



Dinas a Sir Abertawe

Hysbysiad o Gyfarfod

Fe'ch gwahoddir i gyfarfod

Pwyllgor Safonau

Lleoliad: Cyfarfod Aml-Leoliad - Ystafell Gloucester, Neuadd y Ddinas / MS Teams

Dyddiad: Dydd Gwener, 22 Mawrth 2024

Amser: 10.00 am

Cadeirydd: Mike Lewis

Aelodaeth:

Cynghorwyr: O G James, M B Lewis a/ac L G Thomas

Cynghorydd Cymuned: Carlo Rabaiotti

Aelodau Cyfetholedig: Michaela Jones, Janet Pardue-Wood, Mark Rees a/ac Margaret Williams

Gwyltio ar-lein: <http://tiny.cc/SC22ma>

Agenda

Rhif y Dudalen.

- 1 Ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb.**
- 2 Datgeliadau o fuddiannau personol a rhagfarnol.**
www.abertawe.gov.uk/DatgeluCysylltiadau
- 3 Cofnodion.** **1 - 3**
Cymeradwyo a llofnodi, fel cofnod cywir, gofnodion y cyfarfod blaenorol.
- 4 Dyletswydd Arweinwyr y Grwpiau.** **4 - 18**
10.05 am – Y Cynghorydd Lyndon Jones
10.20 am – Y Cynghorydd Peter May
10.35 am – Y Cynghorydd Chris Holley
- 5 Adolygu Cynlluniau Hyfforddi Cynghorau Cymuned a Thref.** **19 - 21**
- 6 Torri Cod Ymddygiad - Cwynion a wnaed i Ombwdsmon Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus Cymru. (Er gwybodaeth)** **22**

Huw Evans

Huw Evans
Pennaeth y Gwasanaethau Democraidd
Dydd Gwener, 15 Mawrth 2024

Cyswllt: Gwasanaethau Democraidd

Cynghorwyr Llafur: 2

Oliver G James	Mike B Lewis
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Cynghorydd y Democraidiaid Rhyddfrydol 1

L Graham Thomas

Aelodau annibynnol

Enw	Cyfnod y Swydd	Enw	Cyfnod y Swydd
Michaela Jones	01.10.2017 i 30.09.2023 Ail-benodwyd 30.09.2027	Mike Lewis	01.10.2017 i 30.09.2023 Ail-benodwyd 30.09.2027
Janet Pardue-Wood	24.05.2022 i 23.05.2028	Mark Rees	19.10.2022 i 18.10.2028
Margaret Williams*	01.04.2015 i 31.03.2021 Ail-benodwyd i 31.03.2025		

Cynghorydd Cymuned:

Name	Term of Office
Carlo Rabaiotti	06.10.2022 tan Etholiadau Llywodraeth Leol nesaf 2027

SYLWER:

- * Mae'n dynodi na all **cyfnod y swydd gael ei ymestyn ymhellach**.
- Gall **cyfnod Aelod Annibynnol yn ei swydd** fod o leiaf 4 blynedd ac nid mwy na 6 blynedd. Gall gael ei ailbenodi am un cyfnod olynol arall ond ni all y cyfnod hwnnw fod am fwy na 4 blynedd.
- Bydd gan **Aelodau'r Awdurdod Lleol/Cynghorwyr Cymuned/ Tref** sy'n aelodau o'r Pwyllgor Safonau gyfnod swydd nad yw'n fwy na 4 blynedd neu bydd yn dod i ben yn ystod etholiad cyffredinol nesaf y llywodraeth leol yn dilyn eu hetholiad, p'un bynnag sy'n fyrrach.
- Ni fydd y Pwyllgor Safonau **yn mynd rhagddo os bydd nifer yr Aelodau Annibynnol yn llai na nifer y Cynghorwyr**. Bydd Cynghorydd yn gadael y cyfarfod er mwyn trafod y busnes.
- Dim ond un Aelod Gweithredol (ac eithrio'r Arweinydd) sy'n gallu eistedd ar Bwyllgor Safonau.

