

# Standards Committee

Wed 12 Dec  
2012  
5.00 pm

Committee Room 2  
Town Hall  
Redditch



[www.redditchbc.gov.uk](http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk)

# Access to Information - Your Rights

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The Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 widened the rights of press and public to attend Local Authority meetings and to see certain documents. Recently the Freedom of Information Act 2000, has further broadened these rights, and limited exemptions under the 1985 Act.

Your main rights are set out below:-

- Automatic right to attend all Council and Committee meetings unless the business would disclose confidential or “exempt” information.
- Automatic right to inspect agenda and public reports at least five days before the date of the meeting.
- Automatic right to inspect minutes of the Council and its Committees (or summaries of business undertaken in private) for up to six years following a meeting.
- Automatic right to inspect lists of background papers used in the preparation of public reports.
- Access, upon request, to the background papers on which reports are based for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting.
- Access to a public register stating the names and addresses and electoral areas of all Councillors with details of the membership of all Committees etc.
- A reasonable number of copies of agenda and reports relating to items to be considered in public must be made available to the public attending meetings of the Council and its Committees etc.
- Access to a list specifying those powers which the Council has delegated to its Officers indicating also the titles of the Officers concerned.
- Access to a summary of the rights of the public to attend meetings of the Council and its Committees etc. and to inspect and copy documents.
- In addition, the public now has a right to be present when the Council determines “Key Decisions” unless the business would disclose confidential or “exempt” information.
- Unless otherwise stated, all items of business before the Executive Committee are Key Decisions.
- (Copies of Agenda Lists are published in advance of the meetings on the Council’s Website:  
[www.redditchbc.gov.uk](http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk)

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**If you have any queries on this Agenda or any of the decisions taken or wish to exercise any of the above rights of access to information, please contact  
Debbie Parker-Jones  
Committee Support Services**

**Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH  
Tel: 01527 881411: Fax: (01527) 65216  
Email: [d.parkerjones@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:d.parkerjones@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)**

# Welcome to today's meeting.

## Guidance for the Public

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### **Agenda Papers**

The **Agenda List** at the front of the Agenda summarises the issues to be discussed and is followed by the Officers' full supporting **Reports**.

### **Chair**

The Chair is responsible for the proper conduct of the meeting. Generally to one side of the Chair is the Committee Support Officer who gives advice on the proper conduct of the meeting and ensures that the debate and the decisions are properly recorded. On the Chair's other side are the relevant Council Officers. The Councillors ("Members") of the Committee occupy the remaining seats around the table.

### **Running Order**

Items will normally be taken in the order printed but, in particular circumstances, the Chair may agree to vary the order.

**Refreshments** : tea, coffee and water are normally available at meetings - please serve yourself.

### **Decisions**

Decisions at the meeting will be taken by the **Councillors** who are the democratically elected representatives. They are advised by **Officers** who are paid professionals and do not have a vote.

### **Members of the Public**

Members of the public may, by prior arrangement, speak at meetings of the Council or its Committees. Specific procedures exist for Appeals Hearings or for meetings involving Licence or Planning Applications. For further information on this point, please speak to the Committee Support Officer.

### **Special Arrangements**

If you have any particular needs, please contact the Committee Support Officer.

Infra-red devices for the hearing impaired are available on request at the meeting. Other facilities may require prior arrangement.

### **Further Information**

If you require any further information, please contact the Committee Support Officer (see foot of page opposite).

### **Fire/ Emergency instructions**

**If the alarm is sounded, please leave the building by the nearest available exit – these are clearly indicated within all the Committee Rooms.**

**If you discover a fire, inform a member of staff or operate the nearest alarm call point (wall mounted red rectangular box). In the event of the fire alarm sounding, leave the building immediately following the fire exit signs. Officers have been appointed with responsibility to ensure that all visitors are escorted from the building.**

**Do Not stop to collect personal belongings.**

**Do Not use lifts.**

**Do Not re-enter the building until told to do so.**

**The emergency Assembly Area is on Walter Stranz Square.**





# Standards

12th December 2012

5.00 pm

## Committee

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

### Agenda

#### Membership:

#### Redditch Borough Councillors:

Pat Witherspoon (Chair)  
Michael Braley (Vice-Chair)  
Phil Mould  
Debbie Taylor  
Derek Taylor

#### Feckenham Parish Council Representative (non-voting co- opted):

Fiona Hawker

#### Observers:

Michael Collins (Independent Observer)  
Patrick Hawkins (Deputy Feckenham  
Parish Council Representative)

<b>1. Apologies</b>	To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to attend this meeting.
<b>2. Declarations of Interest</b>	To invite Councillors to declare any interests they may have in items on the agenda.
<b>3. Minutes</b> (Pages 1 - 6) Chief Executive	To confirm as correct records the minutes of the meetings of the Standards Committee held on 16th July 2012 and 22nd October 2012.  (Minutes attached)
<b>4. Monitoring Officer's Report</b> (Pages 7 - 10) Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services	To receive a report from the Monitoring Officer on any matters of relevance to the Committee.  (Report attached)  <b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b>
<b>5. Parish Council Representative's Report (if any)</b>	To consider any report from the Feckenham Parish Council Representative on any matters of relevance to the Committee.  (Oral report)  <b>(Astwood Bank &amp; Feckenham Ward)</b>

# Standards

Committee

12th December 2012

<p><b>6. Localism Act 2011 - New Standards Regime - Dispensations and Complaints Processes</b></p> <p>(Pages 11 - 22)</p> <p>Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services</p>	<p>To consider the granting of general dispensations under s33 of the Localism Act 2011, the processes for the investigation, reporting and recording of complaints made against Members and the process for local hearings.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>7. Work Programme</b></p> <p>(Pages 23 - 28)</p> <p>Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services</p>	<p>To consider and review the Committee's Work Programme.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>8. Exclusion of the Public</b></p>	<p>Should it prove necessary, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, to exclude the public from the meeting at any point during the proceedings in relation to any item(s) of business on the grounds that either exempt and/or confidential information is likely to be divulged, the following resolution(s) will be moved:</p> <p>"That under Section 100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, it/they involve the likely disclosure of <u>exempt</u> information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act, as amended, the relevant paragraphs of that part being (...to be specified by the Chairman at the meeting), and that it is in the public interest to do so.", and/or</p> <p>"That under Section 100 A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, it/they involve the likely disclosure of <u>confidential</u> information which would be in breach of an obligation of confidence."</p>