee decides that the complaint should be investigated, there will in due course be a hearing before a final determination sub-committee (the membership of which will normally be different to that of the assessment sub-committee).

The Parish Representative will be requested to attend some of these sub-committee meetings. In addition, the Deputy Parish Representatives will be co-opted onto some of these sub-committees; attendance by a Parish Representative or a Deputy/Co-opted Parish Representative is required by the Local Government Act 2000 when the complaint relates to a parish councillor but it is anticipated that the Parish Representative and Deputy/Co-opted Parish Representatives will participate in all matters relating to district councillors. It is not

possible to say how many meetings will be required each year, but the Parish Representative and Deputy/Co-opted Parish Representative should be prepared to attend between approximately 4 and 6 such sub-committee meetings each year. The time of such meetings will vary on a case by case basis.

3. Training

The Council's Constitution requires all members of Council committees to be trained in that committee's subject area. Therefore, the Parish Representative is required to attend training sessions provided for members of the Standards Committee; there are likely to be approximately 2 – 3 training sessions each year.

From time to time external training or networking opportunities may be offered; these are not compulsory.

4. Keeping Abreast

Members of the Standards Committee are regularly sent information or guidance published by the Standards Board for England or other organisations to ensure they are kept abreast of changes, developments, best practice or experiences.

5. Parish Forum Link

The Parish Representative acts as a link between the Standards Committee and the County Association of Local Councils (CALC) Area Committee Meeting. There are regular items on the agendas of both committees to enable information to be passed on to the parish councils and to enable the parish councils to feed back information to the Standards Committee.

The Parish Representative will therefore normally attend meetings of the CALC Area Committee of which there are 4 per year. (Note: A Deputy Parish Representative may carry out this function on behalf of the Parish Representative.)

A working knowledge of and easy access to email and the internet is desirable as the Council is moving towards electronic delivery of agendas and other papers