

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Audit, Standards & Governance Committee

16th January 2025

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 Procurement Services Contact email: c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
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 meeting of the Committee in October 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 three new complaints. Each complaint was assessed and found not to be a member conduct matter.

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 next meeting of the CRWG is due to take place on 29th January 2025. Any recommendations arising from this meeting will be reported to the Council meeting due to take place on 19th February 2025.

Member Development

- 6.5 The Member Development Steering Group (MDSG) is responsible for co-ordinating Member training, induction and ICT support. The group meets throughout the year.
- 6.6 The next meeting of the MDSG is due to take place on Monday 20th January 2025.

Member Training

- 6.7 A Member training programme was 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.
- 6.8 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.
- 6.9 The training sessions that have taken place since the last Monitoring Officer's report or which are shortly due to take place include:
- Member Safety Training – 4th November 2024
 - Member Training – Appointments – Tuesday 19th November 2024
 - Member Planning Training – Thursday 9th January 2025
 - Training for Members of the Shareholders Committee – Thursday 6th February 2025

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6.10 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.

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor K. May, Leader and Cabinet Member Strategic Partnerships and Governance	6/1/25
Lead Director / Head of Service	Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	
Financial Services	N/A	
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor (Governance)	23/12/24