

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Audit, Standards & Governance Committee 15th October 2026

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

Members are asked to RESOLVE that: -

**Subject to Members' comments, the Audit, Standards and
Governance Committee is assured regarding the Monitoring
Officer's Report.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This report provides members with key information relating to standards regime and other governance 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 2026.
- 2.2 Members have previously agreed that 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 and governance 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

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priorities

- 5.2 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

- 5.3 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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Community Impact Implications

- 6.2 There are no specific implications for community safety, health or wellbeing.

Operational Implications

Member Complaints

- 6.3 We received the following complaints in Q2:-

- 1 Member -v- Member complaint – not conduct matter.
- 1 Public -v- Member complaint – resolved informally.
- 2 complaints -v- Parish Councillors – 1 not a conduct matter and the other resolved informally.

Type of complaint	Unresolved	Age Analysis					
		Q2 (July-Sept)	Q1 (Apr-June)	2025 Q4 (Jan – March)	2025 Q3 (Oct-Dec)	2025 Q2 (July- Sept)	2025 Q1 (Apr- June)
Member to Member		1	5			5	5
Public to Member		1	1	3	4	2	2
Parish Councillor complaints		2		4			
Others			1				
Total		4	7	7	4	7	7

Whistleblowing

- 6.4 The Council has not received any whistleblowing complaints since the last report.
- 6.5 Any whistleblowing reports are logged and reported to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) as part of their governance monitoring arrangements.
- 6.6 Whistleblowing reports are also reported as part of the Monitoring Officer's report to the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee.

Contract Procedure Rules – Waivers

- 6.7 The Contract Rules require a waiver to be approved in writing and signed by the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer and recorded

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on the waivers register. Where the contract is £50,000 or above the relevant Portfolio Holder must also be consulted. Assistant Directors must monitor the use of waivers relevant to their department.

- 6.8 The list of waivers approved since May 2026 is attached at Appendix 1.

Constitution Review

- 6.9 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.
- 6.10 A meeting was held on 10th July 2026. During this meeting discussions were held on Arrangements for the Appointment of Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Committees in the Event of an Equality of Votes. A recommendation was agreed that the Council Procedure Rules in the Council's constitution be amended to require a name to be drawn from a hat to appoint a Chairman to preside at a meeting of a Committee in the event of an equality of votes being returned for two rival candidates for the position of Chairman of that Committee for that municipal year. The recommendation was reported to the Council meeting held on 15th July 2026.
- 6.11 A further meeting of the CRWG took place on 17th September 2026. During this meeting, Members considered proposed changes to the Scheme of Delegations in respect of planning. Members learned that these changes were required in response to national changes and to meet legal requirements that need to be implemented by 31st October 2026. The changes proposed to the Council's Scheme of Delegations in respect of planning were subsequently reported for Members' consideration at the meeting of Council held on 14th October.
- 6.12 Also during the meeting of the CRWG held in September, Members considered a report updating the group on arrangements in place for site visits undertaken in advance of Planning Committee meetings. This update was received, following recommendations in respect of site visits raised in the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) review of the Planning Committee in 2025/26. It should be noted that site visits will continue to take place moving forwards as this is considered a suitable arrangement for the types of planning applications that will be determined by the Planning Committee under the new national framework.

Member Development

- 6.13 The Member Development Steering Group (MDSG) is responsible for co-ordinating Member training, induction and ICT support. The group meets throughout the year.
- 6.14 A meeting of the group took place on 1st October 2026. During the meeting, Members considered attendance at training held to date alongside proposals for additional safeguarding and suicide awareness training to be delivered. Reference was also made to specific requirements for training in respect of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee.
- 6.15 Following the Government's recent announcement that District Council elections will go ahead in May 2027, the MDSG also held initial discussions about arrangements for Member induction and training in 2026/27. These discussions will continue at meetings of the group held throughout the year.

Member Training

- 6.16 A small number of Member training sessions have been arranged for 2026/27. This reduced number of training sessions had been booked in accordance with arrangements requested by the MDSG. In line with the approach agreed by the MDSG, some of this training is being delivered jointly with Redditch Borough Council, whilst other sessions are bespoke and being delivered to Bromsgrove Members only.
- 6.17 For 2026/27, the MDSG had agreed that the majority of training should be delivered remotely, on the basis that this will be more convenient for Members with work, caring or other commitments. The exceptions to this are planning and licensing training, where members are expected to attend the training that is provided in person.
- 6.18 The following training has been delivered since the last Monitoring Officer's report was presented:
- Local Plan Training was delivered to Members on 28th July 2026
 - Development Management Training was delivered on 8th September 2026
- 6.19 Additional training was delivered on the following subjects:

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- Audit, Standards and Governance Training was delivered to Members on 7th July 2026.
- Planning Training (delivered by Planning Advisory Group) was held on 8th September 2026
- Joint new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Training was delivered on 29th September 2026.

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

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Contract Procedure Rules - Waivers

Background Papers

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 Economic Development and Enabling	06.10.2026
Legal Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor (Governance)	05.10.2026