

**AUDIT, STANDARDS AND  
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**30<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

**MONITORING OFFICER'S REPORT**

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Relevant Portfolio Holder  | Councillor Geoff Denaro (for Governance)  |
| Portfolio Holder consulted | No  |
| 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 in March 2019.
- 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 There have been no member complaints reported to the Monitoring Officer since the last meeting of the Committee and there are no complaints currently outstanding.

Member training

- 3.4 The following sessions have been delivered as part of the induction programme for Members since the local elections in May 2019:
- Induction night, which provided an opportunity for new Members to meet with the Corporate Management Team.
  - Planning training, which was a joint training session with Redditch Borough Council.
  - Licensing training, provided to Members of the Licensing Committee.
  - Code of conduct training.
  - Overview and Scrutiny training.
- 3.5 Both the Member Development Steering Group and the Constitution Review Working Group continue to meet regularly.
- 3.6 The Member Development Steering Group is currently carrying out a review of Members' use of IT equipment and its suitability.
- 3.7 The Constitution Review Working Group reviewed the Licensing Code of Practice, Members' role Descriptors and the role of the Worcestershire Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) in respect of Members' allowances at a meeting in April 2019.
- 3.8 The Constitution Review Working Group continues to working very effectively in enabling constructive changes to the constitution to be made and in keeping all Members informed.

**Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 3.9 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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