

MONITORING OFFICER'S REPORT

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 July 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.

Operational Implications

Member Complaints

- 6.2 As a result of the issues reported to this Committee in relation to the use of Social Media, training has been arranged and was now scheduled to be delivered by Inspector Richard Field, of West Mercia Police, on 11th January 2024.

Member Support Steering Group

- 6.3 The Member Support Steering Group (MSSG) is responsible for reviewing Member training, induction and ICT support. Meetings of the MSSG are to take place throughout the 2023/24 municipal year.
- 6.4 At the latest meeting of the Member Support Steering Group, held on 12th October 2023, Members considered responses to a survey on the subject of the Member induction process that had been received from Councillors elected in May 2023. The feedback provided will help to inform preparations for the Member induction process in May 2024.
- 6.5 The next meeting of the group is due to take place on Thursday 7th December 2023. At this meeting, Members will consider the draft induction programme for councillors due to be elected in May 2024.

Constitutional Review Working Party

- 6.6 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. The group continues to meet on a regular basis.

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 and Member briefings that have recently taken place or are due to take place soon include:

- Emergency Plan Training – Wednesday 15th November
- Redditch Members’ Social Media Training – Thursday 16th November 2023
- Member Briefing – Agile Working Policy – Thursday 7th December 2023
- Member Safety Training – Tuesday 19th December 2023

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.

Background Papers: 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	15/11/2023
Lead Director / Head of Service	Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	14/11/2023
Legal Services	Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	14/11/2023