

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

23 JUNE 2014

REPORT OF MONITORING OFFICER

CODE OF CONDUCT – UPDATE ON PROGRESS

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To update the Committee on the latest position with regard to standards matters including the Code of Conduct, the Registration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Interests and any complaints against Councillors dealt with under the Council's process.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **The update on the position of standards matters including Parishes' Codes of Conduct, Registration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Interests and complaints against Councillors dealt with under the new system is noted.**

3.0 KEY ISSUES

3.1 Registration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Interests

Members are continuing to update their original forms as new issues are raised or they are subject to a change in circumstances. Work with the parishes is ongoing to ensure all Parish Councillors' Registration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Interest Forms are completed and are available on the website.

3.2 Complaints Process

The Complaints Process has been applied to the following complaints to date :-

	Totals	Referred to Police re DPI	Referred to Gov Cttee for decision	Informal Resolution Stage	Stage 1 – Gov Sub Cttee 1 for initial assessment	Stage 2 – Referred for investigation & Gov Sub Cttee 2 (Hearing)
Complaints received in total since July 2012	26					
Resolved complaints	18			4	13	1
In progress	8					

Breakdown of those in progress		1	2	3	0	2
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3.3 Committee Training

Training for Governance Sub Committee 1 was held on 30 April 2014 for those on that Sub Committee including one of the Parish Representatives. This training was specifically to assist those involved in the Governance Sub Committee meeting that was held on 1 May 2014.

3.4 Independent Persons and Parish Representatives

The Independent Persons have provided 14 opinion reports on complaint cases and both of the Independent Persons have been involved in meetings with Subject Members to assist with informal resolution.

The Leicestershire group of Monitoring Officers met with the Independent Persons across the County on 30 April 2014 to discuss how with the process for consulting them on complaints was working and to be updated on relevant matters. The Independent Persons continue to meet on a regular basis with the Monitoring Officer to discuss any issues and generally keep up to date on standards matters.

4.0 **POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Strong Corporate Governance is important in order to ensure high standards of conduct are maintained.

5.0 **FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The implementation of the new requirements is impacting on democracy related resources with particular regard to the Parish requirements.

6.0 **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS**

6.1 Of particular note in the Localism Act is the change making the non-registration of a disclosable pecuniary interest within 28 days a criminal offence.

7.0 **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

7.1 There are no specific community safety implications in this report.

8.0 **EQUALITIES**

8.1 An Equalities Screening Assessment has been completed and is available on the Council's website which outlines the Council's responsibilities with regard to matters within the report under the Localism Act.

9.0 **RISKS**

9.1 The impact of the changes and implementation to meet the requirements of the Localism Act will need to be managed to minimise any risk to the Council's reputation or otherwise.

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 Publishing the Registration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest forms and information on the Councillor Complaints process to the website encourages paper free access to information and helps to meet the Council's green targets.

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 There has been consultation with Parish Councils on options for meeting the new legislation.

12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

12.1 All indirectly.

Contact Officer: Angela Tebbutt, Monitoring Officer

Date: May 2014

Appendices: None

Background Papers: Localism Act 2011
Minutes of Council Meeting held on 18 July 2012
Minutes of Council Meeting held on 17 July 2013
Previous Minutes of Standards Committee
Previous Minutes of Governance Committee

Reference: Cttees, Council & Sub-Cttees/Governance/2014-15/230614/Code of Conduct – Update on Progress