

Monitoring Officer Update

SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of current work involving the Monitoring Officer.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To note the report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The report provides information to the Committee on current and recent work undertaken by, or involving, the Monitoring Officer.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 In April 2018, Glen O'Connell was appointed as Interim Monitoring Officer. Set out below is a summary of current work undertaken by, or involving, the current Monitoring Officer.

4.2 New Standards Regime

On 27 March 2018 the Standards Committee considered a report on Process for Handling Complaints about Councillors. Following consideration of several options, a preferred option was considered. The committee made some changes to the proposals and recommended a finalised model to Council for its consideration.

The following recommendations were adopted by Council at its meeting on 23 May 2018:

1. To approve the adoption of a new Councillor Complaints Procedure.
2. To approve the adoption of a new Complaints Form.
3. To request that all political groups will establish or review their own Group Complaints Procedures to ensure they are able to deal with complaints that fall outside of the new Procedure.
4. To disapply the necessity for political balance on the Standards Committee as a permitted 'exception', and that the Standards Committee shall henceforward have a composition of:
 - one member per political group on the council;
 - one place reserved for ungrouped members (there are presently none).

5. To approve a variation of Council Procedure Rule CP101 such that appointed members of the Standards Committee are permitted to send group colleagues to attend as substitute members on their behalf.
6. To appoint Mr Peter Purnell and Mr Philip Sunderland as independent persons to the Standards Committee and to establish an Independent Person Advisory Panel.

These new arrangements are to be reviewed in the latter stages of the 2018/19 municipal year.

It is hoped that the new procedures will mark a fresh start for the Standards regime in Derby, with an enhanced independent presence within the procedure and expectations upon political groups to play a key part in dealing with conduct issues. To date only one complaint has been received under the new procedure and this is at an early stage, so a review later in this municipal year, by which time there may be more experience, is sensible.

4.3 Referrals to the Monitoring Officer relating to Taxi Licensing issues

Any instances of Member interference with Taxi Licensing are recorded and reported to the Monitoring Officer. The Interim Monitoring Officer has not received any reports since April 2018 which have required his active involvement or referral to the Standards Committee.

4.4 Governance Changes

The proposal to move to a committee system governance model has major constitutional implications for the Council. A project governance structure has been established to develop and progress the proposals, with the Interim Monitoring Officer playing a key role in developing the new governance model, considering the consequential changes needed to the Constitution and then drafting those changes.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 N/A

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer	Glen O'Connell – Interim Monitoring Officer, 01332 643775 glen.o'connell@derby.gov.uk
Financial officer	N/A
Human Resources officer	N/A
Estates/Property officer	N/A
Service Director(s)	N/A
Other(s)	N/A
For more information contact:	Steven Mason 01332 643653 steven.mason@derby.gov.uk
Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

1.1 None directly arising.

Legal

2.1 None directly arising.

Personnel

3.1 None directly arising.

Equalities Impact

4.1 None directly arising.

Health and Safety

5.1 None directly arising.

Environmental Sustainability

6.1 None directly arising.

Property and Asset Management

7.1 None directly arising.

Risk Management

8.1 None directly arising.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

9.1 This report has the potential to link with all the Council's Corporate Objectives.