AUDIT, STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

10th October 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 July 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

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 complaints since the last meeting.

Member training

3.4   The following sessions have been planned for October 2019 as part of the phased Induction Programme for new Members:

- Data Protection.
- Planning training – it has been agreed that sessions will be held throughout the year on specific areas.
- A further session on Code of conduct training.
- A session on corporate parenting and safeguarding is also in the process of being arranged.

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 is currently looking at behaviour at meetings, date of submission of motions and questions (together with the inclusion of such items during the purdah period) and the scheme of delegations, which is a standing item on the agenda.

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 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

Name: Claire Felton
Email: c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk