

**Audit, Standards &
Governance Committee**

14th September 2023

MONITORING OFFICER'S REPORT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor C. A. Hotham, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton
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 July 2023.
- 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.

Operational Implications

Member Complaints

- 6.2 Since the last meeting of the Committee, the Monitoring Officer has not received any new complaints.

Constitution Review

- 6.4 The Constitution Review Working Group (CRWG) is responsible for reviewing the content of the Council's constitution. Any proposed changes arising from meetings of the group are reported for the consideration of Council.
- 6.5 The CRWG has most recently met on 31st August and has various additional meetings scheduled throughout the year to provide Members with an opportunity to review the content of the Council's constitution.
- 6.6 During the meeting of the CRWG held in August, Members discussed a range of matters including the external review of the Council's Planning Committee, arrangements for considering Motions and Questions on Notice at Council meetings and arrangements for live streaming meetings. The recommendations arising from this meeting will be considered at the next ordinary meeting of Council in October 2023.

Member Development

- 6.7 The Member Development Steering Group (MDSG) is responsible for co-ordinating Member training, induction and ICT support. The group meets throughout the year. The next meeting of the group in the 2023/24 municipal year is due to take place on 30th October 2023.

Member Training

- 6.8 Following the local elections in May 2023, a comprehensive Member training programme has been arranged for both new and returning Members. This programme was organised in accordance with arrangements requested by the MDSG.

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The training sessions that have recently taken place or are due to take place soon include:

- Appointments Committee training on Tuesday 5th and Wednesday 6th September 2023
- Members' Code of Conduct Training – Tuesday 10th and Thursday 19th October 2023
- Planning Enforcement Training – Monday 23rd October 2023
- Carbon Literacy Training – Thursday 2nd November 2023
- Modern.gov App training – November (date to be confirmed)

6.9 As requested by the MDSG, many of the training sessions that are due to be delivered to Members in 2023 will be provided as joint training to Members from both Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council. However, there are some sessions, such as the Overview and Scrutiny training, where Members agreed that bespoke training should be provided to Bromsgrove Members only and, in these cases, separate training has been arranged.

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.

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Charles Hotham	6 th September 2023
Lead Director / Head of Service	Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	6 th September 2023
Financial Services	N/A	
Legal Services	Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	6 th September 2023