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Our reference: T Coop
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Date: 20 October 2017



To all Members of the Standards Committee

Dear Councillor

A meeting of the **Standards Committee** will be held on **Monday 30 October 2017 at 6pm** in the Committee Room 1, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford to consider the following items of business.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. A. Adair', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Deputy Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. Declarations of Interest.
3. Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 20 July 2017 (pages 1 - 4).
4. Report Cases Update 2017-18

The report of the Deputy Monitoring Officer is attached (pages 5 - 8).

5. Disqualification Criteria for Councillors – Government Consultation

The report of the Monitoring Officer is attached (pages 9 - 16).

6. Training for Town and Parish Councils

The report of the Report of the Monitoring Officer is attached (pages 17 - 20).

Membership

Chairman: Councillor R A Adair

Councillors: K P Beardsall, M Buckle, E J Lungley, S E Mallender, F A Purdue-Horan

G Norbury (Appointed), J R Baggaley (Appointed), K White (Appointed),
W A Wood (Appointed)

Rushcliffe Community
Contact Centre

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In person

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First Saturday of
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9am - 1pm

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**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
STANDARDS COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 20 JULY 2017**

HELD AT 5.30PM IN
Council Chamber B, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford

PRESENT:

Councillors R A Adair (Chairman), F A Purdue-Horan

Independent Members: J R Baggaley, G Norbury, K White, W A Wood

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Nigel Carter	Service Manager - Finance and Commercial and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Martin Elliott	Constitutional Services Team Leader
Glen O'Connell	Monitoring Officer

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Councillors M Buckle, E J Lungley

1. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Purdue-Horan declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 4, Cases update 2016/17.

2. Notes of the Previous Meeting

The notes of the meeting held on Monday 27 June 2016 were accepted as a true record.

3. Cases update 2016/17

Councillor Purdue-Horan who had declared an interest in this item left the meeting at this point.

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report to update the Committee on the number of complaints regarding alleged breaches of the Councillor Code of Conduct received since July, 2016. The report also highlighted potential areas where training or education could assist Councillors' understanding of the Council's standards regime's requirements. It was noted by the Monitoring Officer that there had been no complaints submitted regarding Rushcliffe Borough Council Councillors in the last year.

It was AGREED that the report of the Monitoring Officer be noted.

4. Code of Conduct and Monitoring Officer issues for Town and Parish Councils

Councillor Purdue-Horan re-joined the meeting at this point.

The Monitoring Officer made a presentation to the Committee to provide an overview of Code of Conduct and Monitoring Officer issues for Town and Parish Councils.

The presentation provided information on:

- The Code of Conduct and its principles.
- The requirements of the Localism Act 2011 with regard to the registration of disclosable pecuniary interests by Councillors and how they impacted on the decisions involving Councillors.
- The difficulties of defining disclosable pecuniary interests when Town and Parish Councillors were considering Neighbourhood Plans.
- Standards of behaviour expected from Councillors and the importance of Councillors understanding that with a public role comes wide ranging responsibilities.
- The process of receiving and investigating complaints.
- The limitations of the sanctions that could be imposed under the standards regime and the need for a pragmatic and solution based approach to be taken when investigating complaints.
- The types of complaints that had been received by the Monitoring Officer, their potential causes and proposed solutions.

The Monitoring Officer advised that the significant changes to the Standards regime, which had been introduced under the Localism Act 2011, meant that the sanctions that could be applied to Councillors, as a result of a complaint being made and the subsequent investigation, were limited. The Monitoring Officer noted that a pragmatic approach to the resolution of complaints was sought where at all possible, as a full investigation and the imposition of a formal sanction, could in the long term make situations worse in Town and Parish Councils if working relationships were already strained. The Monitoring Officer stated that where possible a more informal approach to official sanctions was taken, such as in the provision of training or coaching, and was in most circumstances the most effective solution.

