

UPDATED VERSION

Role of the Parish Representatives and Deputy Parish Representative on the Standards Committee

1. Attendance at Meetings of the Standards Committee

The Local Government Act 2000 requires there to be at least two Parish Representatives 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 two parish representatives on its Standards Committee with one nominated, trained substitute ("the Deputy Parish Representative"), none of whom should be members of the same parish council.

The Parish Representatives are 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).

The Deputy Parish Representative is encouraged to attend and to participate in the meetings of the Standards Committee, but he or she has no voting rights at Standards Committee meetings. However, if one of the Parish Representatives is unable to attend a meeting, the Deputy Parish Representative may substitute for him/her and may vote at the meeting.

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 be reviewed; the Standards Committee will refer that review 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 Representatives will be requested to attend some of these sub-committee meetings. In addition, the Deputy Parish Representative may be required to attend some of these sub-committee meetings if one of the Parish Representatives is unable to

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attend; attendance by a Parish Representative is required when the complaint relates to a parish councillor but it is anticipated that the Parish Representative and Deputy/Co-opted Parish Representatives will also participate in some matters relating to district councillors. It is not possible to say how many meetings will be required each year, but the Parish Representatives 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 and Deputy Representatives are 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 Representatives act 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 Representatives will therefore normally attend meetings of the CALC Area Committee of which there are 4 per year (Note: Either one of the Parish Representatives or the Deputy Parish Representative may carry out this function).

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.