

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

23 NOVEMBER 2015

REPORT OF MONITORING OFFICER

CODE OF CONDUCT – UPDATE

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' Registration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Interests and complaints against Councillors dealt with under the provisions of the Localism Act is noted.**

3.0 KEY ISSUES

3.1 Registration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Interests

Borough Councillors are aware to update their Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) and other interests as soon as there is any change to the submitted form and these updates are added to the Council's website.

Since the last meeting of the Governance Committee when it was requested that the 3 outstanding Parish Councillor DPI forms be checked, the position on Parish Councillor DPI forms is being closely monitored and of the 144 Parish Councillors, there are 2 Parish Councillor DPI forms still outstanding and liaison with the Parish Councillor and Clerk in each case is ongoing.

3.2 Complaints

A meeting of Governance Sub Committee 1 to consider one complaint has been held since the last Governance Committee meeting and this has resulted in a decision of 'no action'. There is one complaint due for referral to Governance Sub Committee 1 next month and one other complaint outstanding at the time of preparing this paper.

3.3 Independent Persons and Parish Representatives

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. However, the last meeting was cancelled due to neither independent person being available. An alternate date is being arranged. They are also involved in meetings with the Leicestershire group of Monitoring Officers which provides an opportunity to share experiences and learning with others in the same role.

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 administrative resources with particular regard to the Parish requirements and this work has been particularly heavy following the Borough and Parish Elections in May 2015.

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

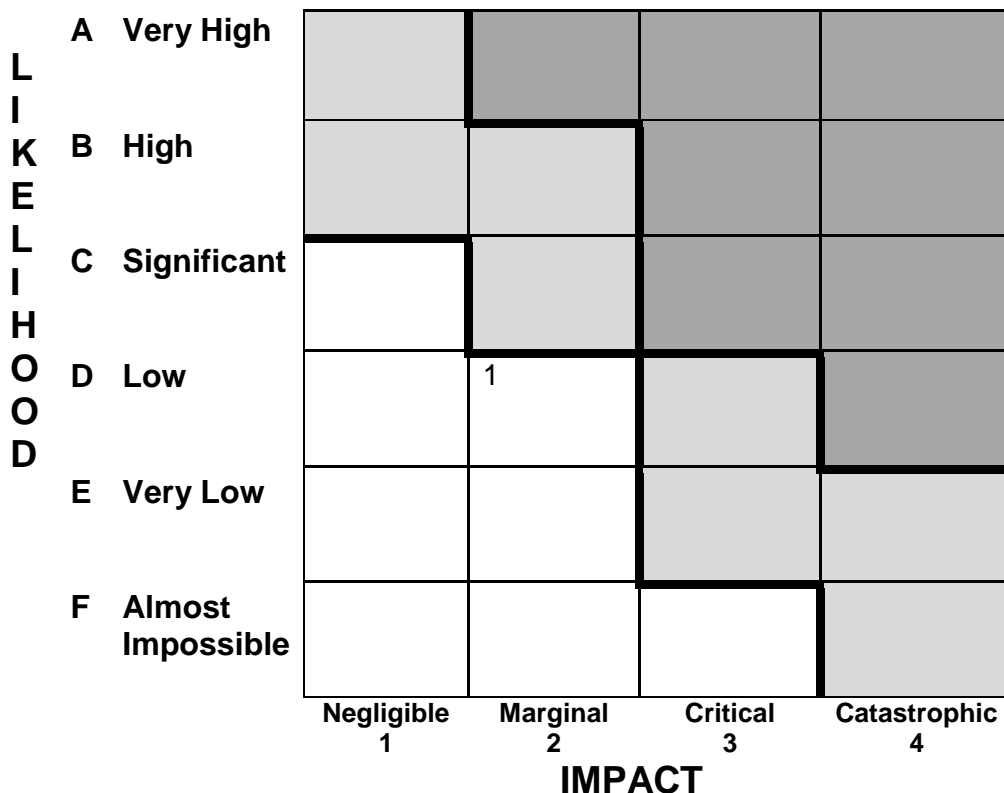
7.1 There are no specific community safety implications in this report.

8.0 EQUALITIES

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

9.0 RISKS

9.1 The risks associated with the report are considered to relate to managing the requirements of the Localism Act and the implications of this not being followed by Councillors impacting on the Council's decision-making process and reputation.



Risk No	Risk Description
1	Decisions of the Sub Committees challenged due to processes not followed in line with legislation and the Council's agreed process.

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 is consultation with the Independent Persons on Member complaints that are referred to the Sub Committees as well as with the Parish Representatives on Parish Councillor complaints.

12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

12.1 All indirectly.

Contact Officer: Angela Tebbutt, Monitoring Officer

Date: November 2015

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
 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 11 December 2013
 Previous Minutes of Standards Committee

Previous Minutes of Governance Committee

Reference:

Cttees, Council & Sub-Cttees/Governance/2015-16/231115/Code of Conduct – Update on Progress