

Subject:	Localism Bill Update	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Standards Committee	Date:	21 st June 2011
Report of:	Director of Business	Portfolio Holder:	Finance and Resources
Key Decision:	No <input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Community Impact Assessment:	Required: No	Attached:	No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required: No	Attached:	No
Contact Officer:	Stuart Sugarman	Telephone:	01706 252447
Email:	stUARTSUGARMAN@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1.	RECOMMENDATION(S)
1.1	That members note the content of the report.
1.2	That members decide on one of the following courses of action: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To maintain the status quo until the next committee. 2. To form a sub-group to discuss alternative arrangements and present a range of options to the next committee.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To update members on the progress of the Localism Bill through Parliament and to provide an update on the implications for Standards Committees across England.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:
- **Responsive and value for money local services** – responding to and meeting the different needs of customers and improving the cost effectiveness of services.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:
- There is a risk that the Council will not have alternative arrangements in place when Standards for England is abolished in early 2012.

5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 5.1 The Localism Bill will abolish Standards for England. It is currently in its second reading in the House of Lords and is expected to receive Royal Assent in late Summer 2011.
- 5.2 The Bill is intended to devolve greater powers to local authorities, and in particular, will mean abolishing Standards for England, the model code of conduct, and introducing local accountability and a criminal offence of deliberate failure to declare a personal interest in a matter.
- 5.3 A report was tabled at the Standards Committee in January 2011, and it was resolved that no action be taken pending further information and a possible consultation period from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG). However, whilst searching for consultation documents on the DCLG website, it was apparent that no consultation was planned; therefore there would be little point in continuing with a Consultation Response Group.

- 5.4 It is proposed that a working group comprising of the Chair, a Parish Council representative and 2 elected members be created, which will explore alternative possibilities in more detail and present a report to the next committee for consideration.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

6. SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from the report.

7. MONITORING OFFICER

- 7.1 Any legal implications raised are included in the body of the report.

8. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

- 8.1 There are no HR implications.

9. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 9.1 None

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 It is important that arrangements are in place before the abolition of Standards for England and members are requested to consider ideas for alternative arrangements.

Background Papers

Document	Place of Inspection
Report to the Standards Committee in January 2011.	http://www.rossendale.gov.uk/site/scripts/meetings_info.php?meetingID=522
The Localism Bill	http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/lbill/2010-2012/0071/2012071pt1.pdf