Members of the Committee were in agreement with the Monitoring Officer that the discussion of Neighbourhood Plans at Town and Parish Council level placed local Councillors in an extremely difficult position with regard to the declaration of disclosable pecuniary interests and asked whether the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) offered any guidance on the matter. The Monitoring Officer advised that this was something that he had raised with them; however, the definition and disclosure of disclosable pecuniary interests in these circumstances would still always be an area where extreme caution and sensitivity would be required. Members of the Committee agreed that it would, in the circumstances be very difficult for NALC to produce guidance that would cover all circumstances and satisfy all parties.

Mr John Baggaley, Rushcliffe Borough Council's Independent Person for Standards matters welcomed the Monitoring Officer's focus on promoting high standards of behaviour at Town and Parish Council meetings between

Councillors and noted that continued poor discipline in meetings could lead to a Council becoming dysfunctional and therefore any preventative action in this area was to be welcomed. The Chairman stated that whilst, in his experience, the majority of parish councils operated well, some Town and Parish Council Chairmen did not follow Standing Orders in Council meetings which led to disorderly conduct in meetings and that Town and Parish Clerks did not feel they had the support of the Chairmen to ensure Standing Orders were followed. The Chairman noted that training should be provided to both Chairmen and Clerks in the effective and correct procedures for conducting meetings.

The Committee considered what actions were needed, as well as the challenges that needed to be overcome to support Chairmen and Clerks in Town and Parish Councils to ensure Council meetings were delivered effectively and that mutual respect and good behaviour between Councillors was promoted and maintained. The Members of Committee were in agreement regarding to the Monitoring Officer's important role in maintaining good behaviour and promoting the Standards regime within Town and Parish Council's and welcomed the Monitoring Officer's recent appointment to the role.

It was AGREED that

- a) the presentation of the Monitoring Officer be noted.
- b) the Monitoring Officer submits a report outlining a proposed approach on delivering training for Town and Parish Chairman and Clerks to the next meeting of the Standards Committee.
- c) the next meeting of the Standards Committee be scheduled for October, 2017.

The meeting closed at 6.40pm.

Action Sheet
STANDARDS COMMITTEE - THURSDAY 20 JULY 2017

Minute Number	Actions	Officer Responsible
4	To submit a report outlining a proposed approach on delivering training for Town and Parish Chairman and Clerks to the next meeting of the Standards Committee	Monitoring Officer
4	To arrange a meeting of the Standards Committee for some time during October, 2017	Constitutional Services Team Leader in consultation with the Chairman.

Report of the Monitoring Officer

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report provides information on the number of complaints received since the implementation of the new standards regime from July 2012. It also aims to help in identifying areas where training or education may assist Councillors' understanding of the regime's requirements.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the report be noted.

3. Details

- 3.1. As previously reported to the Committee, in June 2012 Council agreed a Councillor Code of Conduct in line with provisions within the Localism Act 2011. It also agreed to retain a Standards Committee. Council requested that the Code and the Committee's role and terms of reference be reviewed after a year. At its meeting on 25 July 2013 the Standards Committee undertook this review and its report and recommendations were presented to Council in September 2013.
- 3.2. At its meeting in September 2013 Council upheld the Standards Committee's recommendations with no changes being made to the Committee's composition or terms of reference. In December 2013 Council agreed the appointment of John Baggaley as the Council's Independent Person for standards as required by the Localism Act. At the Standards Committee's request Mr Baggaley is invited to attend its meetings in order that he is aware of its role and work.
- 3.3. In relation to complaints received since the implementation of the existing standards regime (from the 1 July 2012), there have been a total of 45 cases. Details of these cases have been periodically reported to the Committee, with the last report in June, 2017.
- 3.4. Cases 01/13 to 1/17 were contained in the previous report to Committee considered in June 2017. The new cases received since the last report are set out in the table attached as **Appendix A**. Each of these cases have been dealt with by the Monitoring Officer giving due regard to the published Councillor Complaints Procedure. Where appropriate, the Independent Person has been consulted, however in one case the matter was not classed as a complaint about a Councillor due to the particular circumstances, for example it related to dissatisfaction with Council services or the Council's actions rather than the behaviour or conduct of a Councillor.

