

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Audit, Standards &
Governance Committee
2023**

19th January

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 ordinary meeting of the Committee in October 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.

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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.

Operational Implications

6.2 Member Complaints

Since the last meeting of the Committee the Monitoring Officer has received a number of Parish Council Complaints all relating to matters that fall outside of the remit of the Monitoring Officer. Parish issues are being logged and now form part of the training and development sessions for Parish Councils post-election in the spring.

In respect of the complaint reported at the last meeting of the Committee, the matter remains ongoing and is now with the subject member and advisor for comment and resolution. Members are further advised that all non-code related matters reported to the Monitoring Officer historically have been assessed and included in the training sessions for District members pre and post-election.

Constitution Review

- 6.3 The Constitution Review Working Group is due to meet on 26th January 2023. Any recommendations arising from this meeting will be reported to Council for Members' consideration.

Member Development

- 6.4 The Member Development Steering Group continues to meet regularly. At recent meetings of the group, held on 31st October 2022 and 11th January 2023, Members have discussed the Member induction process for Councillors due to be elected in May 2023.

Member Training

- 6.5 Since the last meeting of the Committee the following training has been arranged for Members:
- Cyber security training, which took place on 12th December 2022.
 - Standards and Code of Conduct training, which was arranged following changes made to the Members' Code of Conduct in 2022. This training took place on 12th January 2023.

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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	9 th January 2023
Lead Director / Head of Service	Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer	6 th January 2023
Financial Services	N/A	
Legal Services	Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer	6 th January 2023