Agenda Item 3



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Standards Committee**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Friday, 19 January 2024 at 10.00 am

Present: Mike Lewis (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)
M B Lewis

Councillor(s)
L G Thomas

Co-opted Member(s)
Carlo Rabaiotti
Michaela Jones

Co-opted Member(s)
Janet Pardue-Wood
Mark Rees

Officer(s)
Huw Evans
Allison Lowe
Adrian Jeremiah

Head of Democratic Services
Democratic Services Officer
Lead Lawyer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): O G James

Independent Member(s): N/A

9 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City & County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

10 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Standards Committee held on 13 October 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

11 Standards Committee Annual Report 2022-2023.

The Head of Democratic Services presented the Standards Committee Annual Report 2022-2023. The report described how the Committee's functions had been discharged during the previous year.

Resolved that:

- 1) The report be approved and forwarded to Council for information.

12 Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Report and Accounts 2022/2023.

The Head of Democratic Services provided a "For Information" report in relation to the Annual Report & Accounts of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales 2022/23.

13 Review of Standards Committee Hearings Procedure.

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report in order to review the Standards Committee Hearings Procedure.

The Standards Committee made several recommendations to improve the Hearings Procedure.

Resolved that:

- 1) The report be approved subject to the following amendments:
 - a) A sentence be added regarding disclosure of documents for the Committee bundle be received within 5 clear working days prior to publication of the agenda pack;
 - b) A paragraph be added, requiring all participants to affirm that their statement is the truth to the best of their knowledge;
 - c) Paragraph 13.1 be revised to read "The Committee will announce its decision on the day where possible. A full written decision with reasons supporting the decision.....";
 - d) Page numbers and version control be added;
 - e) A paragraph relating to "Representation" be added.
- 2) The revised Hearings Procedure be circulated to the Committee by email.

14 Breach of Code of Conduct - Complaints made to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW). (For Information)

The Head of Democratic Services provided a "For Information" report to update the Standards Committee on decisions made by the PSOW in relation to allegations that Local Authority and Community / Town Councillors had breached the Code of Conduct.

15 Workplan 2023-2024.

The Chair presented the Work Plan 2023-2024.

Resolved that:

- 1) The Work plan be noted;
- 2) Topics for the 2024-2025 Work Plan be forwarded to the Chair in advance of the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 10.51 am

Chair

Agenda Item 4



Report of the Monitoring Officer

Standards Committee – 22 March 2024

Group Leader Duty

Purpose:	To meet with political Group Leaders and discuss how they maintain high standards of behaviour within their group.
Policy Framework:	Standards Committee Terms of Reference – Council Constitution.
Consultation:	Legal, Access to Services and Finance.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that the Standards Committee: 1) Discuss with political Group Leaders how they continue to comply with the duty to maintain high standards of behaviour within their Group.
Report Author:	Adrian Jeremiah
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Adrian Jeremiah
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Background

1.1 At the Standards Committee meeting on 24 June 2022 the Committee resolved that:

- The Committee meets formally with the Group Leaders on an annual basis
- The Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee meet with the Group Leaders on an informal basis to monitor their compliance with the duty
- That a template report is drafted to be sent to Group Leaders to complete in terms of members of their group who have attended training (mandatory and recommended) and any steps they have taken during the year to promote high standards within their group.

1.2 Themes for discussion were circulated to Group Leaders and are attached at Appendix A.

2. Duty of Group Leaders

- 2.1 The duty of group leaders is to take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members of the group. This could include leading by example, using their influence to create a positive culture, being proactive in promoting high standards of behaviour within their group, addressing issues as soon as they arise and working with the Monitoring Officer for early advice and guidance.
- 2.2 Attached at Appendix B is the Guidance on Group Leader duties from Welsh Government.

3. Integrated Impact Assessment

3.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

3.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

3.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

3.4 An IIA Screening Form has been completed with the agreed outcome that a full IIA report is not required as there are no integrated impact implications.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications associated with the report.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Background Papers:

None

Appendices:

Appendix A – Themes for Discussion.

Appendix B – Welsh Government Statutory Guidance on duties of leaders of political groups in relation to standards of conduct.

Question 1 – The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act provides that Leaders of political groups must take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members of their group. We are interested to hear as to what actions you take now in terms of maintaining standards within your own group and how are you proposing to meet the new duty going forward?

Question 2 – The Standards Committee also has new functions under the Act to ensure that group leaders have access to advice and training to support their new duties and to monitor group leaders' compliance with those duties. Is there any support that you feel would be beneficial either from the Standards Committee/Chief Executive/Monitoring Officer in carrying out your duty and whether we can assist you in any way.

Statutory Guidance on duties of leaders of political groups in relation to standards of conduct

Status of this Guidance

This is statutory guidance issued under section 52A of Local Government Act 2000 (the 2000 Act) inserted by section 62 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (the 2021 Act).

Purpose of this Guidance

This guidance sets out how leaders of political groups in principal councils should meet their duties contained in section 52A of the Local Government Act 2000 (“the 2000 Act”), inserted by section 62, of the 2021 Act, which relates to the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct by the members of the group.

This guidance is designed to support leaders of political groups understand and discharge their duties in relation to high standards of conduct, whilst recognising that they will wish to and should be encouraged to develop their own approach in line with their wider statutory obligations, local circumstances, and best practice. However, the basic principles set out in the guidance should apply to all.

This guidance specifically addresses the following duties:

Duty to take reasonable steps to promote and maintain

high standards of conduct by the members of the group

Section 52A(1)(a) of the 2000 Act requires that a leader of a political group consisting of members of a county council or county borough council in Wales, must take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members of the group.

Duty to co-operate with the council's standards committee (and any sub-committee) in the exercise of the standards committee's functions

Section 52A(1)(b) of the 2000 Act requires that a leader of a political group consisting of members of a county council or county borough council in Wales, must co-operate with the council's standards committee (and any sub-committee of the committee) in the exercise of the standards committee's functions.

This guidance refers specifically to these duties on a leader of a political group, and sets out the expectations on how they will perform these duties. All of the duties apply from 5 May 2022.

There are other provisions within Part 3 of the 2000 Act relating to standards committees, inserted by sections 62 and 63 of the 2021 Act. These aspects of the 2021 Act are also described in this guidance.

This guidance is set out as follows:

- policy context within which the duties are set and the purpose of the duties
- duty to take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members of the group
- duty to co-operate with the council's standards committee (and any sub-committee) in the exercise of the standards committee's functions

Policy context and purpose of the duties set out in section 52A of the Local Government Act 2000

Policy context

Part 3 of the 2000 Act established a statutory framework to promote and maintain high standards of ethical conduct by members and employees of relevant authorities in Wales. A 'relevant authority' is a county or county borough council ("a principal council"), community council, fire and rescue authority, a national park authority and a Corporate Joint Committee.

The framework consists of the 10 general principles of conduct for members (derived from Lord Nolan's 'Seven Principles of Public Life'), set out below:

- Selflessness.
- Honesty.
- Integrity and propriety.
- Duty to uphold the law.
- Stewardship.
- Objectivity in decision-making.
- Equality and respect.
- Openness.
- Accountability.
- Leadership.

These are included in the statutory Model Code of Conduct ("the Code") (as required under section 50 of the 2000 Act), which lays down a set of enforceable minimum standards for the way in which members should conduct themselves, both in terms of their official capacity and (in some instances) in their personal capacity. It also guides members on the declaration and registration of interests. All elected members must familiarise themselves with and give a written undertaking to observe the Code before they can take up office. As the Code may from time to time be updated members must familiarise themselves with

any changes with which they are required to observe.

Watch a video on:

- [the local authority ethical standards framework in Wales](#)
- [how councillors should behave and interact with people](#)
- [how to complain about a councillor in Wales](#)

Building on the existing arrangements, section 62 of the 2021 Act inserts a new section 52A into the 2000 Act which places a duty on leaders of political groups within a principal council to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members of their group. Group leaders are required to co-operate with the council's standards committee in the exercise of its general and specific functions for promoting high standards (see below).

Subsection (3) amends section 54 of the 2000 Act to extend the specific functions of a standards committee to include monitoring compliance by leaders of political groups with the new duty imposed on them by the 2021 Act to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members of their group. A standards committee must also provide advice or provide or arrange training for group leaders on the new duty.