- 3.5. The table at **Appendix A** indicates the date of complaint, if it related to a Borough, Parish or Town Councillor, if the complaint was made by another Borough, Parish or Town Councillor and what action was taken to address the complaint.
- 3.6. Since the last report to the Committee a further 12 cases have been received, with five of these cases relating to Cotgrave Town Council and three to Bingham Town Council. The table highlights that three of the cases received have resulted in a decision to progress the complaints through the procedure after an initial assessment was carried out.

4. Training

- 4.1. During the year the Monitoring Officer has been available to provide support to questions raised by individuals. As reported at the last meeting the Monitoring Officer attended the Town and Parish Council forum on 16 June 2017. As part of his presentation the Monitoring Officer offered to arrange meetings with Parish and Town Councillors and following the last meeting of this committee is developing proposals for a programme of training and development for Town and Parish Chairmen and Clerks.

5. Implications

5.1. Finance

There are no direct financial implications.

5.2. Legal

There are no specific legal implications

5.3. Corporate Priorities

Delivery of an effective Standards regime supports the Council's priority of *'Maintaining and enhancing our residents' quality of life –Our residents'*

5.4. Other Implications

None


For more information contact:	Nigel Carter Deputy Monitoring Officer ncarter@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers Available for Inspection:	
List of appendices (if any):	Appendix A - Summary of Cases 2017/18

Appendix A

Summary of new cases from February 2017

Case Ref	Date received	RBC/Parish Council	Complainant	Independent Person consulted	Decision and date
1/17	23/1/17	Bingham Town Council	Town Councillor	Yes	Complaint rejected following initial appraisal 02/17
2/17	9/3/17	Newton Parish Council	Member of the public	No	Complaint raised issues about the Council corporately with no confirmation of complaints against specific Councillors 20/3/17
3/17	4/7/17	RBC/Newton Parish Council	Member of the public	No	Complaint rejected following initial appraisal
4/17	13/8/17	Cotgrave Town Council	Town Councillor	Yes	Complaint rejected following initial appraisal 4/9/17
5/17	13/8/17	Cotgrave Town Council	Town Councillor	Yes	Compliant withdrawn 28/8/17
6/17	13/8/17	Cotgrave Town Council	Town Councillor	Yes	Complaint rejected following initial appraisal 4/9/17
7/17	10/8/17	Bingham Town Council	Borough and Town Councillor	Yes	To be progressed through the procedure.

Case Ref	Date received	RBC/Parish Council	Complainant	Independent Person consulted	Decision and date
8/17	27/9/17	Bingham Town Council	Borough and Town Councillor	Yes	As above.
9/17	1/10/17	Bingham Town Council	Borough and Town Councillor	Yes	As above.
10/17	19/9/17	Cotgrave Town Council	Member of the public	Yes	Awaiting initial assessment decision
11/17	19/9/17	Cotgrave Town Council	Member of the public	Yes	As above
12/17	22/9/17	Stanford on Soar Parish Council	Member of the public	Yes	Complaint rejected following initial appraisal, but significant issues for the Parish Council to address.

 <p>Rushcliffe Borough Council</p>	<p>Standards Committee</p> <p>30 October 2017</p> <p>Disqualification Criteria for Councillors - Government Consultation</p>	<p>5</p>
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Report of the Monitoring Officer

1. Summary

This report describes a current government consultation on proposed legislative changes to extend the criteria for disqualification of councillors and invites the views of the committee upon them.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the proposals be supported and a response be given to DCLG: (1) agreeing to the proposals in Consultation questions 1 and 3 and, (2) confirming that, on balance, any significant effect the proposals may have on the discharge of Public Sector Equality Duties should be positive. The committee are invited to make any further comments they consider appropriate in relation to Consultation questions 2, 4 and 6.

3. Details

The government has commenced a consultation on updating and expanding the disqualification criteria for councillors. It is seeking responses, by 8 December 2017, to the Consultation questions set out in Appendix C.

3.1 Current Position

The current disqualification criteria are contained in section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972 and are summarised below.

