



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Standards Committee**

Committee Room 5 - Guildhall, Swansea

Friday, 12 January 2018 at 9.35 am

**Present:** Jill Burgess (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

J A Hale

**Councillor(s)**

L G Thomas

**Co-opted Member(s)**

Philip Crayford  
Gareth Evans

**Co-opted Member(s)**

Michaela Jones  
Mike Lewis

**Co-opted Member(s)**

Margaret Williams

**Officer(s)**

Huw Evans  
Allison Lowe  
Tracey Meredith

Head of Democratic Services  
Democratic Services Officer  
Head of Legal, Democratic Services and Business  
Intelligence and Monitoring Officer

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): None

Independent Member(s): None

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**21 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.**

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

**22 Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Standards Committee held on 13 October 2017 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**Matters Arising:**

**Minute 15 - Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) Annual Report for 2016/17**

Following an instruction from the Committee, the Monitoring Officer had spoken to the PSOW Office for guidance as to how much detail could be presented to Standards Committee in relation to complaints. The Monitoring Officer advised that other authorities had asked for similar guidance. The table of complaints was later on the agenda. Further guidance may be forthcoming.

### **Minute 16 - Code of Conduct Casebook**

In addition to the above, the Monitoring Officer had written to the PSOW in relation to the 2 cases they felt should have been referred back to the Standards Committee, as they had originally considered applications for dispensation to the Councillors concerned.

The Ombudsman had responded that unfortunately they were unable to expand on these cases, however, in order to be helpful a Public Interest factsheet had been published at the end of December. A copy was circulated to the Committee Members.

### **23 Community / Town Councils who have adopted the Model Local Resolution Protocol.**

Following approval and encouragement from the Standards Committee, the Monitoring Officer had written to all the Community / Town Council Clerks inviting them to adopt the Model Local Resolution Protocol guidance provided by One Voice Wales.

The Monitoring Officer provided a list of the responses received from the Community / Town Councils.

Out of 24 Community / Town Councils, 18 had adopted the protocol. 3 would be discussing the protocol at their next meeting, 1 (Llangennith, Llanmadoc & Cheriton Community Council) had no plans to adopt it and 2 (Gowerton Community Council and Penrice Community Council) were still to respond.

A discussion ensued in relation to why Llangennith, Llanmadoc & Cheriton Community Council had no plans to adopt the Protocol. They had indicated that as they had a sufficient complaints procedure and did not usually receive many complaints, that a further protocol was not deemed necessary at this time.

**Resolved** that:

- 1) The report be noted;
- 2) An updated list be provided at the next meeting.

### **24 Code of Conduct Casebook.**

The Monitoring Officer provided a 'for information' report to update the Standards Committee on the Ombudsman's Code of Conduct Casebook.

The Casebook referred to covered the period July – September 2017 – Issue 14 November 2017.

She outlined several cases in the Casebook, including the case which had been referred to the Adjudication Panel for Wales.

**Resolved that:**

- 1) The report be noted;
- 2) The Monitoring Office forward the Casebook to all Councillors, together with the decision document referred to in the Adjudication Panel for Wales case referred to on page 13 of the Agenda pack.

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

The Monitoring Officer provided a list of the complaints.

This information had previously been reported to the Committee, however the information was backdated to 4 May 2017 in order to provide the additional information requested by the Committee at its last meeting.

The Monitoring Officer would revise the table in the future if guidance from the PSOW allowed.

**Resolved** that the report be noted.

**26 Update on Standards Committee Conference. (Verbal)**

The Monitoring Officer provided a verbal update on the Standards Conference, which was scheduled for 14 September 2018 at Aberystwyth University.

Attendance and other arrangements would be discussed further once additional details were received.

**27 Workplan 2017-2018.**

The Head of Democratic Services suggested that the meetings with the Political Group Leaders commence at the next meeting scheduled for April 2018.

The Committee also suggested it would be beneficial to invite someone from the PSOW office to attend a future meeting to discuss:

- The workload of the PSOW, including the structure, staffing, its office management, etc;
- The present and more importantly the future role of the Standards Committee, its workload and how it fits into the overall process.

**Resolved that:**

- 1) The Workplan be noted;
- 2) The Monitoring Officer speak with the PSOW Office with a view to inviting a representative to a future meeting of the Standards Committee.

The meeting ended at 10.40 am

**Chair**