
MONITORING OFFICER'S REPORT

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| Relevant Portfolio Holder | Councillor Luke Court – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling |
| Portfolio Holder Consulted | Yes |
| Relevant Head of Service | Claire Felton |
| 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 March 2023.
- 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.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Audit, Governance & Standards Committee
2023**

27th July

Operational Implications

Member Complaints

- 6.2 The Monitoring Officer continues to receive complaints in relation to social media and as a result is in discussions with Inspector Richard Field, of West Mercia Police, to identify dates for social media training.
- 6.3 The Monitoring Officer has received a complaint in relation to the use of exempt information and this has been resolved locally. Members are reminded to familiarise themselves with the rules in respect of considering exempt information and to speak to officers if they have any questions.

Member Support Steering Group

- 6.4 The Member Support Steering Group (MSSG) is responsible for reviewing Member training, induction and ICT support. Meetings of the MSSG are due to take place throughout the 2023/24 municipal year. The first meeting of the group is due to take place in August 2023.

Constitutional Review Working Party

- 6.5 The Constitutional Review Working Party (CRWP) is responsible for reviewing the Council's constitution and makes recommendations to full Council regarding any proposed changes to the content of the constitution.
- 6.6 The CRWP holds regular meetings throughout the year. The first scheduled meeting of the CRWP took place on 13th July 2023. During the meeting, Members considered an update in respect of the test of meeting owls and live streaming meetings, a report in respect of the Licensing Committee's recent discussions concerning delegations for the licensing process and an update in respect of the Policy Framework.
- 6.7 Any recommendations arising from meeting of the CRWP are reported for Members' consideration at meetings of full Council, which ultimately determines changes to the constitution.

Member Training

6.7 Following the local elections in May 2023, a comprehensive Member training programme was arranged for both new and returning Members.

6.8 The training sessions that have taken place since the last meeting of the Committee include:

- Redditch Members' Overview and Scrutiny Training – 5th June 2023.
- Local Government Finance Training – 12th June 2023 (joint with Bromsgrove District Council)
- Housing Induction Presentation – 19th June 2023
- Planning Committee Procedural Briefing – 21st June 2023
- Licensing Training – 22nd June 2023
- Members' Equalities Training – 27th June 2023
- Data Protection Training – 4th July (joint with Bromsgrove District Council)
- Chairing Skills Training – 5th July 2023 (joint with Bromsgrove District Council)
- Shareholders Committee training – 6th July 2023
- Civility in Public Life and Social Media Training – 10th July 2023 (joint with other Councils in Worcestershire)
- Electoral Matters Committee training – 11th July
- Code of Conduct Training for Parish Council Clerks and Parish Councillors (7th June, 6th July and 18th July 2023)

6.9 At an early meeting of the MSSG Members will be asked to review the training provided as part of this induction programme and this will provide an opportunity for lessons to be learned for the future.

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 Luke Court - Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling | XX 2023 |
| Lead Director / Head of Service | Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer | 7 th July 2023 |
| Financial Services | N/A | |
| Legal Services | Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer | 7 th July 2023 |