A person is disqualified from standing as a candidate or being a member of a local authority if they:

- (1) are employed by the authority or a company under the control of the authority, or under the direction of various local authority committees and boards;
- (2) are subject to certain types of bankruptcy orders;
- (3) have, within 5 years before being elected, or at any time since, been convicted of any offence and received a sentence of imprisonment (suspended or not) for a period of not less than three months without the option of a fine;
- (4) are disqualified under Part III of the Representation of the People Act 1983 [election offences];

(5) are a teacher in a school maintained by the local authority.

3.2 Proposals

The government propose the following additional disqualification criteria in relation to sexual offences and anti-social behaviour

1. Sexual Offences

The government's proposals and consultation questions are set out in Appendix A. Essentially the government is seeking to extend disqualification to cover offenders who are the subject of "notification requirements" but not extending it to persons who have not been either convicted or have not received a caution (which involves an admission of guilt) in relation to a sexual offence. The inclusion of proven offenders is clearly sensible but differing views may be held over the proposal not to extend disqualification to persons who are subject to Sexual Risk Orders (see Appendix A) but the rationale for this is clearly based on the fact that, in these circumstances there has been no conviction or admission of guilt by the person and, hence, disqualification could be argued to breach their human rights.

2. Anti-Social Behaviour

The government's proposals are set out in Appendix B. Here the proposed disqualifications are the consequence of orders issued by the courts in respect of civil injunctions and criminal behaviour orders following convictions. A similar rationale has been applied to narrow the disqualification to where a court process and findings have been applied to anti-social behaviour. Queries were raised with DCLG over two issues:

- (a) whether a short-term injunction would have the effect of immediate disqualification of a sitting councillor? – DCLG confirmed that it was intended that this would cause an immediate disqualification of a sitting councillor but, on the expiry of the injunction the former councillor would, then, be able to stand as a candidate for election.
- (b) whether injunctions imposed as a result of behaviour outside the area of the relevant council would attract the disqualification? – DCLG confirmed that their intention was that it should.

3.3. General

The intention is that the new provisions will not be applied retrospectively. This is in line with normal legislative practice, and will mean that existing councillors will not become disqualified under one of the new criteria during their, then, current term of office but relevant sex offender notifications, injunctions and orders which were imposed prior to the new provisions coming into force, but which remain in effect, will act to disqualify the councillor from standing for re-election after the changes come into force.

The implications of the proposals for the Council’s Public Sector Equality Duties are difficult to predict or appraise but, if they contribute to an environment where there is greater confidence that Councillors’ elections and ongoing behaviour is subject to additional safeguards then any impact should be positive. One potential area for controversy would be where anti-social behaviour injunctions and orders have been imposed in respect of actions occurring within a politically contentious context.

4. Implications

4.1. Finance

There are no financial implications

4.2. Legal

The proposals will require amendments to primary legislation. No parliamentary timescale has been given for this.

4.3. Corporate Priorities

The quality and integrity of Councillor is essential to the effective functioning of the Council and delivery of its priorities and objectives. The introduction of the proposed disqualifications should enhance public confidence in councillors and candidates for that office.

4.4. Other Implications

None

For more information contact:	Glen O’Connell Monitoring Officer 0115 914 8332 GOconnell@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers Available for Inspection:	Emails to and from DCLG 11-13 October 2017
List of appendices (if any):	Appendix A - Proposals for Sexual Offences Appendix B - Proposals for Anti-Social Behaviour Appendix C - Consultation questions

Sexual Offences

10. The Government considers that anyone who is subject to sex offender notification requirements, commonly referred to as 'being on the sex offenders register', should be barred from standing for election, or holding office, as a local authority member, directly-elected mayor or member of the London Assembly. The period of time for which they would be barred would end once they were no longer subject to these notification requirements.

