



# Audit, Governance and Standards Committee

Thu 3 Jul  
2014  
7.00 pm

Committee Room 2  
Town Hall  
Redditch

**REDDITCH** BOROUGH COUNCIL

*making  
a  
difference*

[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  
Democratic Services**

**Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH  
Tel: 01527 881411  
e.mail: [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 Democratic Services 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 Democratic Services Officer.

### ***Special Arrangements***

If you have any particular needs, please contact the Democratic Services 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 Democratic Services 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.**





# Audit, Governance and Standards Committee

Thursday, 3rd July, 2014

7.00 pm

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

## Agenda

### Membership:

Redditch Borough  
Councillors:

Roger Bennett (Chair)  
David Thain (Vice-Chair)  
Michael Braley  
Natalie Brookes  
John Fisher

Jane Potter  
Rachael Smith  
John Witherspoon  
Pat Witherspoon

Independent  
Member:

Dave Jones (non-voting  
co-opted – for Audit and  
Governance)

Feckenham Parish  
Council  
Representative:

Vanancy (non-voting  
co-opted – for Standards)

Observer:

Michael Collins  
(Independent Observer)

### 1. Introduction and Welcome to the new Audit, Governance and Standards Committee

To welcome Members to the first meeting of the newly established Audit, Governance and Standards Committee.

Future meetings of the Committee for the 2014/15 Municipal Year are scheduled to take place at 7.00pm on:

- Thursday 25th September 2014;
- Thursday 22 January 2015; and
- Thursday 23 April 2015.

There will also be an additional Statement of Accounts Briefing for all members of the Committee at 7.00pm on Thursday 11 September 2014.

### 2. Apologies and named Substitutes

To receive the apologies for absence and details of any Councillor nominated to attend the meeting in place of a member of the Committee.

<p><b>3. Declarations of Interest</b></p>	<p>To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and/or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests.</p>
<p><b>4. Minutes</b> (Pages 1 - 24)</p>	<p>To confirm as correct records the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 24th October 2013 and the Audit &amp; Governance Committee held on 24th April 2014.</p> <p>(Minutes attached)</p>
<p><b>5. Monitoring Officer's Report - Standards Regime</b> (Pages 25 - 30) Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services</p>	<p>To receive a report from the Monitoring Officer on any matters of relevance to the Committee.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>6. Localism Act 2011 - Standards Regime - Dispensations Report</b> (Pages 31 - 34) Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services</p>	<p>To consider the re-granting of general dispensations previously granted by the former Standards Committee, and the grant of an additional general dispensation, under s33 of the Localism Act 2011, to enable Members to participate and vote on matters under consideration at Council and committee meetings in particular circumstances.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>7. Audit, Governance and Standards Committee - Action List and Work Programme</b> (Pages 35 - 44) Chief Executive</p>	<p>To consider the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee's Action List and Work Programme.</p> <p>(Action List and Work Programme attached)</p> <p><b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>

<p><b>8. Grant Thornton Progress Update Report</b>  (Pages 45 - 60)  Executive Director, Finance and Resources</p>	<p>To receive a progress update report from Grant Thornton, the Council's External Auditors.  (Report attached)  <b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>9. Risk Monitoring and Reporting</b>  Head of Leisure and Cultural Services</p>	<p>To receive a presentation from the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services on the key operational risks identified within his service area.  Also, to receive and additional Officer and/or Lead Risk Member (Councillor Bennett) oral updates in relation to risk monitoring activity which has taken place since the last meeting of the Audit &amp; Governance Committee.  (Presentation / oral report)  <b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>10. Appointment of Lead Fraud and Risk Members on the Committee</b>  Chief Executive</p>	<p>Further to the Annual Meeting of the Council on 9th June 2014, to appoint the Lead Fraud (x1) and Risk (x2) Members on the Committee.  These Members will be charged with overseeing the areas of fraud and risk on behalf of the Committee and to report back to the Committee on any training/activities which they may have undertaken as part of their Lead Member roles.  <b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>11. Internal Audit - Annual Report 2013/14</b>  (Pages 61 - 74)  Executive Director, Finance and Resources</p>	<p>To consider the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2013/14 and the 2013/14 Worcestershire Internal Audit Shared Services Manager's annual opinion on the overall adequacy of the Council's internal control environment.  (Report attached)  <b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>

<p><b>12. Annual Governance Statement 2013/14</b> (Pages 75 - 82) Executive Director, Finance and Resources</p>	<p>To seek Members' approval of the Annual Governance Statement for signature by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive, for inclusion in the Statement of Accounts 2013/14.  (Report attached)  <b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>13. Benefits Investigations - 1st December 2013 to 31st March 2014</b> (Pages 83 - 92) Executive Director, Finance and Resources</p>	<p>To advise Members on the performance of the Benefits Services Fraud Investigation Service for the period 1st December 2013 to 31st March 2014.  (Report attached)  <b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>14. Debt Recovery Update - Quarters 3 and 4 2013/14</b> (Pages 93 - 96) Executive Director, Finance and Resources</p>	<p>To advise Members on the collection and recovery processes of the Council's Income Team and update Members on outstanding debt levels.  (Report attached)  <b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>15. Portfolio Holder Update - 2013/14 Outturn</b> Councillor John Fisher</p>	<p>To receive an oral update from Councillor John Fisher, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management, on the 2013/14 Outturn Report.  (Oral report)  <b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>

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**16. Exclusion of the Public**

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:

"That under Section 100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, it/they involve the likely disclosure of exempt 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

"That under Section 100 A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, it/they involve the likely disclosure of confidential information which would be in breach of an obligation of confidence."

**The paragraphs under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act are as follows:**

**Subject to the "public interest" test, information relating to:**

- **Para 1 – any individual;**
- **Para 2 – the identity of any individual;**
- **Para 3 – financial or business affairs;**
- **Para 4 – labour relations matters;**
- **Para 5 – legal professional privilege;**
- **Para 6 – a notice, order or direction;**
- **Para 7 – the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime;**

**may need to be considered as 'exempt'.**

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