

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

29 JUNE 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

Following the Borough Elections, each Borough and Parish Councillor is to complete a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) form within 28 days of their election.(This is regardless of whether they were previously Councillors and had previously completed a form, new forms are required for every Councillor.)

With regard to the Borough Councillors, these have been completed with the exception of one councillor who is currently not able to complete the form due to circumstances outside their control. The forms are on the Council's website. To assist Parish Councillors in completing their DPI forms, the Monitoring Officer has written to each Parish Councillor at their home address enclosing the form for completion. The Parish Clerks are also assisting and in many cases collecting and collating the forms for their Councillors. It is hoped that this approach will encourage their urgent attention to this matter. Those Parish Councillor forms that are already received are available on the Council's website.

3.2 Complaints

The table below shows the Member Complaints currently in progress.

	Totals	Referred to Police re DPI	Referred to Gov Cttee for decision	Informal Resolution Stage	Withdrawn	Stage 1 – Gov Sub Cttee 1 for initial assessment	Stage 2 – Referred for investigation & Gov Sub Cttee 2 (Hearing)
In progress	14						

Breakdown of those in progress				9			5
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3.4 Where the complaints are against people who are no longer Councillors following the elections, there is an exempt report at this meeting for consideration by Members.

3.5 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. 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.

The Melton Branch of LRALC appoint the Parish Representatives to the Governance Committee on an annual basis and these appointments for 2015/16 are as follows :-

Parish Councillor Anne Dames	Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council
Parish Councillor Philip Dorn	Broughton and Dalby Parish Council
Parish Councillor Peter Holbrook	Waltham & Thorpe Arnold Parish Council

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.

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.

L I K E L I H O O D	A	Very High				
	B	High				
	C	Significant				
	D	Low		1		
	E	Very Low				
	F	Almost Impossible				
			Negligible 1	Marginal 2	Critical 3	Catastrophic 4

IMPACT

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: June 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/2015-16/290615/Code of Conduct – Update on Progress