11. An individual can become subject to notification requirements by committing certain criminal acts or being issued with certain types of civil order:

- Being subject to sex offender notification requirements is an automatic consequence of being cautioned or convicted of a sexual offence listed in Schedule 3 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (see: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/schedule/3>).
- Sexual Harm Prevention Orders are civil orders intended to protect the public from offenders convicted of a sexual or violent offence who pose a risk of sexual harm to the public by placing restrictions on their behaviour. Offenders who are subject to Sexual Harm Prevention Orders become subject to notification requirements.
- Notification Orders are civil orders intended to protect the public in the UK from the risks posed by sex offenders who have been convicted, cautioned, warned or reprimanded for sexual offences committed overseas. Such offenders may be British or foreign nationals convicted, cautioned etc. abroad of a relevant offence. Offenders who are subject to Notification Orders become subject to notification requirements.

12. The duration of the notification requirement period (i.e. how long a person is on the sex offenders register) is set out in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and in the table below. The courts have no discretion over this.

Where the (adult) offender is:	The notification period is:
Sentenced to imprisonment for life or to a term of 30 months or more	An indefinite period
Detained in a hospital subject to a restriction order	An indefinite period
Sentenced to imprisonment for more than 6 months but less than 30 months imprisonment	10 years
Sentenced to imprisonment for 6 months or less	7 years
Detained in a hospital without being subject to a restriction order	7 years
Cautioned	2 years

Conditional discharge	The period of the conditional discharge
Any other description (i.e. community sentence, fine)	5 years

These periods are halved for offenders who are under 18 on the date of the caution, conviction or finding, as defined within the 2003 Act.

13. Offenders who are subject to the notification requirements must notify the police of (amongst other things) their: name, date of birth, national insurance number, home address, passport number, bank account and credit card details. They must do this annually, any time the details change or when they travel abroad. They must also notify the police when they stay or reside with a child for more than 12 hours.
14. Further information on the Sexual Offences Act 2003 can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-part-2-of-the-sexual-offences-act-2003>.
15. The Government does not propose including another type of civil order, the Sexual Risk Order, as this person would not have been convicted or cautioned of a sexual offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and are not subject to notification requirements for registered sex offenders. A Sexual Risk Order does require the individual to notify to the police their name and their home address. A Sexual Risk Order can be sought by the police against an individual who has not been convicted, cautioned etc. of an offence under Schedule 3 or Schedule 5 of the 2003 Act but who is nevertheless thought to pose a risk of harm to the public in the UK and/or children or vulnerable adults abroad.

Q1. Do you agree that an individual who is subject to the notification requirements set out in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (i.e. who is on the sex offenders register) should be prohibited from standing for election, or holding office, as a member of a local authority, mayor of a combined authority, member of the London Assembly or London Mayor?

Q2. Do you agree that an individual who is subject to a Sexual Risk Order should not be prohibited from standing for election, or holding office, as a member of a local authority, mayor of a combined authority, member of the London Assembly or London Mayor?

Anti-Social Behaviour

16. Anti-social behaviour blights people's lives and can leave victims feeling powerless. These are a range of powers to the courts, police and local authorities to tackle the problems in the table below.

17. The Government considers that an individual who is subject to an anti-social behaviour sanction that has been issued by the court, i.e. a Civil Injunction or a Criminal Behaviour Order, should be barred from standing for election, or holding office, as a local authority member, directly-elected mayor or member of the London Assembly. The period of time for which they would be barred would end once they were no longer subject to the injunction or Order.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Powers

Type	Power	Description
Issued by the court to deal with individuals	Civil Injunction	A civil order with a civil burden of proof. The injunction can include both prohibitions and positive requirements to tackle the underlying causes of the behaviour. Applications can be made by police, councils, social landlords, Transport for London, Environment Agency, Natural Resources Wales and NHS Protect.
	Criminal Behaviour Order	A court order available on conviction. The order can be issued by any criminal court against a person who has been convicted of an offence. It is aimed at tackling the most persistently anti-social individuals who are also engaged in criminal activity. The order can include both prohibitions and positive requirements. Applications are made by the prosecution, in most cases by the Crown Prosecution Service, either at its own initiative or following a request from the police or council.
Used by the police to move problem groups or individuals on	Dispersal Power	A flexible power which the police can use in a range of situations to disperse anti-social individuals and provide immediate short-term respite to a local community. It allows the police to deal instantly with someone's behaviour and prevent it escalating. The use of the power must be authorised by an officer of at least inspector rank, to be used in a specific locality for up to 48 hours or on a case by case basis. This is to ensure that the power is used fairly and proportionately and only in circumstances in which it is necessary.