Purpose of the standards of conduct provisions

The ethical standards framework in Wales aims to promote the observance of consistent standards of conduct by local government members. High ethical standards underpin and maintain public confidence in democratic governance and the decision making process. For any organisation to be effective it must respect diversity in all its forms and treat everyone with the respect they would expect for themselves. Engendering a culture within a principal council which embraces high standards of conduct, requires both local leadership and all elected members to accept responsibility and accountability for their actions both individually and collectively.

The standards of conduct provisions in the 2021 Act complement the existing statutory ethical framework and support the Code of Conduct process. The provisions are designed to ensure leaders of political groups in principal councils, supported by standards committees, promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members of their group.

The wider environment in which the standards of conduct duties operate

The standards of conduct provisions contained in the 2021 Act support the Welsh Government's wider commitment to equality and diversity in public life. Action has been taken through the Diversity in Democracy Programme to tackle the barriers which prevent individuals' active participation in local democracy. Within local government, and through the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), there has been a commitment to Diversity in Democracy, including councils signing Diverse Council declarations which seek, amongst other actions, to ensure councils 'demonstrate an open and welcoming culture to all'. Furthermore, the WLGA, working with the Local Government Association (LGA), Northern Ireland Local Government association (NILGA) and the Scottish body, COSLA, has been promoting the Civility in Public Life programme, which seeks to promote civil, constructive and respectful political discourse.

The Anti Racist Wales Action Plan sets out a series of goals and actions designed to improve the outcomes for black, Asian and minority ethnic people in Wales. It includes a number of goals and actions for local government relating to its leadership and representation role. It recognises that a more diverse elected representation is good for decision making and likely to lead to decisions which better reflect society as a whole. This in turn contributes to greater public confidence.

Duty to take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members of the group

Introduction

This is statutory guidance issued under section 52A of the Local Government Act 2000 (the 2000 Act) as amended by section 62 of the Local Government and Elections Act 2021 (the 2021 Act). This section of the guidance should be read by a leader of a political group in a principal council to support the discharge of their duties in section 52A of the 2000 Act, to take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members of the group. The guidance here reflects the minimum requirements, recognising that leaders are best placed to build on this to develop the detail of their own approach, and work together to share best practice across political groups and with standards committees.

Definition of political groups and group leaders

Section 52A(3) of the 2000 Act enables the Welsh Ministers to make provision in regulations about the circumstances in which (a) members of a county council or county borough council in Wales are to be treated as constituting a political group; (b) a member of a political group is to be treated as a leader of the group.

The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, made under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, currently governs the position in this respect, until such time as regulations passed under 52A(3) of the 2000 Act are made.

Section 52A(1)(a) of the 2000 Act requires that a leader of a political group consisting of members of a county council or county borough council in Wales, must take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members of the group.

The duty does not make leaders of a political group accountable for the behaviour of their members as conduct must be a matter of individual responsibility and accountability. However, they do have a role in taking

reasonable steps in maintaining high standards, setting an example, using their influence to support a positive culture, being proactive in promoting high standards of conduct in their group and addressing issues of alleged non-compliance as soon as they arise.

Reasonable steps the group leader may undertake include:

- demonstrating personal commitment to and attending and participating in relevant development or training around equalities and standards, including on the Code of Conduct
- actively encouraging group members to attend relevant development or training around equalities and standards including in relation to the Code of Conduct
- ensuring nominees to a committee have received the recommended training for participating on that committee
- promoting modelling civility and respect within group communications and meetings and in formal council meetings
- supporting informal resolution procedures in the council, and working with the standards committee and monitoring officers to achieve local resolution
- encouraging a culture within the group which supports high standards of conduct and integrity
- attend a meeting of the council's standards committee if requested to participate in discussions on Code of Conduct issues
- drive forward work to implement any recommendations from the standards committee about improving standards
- work with the standards committee to proactively identify, consider and tackle patterns of inappropriate behaviour
- work together with other group leaders, within reason, to collectively support high standards of conduct within the council and where any issues identified involve more than one political group

As set out above, the purpose of the new duties is to build on and support a culture which is proactive, acts on and does not tolerate inappropriate behaviour. The Guidance from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales for members on the Code of Conduct provides advice on the Code and its requirements. It

includes examples of cases considered by the Ombudsman and decisions reached by local standards committees and the Adjudication Panel for Wales which demonstrate behaviours which are unreasonable or inappropriate. Leaders of political groups and all members, including independent members, should have regard to the Ombudsman's Guidance, which can be accessed on the [Ombudsman's website](#).

