

**AUDIT, STANDARDS AND
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

30th March 2017

MONITORING OFFICER'S REPORT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Geoff Denaro
Portfolio Holder consulted	Yes
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

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This report sets out the position in relation to key standards regime matters which are of relevance to the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee since the last meeting of the Committee on 8th December 2016.
- 1.2 It is proposed that a report of this nature be presented to each meeting of the Committee to ensure that Members are kept updated with any relevant standards matters.
- 1.3 Any further updates arising after publication of this report, including any relevant standards issues raised by the Parish Councils' Representative(s), will be reported on orally by Officers/the Parish Representative(s) at the meeting.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That, subject to Members' comments, the report be noted.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 The Localism Act became law on 15th November 2011. Chapter 7 of Part 1 of the Localism Act 2011 ('the Act') introduced a new standards regime effective from 1st July 2012. The Act places a requirement on authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted (with voting rights) Members of an authority. The Act also requires the authority to have in place arrangements under which allegations that either a district or parish councillor has breached his or her Code of Conduct can be investigated, together with arrangements under which decisions on such

**AUDIT, STANDARDS AND
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

30th March 2017

allegations can be made. The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 were laid before Parliament on 8th June 2012 and also came into force on 1st July 2012.

Service / Operational Implications

Member Complaints

- 3.3 No new Member complaints have been received since the last meeting of the Committee.
- 3.4 The ongoing Member to Member (both district councillors) complaint which was reported on at the December meeting has now been withdrawn.

Member training

- 3.5 Personal Health and Safety training for Councillors was held in February and whilst well received was poorly attended.
- 3.6 Future training plans include workshops about housing services and further data protection opportunities.

Parish Councils' matters

- 3.7 On Thursday 16th March the Monitoring Officer undertook training at Wythall Parish Council on dispensations.
- 3.8 The Monitoring Officer has also been working with Stoke Parish Council and Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council on Governance arrangements.
- 3.9 Following the recent meetings of the Bromsgrove Area Committee of the Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils (CALC), Mr Chris Scurrill of Belbroughton and Fairfield Parish Council remains the Parish Councils' Representative on the Committee (non-voting co-opted member). The second Parish Councils' Representative and Deputy Parish Councils' Representative positions currently remain vacant.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.10 There are no direct implications arising out of this report. Details of the Council's arrangements for managing standards complaints under the Localism Act 2011 are available on the Council's website and from the Monitoring Officer on request.

**AUDIT, STANDARDS AND
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

30th March 2017

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:

- Risk of challenge to Council decisions; and
- Risk of complaints about elected Members.

5. APPENDICES

None.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Debbie Parker-Jones (Democratic Services Officer)
Email: d.parkerjones@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Tel: 01527 881411