

**AUDIT, STANDARDS AND  
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**18th January 2018**

**MONITORING OFFICER'S REPORT**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Geoff Denaro (for Governance)
Portfolio Holder consulted	
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 14th September 2017.
- 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

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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 The two outstanding Parish complaints reported at the previous meeting have now been concluded. In respect of the member to member Parish complaint the Investigating Officer has concluded that there was no breach of the Code of Conduct. In doing so he made a recommendation to the Clerk of the Parish that steps should be taken to improve relationships between the parties. The Monitoring Officer is working with the Parish to support them in this regard. In relation to the member of the public to member complaint (again Parish) both of the subject members have resigned and the matter has therefore been resolved locally.
- 3.4 Since the last meeting of the Committee one formal complaint (district Member to Member) and two general queries which have not yet resulted in formal complaints (one district Member to Member and one member of the public against a parish councillor) have been received, which the Monitoring Officer is hoping to manage locally.

Member training

- 3.5 Recent training which has taken place has included:
- Data Protection Refresher – 28th September 2017 – 4 attendees (a second session was cancelled due to low numbers);
  - Safeguarding & Prevent – 12th October 2017 – 6 attendees;
  - Housing Briefings – 2nd and 8th November 2017 – 7 & 9 attendees respectively; and
  - Planning Briefing – 28th November – 6 attendees.
- 3.6 No training is planned for the New Year at this point.
- 3.7 Both the Member Development Steering Group and the Constitution Review Working Group continue to meet on a quarterly basis.

**Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 3.8 There are no direct implications arising out of this report. Details of the Council's arrangements for managing standards complaints under the

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Localism Act 2011 are available on the Council's website and from the Monitoring Officer on request.

**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**

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