The importance of attendance at training on the Code of Conduct has been highlighted by the Ombudsman and was raised under the independent review of the Ethical Standards Framework and Model Code of Conduct carried out by Richard Penn. Leaders of political groups should actively encourage all members in their group to read the Ombudsman's Guidance and any local guidance issued by the monitoring officer or standards committee and to take up any offer of training. They should also work constructively with standards committees and monitoring officers to identify the training requirements for themselves and for their group members.

It is essential that relationships with members are established which encourage them to raise issues with the group leader. The group leader has a significant role to play in creating a culture of trust and mutual respect in their group. Where issues arise, the importance of resolving low-level complaints at a local level has been raised by the Ombudsman and the independent Review of the Framework. Typically, these complaints are about alleged failures to show respect and consideration for others and the making of frivolous and low-level complaints. The group leader should be pivotal in preventing the escalation of these complaints to the stage where more formal interventions become necessary. Leaders of political groups should have informal discussions with members who may be showing early signs of inappropriate behaviour to 'nip this in the bud' before it becomes problematic or in danger of breaching the Code. This may include suggesting and requesting appropriate training or refresher training for the members concerned, asking for social media posts they have made to be removed, and requesting they apologise where appropriate.

A leader of a political group who fails to comply with the new duty in a meaningful way, may potentially be regarded as bringing their office into

disrepute, and likely to be in breach of the Code (see the Ombudsman's Guidance).

Political group leaders will want to ensure they are able to evidence the steps they have taken to help create an environment in which members demonstrate appropriate standards of behaviour, undertake appropriate training and address, with members, instances where standards of behaviour falls short of that expected. It is a matter for individual group leaders how they choose to evidence their compliance with this guidance, but it may include notes of meetings, copies of correspondence, audits of member training on issues such as equality and the Code of Conduct and action taken to address any gaps in that training.

A political group's internal disciplinary procedures remain a matter for that group or any associated political party's own rules on discipline. However, it is expected that the group leader will take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members within group communications and meetings as well as their 'public' conduct outside of the group setting.

Duty to co-operate with the council's standards committee (and any sub-committee) in the exercise of the standards committee's functions

Introduction

This section of guidance is issued under section 52A of the Local Government Act 2000 (the 2000 Act) as amended by section 62 of the Local Government and Elections Act 2021 (the 2021 Act). It is about the duty to co-operate with the council's standards committee (and any sub-committee) in the exercise of the standards committee's functions within section 52A of the 2000 Act.

The duties came into force on 5 May 2022.

Duty

Section 52A(1)(b) of the 2000 Act requires that a leader of a political group consisting of members of a county council or county borough council in Wales, must co-operate with the council's standards committee (and any sub-committee of the committee) in the exercise of the standards committee's functions.

Role of leader of political group

It is essential the leaders of a political group co-operate, and ensure the members within their group co-operate, with the monitoring officer and standards committee when an issue is referred to the standards committee.

Leaders of a political group should build good relations, and work constructively with the monitoring officer, seeking advice from them and the standards committee on matters of behaviour and conduct when required, both promoting positive behaviours and addressing inappropriate ones. Group leaders should also report compliance with their duty to the standards committee. This can take the form of a short letter or report at a frequency agreed by the political group leaders in the council and its standards committee. Group leaders should also report any serious concerns about members' behaviour which have not been remedied by informal actions, in line with the requirement in the Code of Conduct to report such breaches.