Issued by councils, the police and social landlords to deal with problem places	Community Protection Notice	A notice designed to deal with particular problems which negatively affect the community's quality of life. The Notice can be issued to anyone aged 16 or over, businesses or organisations. This is a two-stage power and a written warning has to be issued first. Failure to stop the behaviour or take action to rectify the problem would lead to the notice being issued. The power can be used by councils, police and social landlords (if designated by the council).
	Public Spaces Protection Order	Designed to deal with anti-social behaviour in a public place and apply restrictions to how that public space can be used to stop or prevent anti-social behaviour. The order is issued by the council. Before the order can be made, the council must consult with the police and whatever community representatives they think appropriate, including regular users of the public space. Before the order is made the council must also publish the draft order.
	Closure Power	A fast and flexible two-stage power. Can be used to quickly close premises which are being used, or likely to be used, to commit nuisance or disorder, including residential, business and licensed premises. The police and councils are able to issue Closure Notices for up to 48 hours and the courts are able to issue Closure Orders for up to six months if satisfied that the legal tests have been met. Following the issue of a Closure Notice, an application must be made to the magistrates' court for a closure order.

Q3. Do you agree that an individual who has been issued with a Civil Injunction (made under section 1 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014) or a Criminal Behaviour Order (made under section 22 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014) should be prohibited from standing for election, or holding office, as a member of a local authority, mayor of a combined authority, member of the London Assembly or London Mayor?

Q4. Do you agree that being subject to a Civil Injunction or a Criminal Behaviour Order should be the only anti-social behaviour-related reasons why an individual should be prohibited from standing for election, or holding office, as a member of a local authority, mayor of a combined authority, member of the London Assembly or London Mayor?

Questions

Q1. Do you agree that an individual who is subject to the notification requirements set out in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (i.e. is on the sex offenders register) should be prohibited from standing for election, or holding office, as a member of a local authority, mayor of a combined authority, member of the London Assembly or London Mayor?

Q2. Do you agree that an individual who is subject to a Sexual Risk Order should not be prohibited from standing for election, or holding office, as a member of a local authority, mayor of a combined authority, member of the London Assembly or the London Mayor?

Q3. Do you agree that an individual who has been issued with a Civil Injunction (made under section 1 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014) or a Criminal Behaviour Order (made under section 22 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014) should be prohibited from standing for election, or holding office, as a member of a local authority, mayor of a combined authority, member of the London Assembly or London Mayor?

Q4. Do you agree that being subject to a Civil Injunction or a Criminal Behaviour Order should be the only anti-social behaviour-related reasons why an individual should be prohibited from standing for election, or holding office, as a member of a local authority, mayor of a combined authority, member of the London Assembly or London Mayor?

Q5. Do you consider that the proposals set out in this consultation paper will have an effect on local authorities discharging their Public Sector Equality Duties under the Equality Act 2010?

Q6. Do you have any further views about the proposals set out in this consultation paper?

Report of the Monitoring Officer

1. Purpose of the report

To consider initial proposals and an approach to developing a training programme for Town and Parish Councils in the Borough.

2. Recommendation

That the Committee consider and comment upon the initial proposals and approach and request a further report to their next meeting after the Town and Parish Forum meeting on 9 November 2017.

3. Supporting Evidence

A presentation was given to the Committee at their last meeting on Code of Conduct and Monitoring Officer issues for Town and Parish Councils in the Borough. The Committee requested a report outlining a proposed approach for delivering training for Town and Parish Chairmen and Clerks. In promoting training and development initiatives it is essential that the target market – here Town and Parish Council Chairmen and Clerks – positively relate to the offer, and that the offer reaches those that most need it. It is intended that a slot on the next Town and Parish Forum meeting, on 9 November 2017, is used to gain a view, through facilitated group work, on what are their key priorities for training and development, and how training and development resources and opportunities, through national bodies – the National Association of Local Councils (“NALC”) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (“SLLC”) – can be identified and marshalled, and how Borough Council in-house resources, and external resources can assist with this. The group work will be facilitated to make sure that the real issues are identified and the concerns previously discussed in this Committee are considered.

