

**Audit, Governance &
Standards Committee
2022**

27th October

MONITORING OFFICER'S REPORT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Karen Ashley – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Yes
Report Author Claire Felton	Job Title: Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services Contact email: c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	An Effective and Sustainable Council
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, Governance and Standards 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, Governance and Standards Committee since the last update provided at the meeting of the Committee in July 2022.
- 2.2 It has been proposed that a report of this nature be presented to each meeting of the Committee 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 on orally 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. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 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 there is an effective and sustainable Council.

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

6.2 Member Complaints

Since the last meeting of the Committee, there have been a number of Borough Member to Member complaints regarding social media which are being dealt with locally by the Monitoring Officer in conjunction with the Group Leaders.

The New Normal

6.3 Since 7th May 2021, elected Members have needed to attend formal Committee meetings in person. These rules do not apply to informal meetings, such as Scrutiny Task Groups or Member training and consequently a lot of informal and private meetings continue to take place remotely.

6.4 Carbon Literacy training was provided to Members in September 2022. In total, 10 Councillors attended this training.

6.5 The Member Support Steering Group is due to meet on 13th October 2022. During this meeting, Members will have an opportunity to reflect back on lessons learned from the Member induction process in May 2022 and to start to consider arrangements for induction in May 2023.

6.6 The Constitutional Review Working Party continues to meet regularly. Any recommendations arising from meetings of this group are reported to Council for Members' consideration.

Arrangements Following the Death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

6.7 Following the announcement of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, it was agreed that as a mark of respect, all meetings and training sessions that were due to take place during the period of national mourning be cancelled. Following consultation with group leaders and the Chairs of Committees, a decision was also taken not to publish agenda packs during the mourning period and therefore meetings due to take place in late September were also postponed. All postponed meetings have now been rescheduled.

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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 Karen Ashley – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling	19/10/2022
Lead Director / Head of Service	Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer	17/10/2022
Financial Services	N/A	
Legal Services	Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer	17/10/2022