At the beginning of each council year Political group leaders should meet with the standards committee to agree the following:

- how group leaders and the standards committee will work together to ensure appropriate standards of behaviour
- frequency of meetings between group leaders and the standards committee throughout the year
- the threshold which the standards committee will use to establish whether it is content that political group leaders have complied with the duties of the

2021 Act

- the mechanism for political group leaders to provide reports to the standards committee about the actions they have taken to comply with the duties within the 2021 Act

If a member is found by the standards committee to be in breach of the Code of Conduct and is disciplined by the committee, the leader of the political group must support the action, in order to maintain the high standards of conduct expected in public life and the Code. Group leaders should observe the Ombudsman's Guidance and the Sanctions Guidance issued by the President of the Adjudication Panel for Wales, which can be accessed on the [Adjudication Panel's website](#).

Statutory Guidance on the Functions of Standards Committees

Status of this guidance

This guidance is issued under; section 54(7) of the Local Government Act 2000 (the 2000 Act) inserted by section 63 of Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act (the 2021 Act).

The duties came into force on 5 May 2022.

Purpose of this guidance

Local standards committees play an important role in supporting members, individually and collectively, to develop and maintain a culture which embraces high standards of conduct.

A principal council is required by section 53 of the 2000 Act to establish a standards committee.

Agenda Item 5



Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Standards Committee - 22 March 2024

Review of Community & Town Council Training Plans

Purpose:	To review the publication of Community & Town Council Training Plan.
Policy Framework:	Standards Committee Terms of Reference – Council Constitution.
Consultation:	Legal, Access to Services and Finance.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) The update be noted.
Report Author:	Huw Evans
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Standards Committee has previously voiced some concerns around the level of training available to Community / Town Councillors in complying with the Code of Conduct particularly when dealing with financial matters.
- 1.2 Section 67 of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires Community & Town Councils to make and publish a plan about the training provision for its Councillors and staff. Community / Town Councils had to publish their first training plan by 5 November 2022. The Training Plan must also be published electronically when approved.

2. Community & Town Councils Training Plans

- 2.1 Welsh Government produced draft guidance for Community / Town Councils as to the contents of a Training Plan which may include:
 - i) Reflecting on, and addressing, whether the Council collectively has the skills and knowledge it needs to deliver its plans most effectively.
 - ii) Identifying areas which all Councils should ensure that they have sufficient skills and understanding i.e. Code of Conduct, Financial Management, Governance and Councillor Induction.

- iii) Broader training i.e. shadowing more experienced Councillors.
- iv) Training needs assessments.

- 2.2 Similarly One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks have produced Guidance on Preparing a Council's Training Plan including a model Training Plan template.
- 2.3 In 2023, the Monitoring Officer wrote to Community / Town Councils asking them to send copies of their Training Plans when approved by their Councils. The Standards Committee should note that it is a matter for individual Community / Town Councils to approve their Training Plans and not the Standards Committee.
- 2.4 Community / Town Councils should regularly review whether there are opportunities to improve their administration and governance so that they are better able to perform their responsibilities and serve their communities.
- 2.5 The Standards Committee considered a report relating to Community & Town Council Training Plans on 22 March 2023. The report was noted, and the Committee wished to review the Training Plans item, six months later.

3. Review of Community & Town Councils Training Plans

- 3.1 The Head of Democratic Services has written to all Community / Town Councils seeking an update on their Training Plans. 23 of the 24 Community / Town Councils within the Swansea Council state that they have adopted and published their Training Plans.
- 3.2 Llangennith, Llanmadoc & Cheriton Community Council have drafted their Training Plan which is currently out for consultation. Their Council will consider adopting it on 3 April 2024.

4. Integrated Impact Assessment

- 4.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage.
 - Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.
 - Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
 - Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

- 4.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.
- 4.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also considers other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.
- 4.4 An IIA Screening Form has been completed and no adverse implications have been noted.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications associated with the report.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 The legal implications associated with this report are set out within it.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices: None.

Agenda Item 6



Report of the Monitoring Officer

Standards Committee – 22 March 2024

Breach of Code of Conduct - Complaints made to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW)

The Committee is advised of the following decisions by the PSOW in relation to allegations that Local Authority and Community and Town Councillors have breached the Code of Conduct.

Name of Council / Councillor	Name of Complainant	Ombudsman Reference	Result of Investigation and date of the current situation
Mawr CC	Public	202307148	PSOW not investigating