

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Audit, Standards & Governance Committee**

**10<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

**MONITORING OFFICER'S REPORT**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor K. May
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton
Report Author Claire Felton	Job Title: Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Property Services Contact email: <a href="mailto:c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk">c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk</a>
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priority	Sustainable
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 May 2024.
- 2.2 It has been proposed that from 2024-25 a report of this nature be presented to the Committee on a quarterly basis 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. COUNCIL PRIORITIES - IMPLICATIONS**

**Relevant Council Priorities**

- 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 the Council is sustainable.

**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 report the Council received two new complaints. Both were assessed and found not to be member conduct matters.

Constitution Review

- 6.3 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.
- 6.4 The latest meeting of the CRWG took place on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024. During the meeting, Members discussed potential changes to the procedural rules for the Licensing Committee (and Licensing Sub-Committees), the rules in the constitution for consideration of Questions on Notice at Council meetings and the allowance paid to the Chairman of the Council.
- 6.5 Recommendations from the CRWG in respect of these matters will have been considered at a meeting of Council held on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

Member Development

- 6.8 The Member Development Steering Group (MDSG) is responsible for co-ordinating Member training, induction and ICT support. The group meets throughout the year.
- 6.9 The next meeting of the MDSG is due to take place on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

Member Training

- 6.10 A Member training programme has been arranged for 2024/25. This programme was organised in accordance with arrangements requested by the MDSG. In line with the approach agreed by the MDSG, a lot of this training has been delivered jointly with Redditch Borough Council.
- 6.11 The MDSG has previously requested that the majority of training should be delivered in person. However, Members can opt to attend most training sessions remotely, with the link to the session provided on request.

6.12 The training sessions that have taken place since the last Monitoring Officer's report or which are shortly due to take place include:

- Mock Planning Committee (Bromsgrove only) – Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May
- Chaining Skills Training – Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May
- Overview and Scrutiny Training (including work prioritisation session – Bromsgrove only) – Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June
- Joint Member Licensing Training – Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June
- Modern.gov app Training – Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June
- Joint Member Licensing Training – Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June
- Local Government Finance Training – Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> July
- Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Training – Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September
- Carbon Literacy Training – Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October
- Code of Conduct Training for Parish Councillors – Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October
- Member Safety Training – Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November

6.13 Following the by-election in September 2024, a number of one-to-one training exercises have been arranged for Councillor Clarke.

6.14 Training continues to be offered by the Local Government Association (LGA) to elected Members. This training is promoted to Members throughout the year.

## **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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**10<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Name and Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Portfolio Holder	Councillor K. May, Leader and Cabinet Member Strategic Partnerships and Governance	30.09.24
Lead Director / Head of Service	Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	28.09.24
Financial Services	N/A	
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor (Governance)	30.09.24