It is also important to recognise that attendees at the Forum are likely to be committed chairmen and clerks who have taken the time out to attend and facilitation will need to make sure the needs of those not attending are also addressed in discussions, with follow-up on the outputs from the forum circulated to all Town and Parish Clerks, requesting that it be considered at their next Council meeting and endorsed or commented upon accordingly, with a response then given to the Borough Council.

The involvement of the Forum may also provide a very helpful source of volunteers to become involved in the programme, through involvement in

training/development sessions and providing practical and local demonstrations of good practice in chairmanship and clerking.

Set out below are initial suggestions for topics for inclusion in the programme, together with potential resources:

1. Local Government Basics

- What is a town or parish council and what does it do
- How does it fit into the wider public sector context
- Legal framework
- Financial framework
- Elections and co-option
- Taking decisions properly
- The Code of Conduct
- [INPUT FROM FORUM SESSION]

Resources: NALC, SLCC materials, RBC officers

2. The role of the Chairman

- Forward planning
- Pre-meeting preparation
- Managing the meeting, including gaining full participation
- Post-meeting actions
- Managing yourself and understanding your impact on others
- Relationships with officers
- The wider role
- Difficult issues [INPUT FROM FORUM SESSION]

Resources: NALC, SLCC materials, RBC officers, general management training resources and external resource

3. The role of the Clerk (and Proper officer/Finance Officer)

- Roles and responsibilities to the Council and externally
- General work – sufficiency of knowledge and capacity – including acting as a manager of a small business
- Pre-meeting preparation and formalities - development and use of best practice flowcharts
- Helping manage the meeting
- Managing the relationships with the chairman and all councillors
- Using support from NALC, SLCC and the Borough Council effectively
- Difficult issues [DRAWN FROM FORUM SESSION AND ISSUES ENCOUNTERED THROUGH STANDARDS CASES]

Resources: NALC, SLCC materials, RBC officers, general management training resources and external resource.

As indicated, there are a variety of resources available with resources and materials held by the national bodies, which can be used to develop sessions locally, and those bodies also provide training directly. Some of the issues likely to be of concern to chairmen and clerks are not unique to local government, e.g., issues with chairing meetings and dealing with differing and difficult personalities are common to most employment sectors, and there is a wealth of general management material dealing with this.

Funding the programme will be an important issue but, at this stage, should not deter the development of ideas. Key sensitivities for the programme include ensuring that it provides what Rushcliffe's Towns and Parishes want and need, whilst co-ordinating with material and resources available from NALC and SLCC and not conflicting with them or replicating their work; hence, early liaison with, and involvement from, the Nottinghamshire branch of NALC will be sought.

NALC, with funding and support from the Improvement and Development Board, have recently developed the "Local Council Award Scheme" which is, essentially, a quality standard for Town and Parish councils. It is a matter for each Town and Parish Council as to whether they want to participate in this initiative, but it would make sense for any training programme for Rushcliffe Towns and Parishes to be developed with a clear linkage to the components of that Award Scheme, so that it may be seen as a strong source of support for Councils wishing to participate in that scheme.

4. Implications

4.1. Finance:

The initial development of the programme will not, in itself, involve additional expenditure, but will need to identify any additional resources it may require before any commitment is made to deliver it.

4.2. Legal:

The delivery of a training and development programme for Town and Parish councils should help ensure they conduct themselves effectively and in accordance with legal requirements.

4.3. Corporate Priorities:

The proposed programme should help Town and Parish Councils to perform their functions more effectively and should generally improve liaison with the Borough Council.

For more information contact:	Glen O'Connell Monitoring Officer 0115 914 8332 GOConnell@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers Available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices (if any):	None