

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Audit, Standards &
Governance Committee
2022**

13th October

MONITORING OFFICER'S REPORT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Geoff Denaro – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Yes
Report Author Claire Felton	Job Title: Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services Contact email: c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	An Effective and Sustainable Council
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Audit, Standards and Governance Committee is asked to RESOLVE that:-

1) subject to Members' comments, the report be noted

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 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 update provided at the meeting of the Committee in July 2022.
- 2.2 It has been 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.
- 2.3 Any further updates arising after publication of this report, including any relevant standards issues raised by Parish Councils, will be reported verbally by Officers at the meeting.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Chapter 7 of Part 1 of the Localism Act 2011 ('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.

5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 5.1 It is important to ensure that the Council manages standards regime matters in an appropriate manner. The issues detailed in this report help to ensure that there is an effective and sustainable Council.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.2 There are no specific climate change implications

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.1 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.

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Operational Implications

6.2 Member Complaints

Since the last meeting of the Committee the Monitoring Officer has received one member to member complaint. This has been resolved as the matter did not result in a breach of the code.

In respect of the complaint that was reported at the last meeting of the Committee, whilst the investigation has now concluded this matter is with the Monitoring Officer for further consideration and remains ongoing.

The New Normal

6.4 Since 7th May 2021, elected Members have needed to attend formal Committee meetings in person. These rules do not apply to informal meetings, such as Scrutiny Task Groups or Member training and consequently a lot of informal and private meetings continue to take place remotely.

6.6 The Constitution Review Working Group continues to meet regularly with the next meeting due to take place in October 2022. Any recommendations arising from meetings of this group will be reported to Council for Members' consideration.

6.7 A Member Development Steering Group meeting is due to take place on 31st October 2022.

Arrangements Following the Death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

6.8 Following the announcement of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, it was agreed that as a mark of respect, all meetings and training sessions that were due to take place during the period of national mourning be cancelled. Following consultation with group leaders a decision was also taken not to publish committee agenda packs during the mourning period and this meant that some other meetings scheduled to take place in late September were postponed. All postponed meetings have now been rescheduled.

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Member Training

6.9 Since the last meeting of the Committee the following training has been arranged for Members:

- Carbon Literacy Training, a further opportunity for Members to attend carbon literacy training took place on 26th September 2022.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 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.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

No appendices.

Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011.

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Geoff Denaro – Portfolio Holder for Governance	30/09/2022
Lead Director / Head of Service	Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer	30/09/2022
Financial Services	N/A	
Legal Services	Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer	30/09/2022

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