

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

23 MARCH 2017

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

RESPONSE FROM THE OMBUDSMANS OFFICE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide Members with a copy of the response received from the Ombudsmans office in relation to corporate complaint handling by public sector organisations.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority

- 2.1 Standards are an implicit requirement in the successful implementation of the Corporate Themes.

3. Background

- 3.1 On 15th November 2016 the Committee received a report on the Ombudsmans Casebook. Members noted that a number of cases in the Casebook related to delays by public bodies in dealing with complaints which could be attributed to reduced staff numbers in local government and Health Boards and that this should be conveyed in writing to the Ombudsman.
- 3.2 The Committee was concerned that in the current and ongoing financial climate organisations were not giving the appropriate priority to the processing and consideration of corporate complaints, both in the individual complaint but also as a method of information gathering on service delivery quality. The Committee was also concerned that, accepting that many organisations were seeking alternative models of delivery to ensure the maintenance and improvement of services to the public, the prioritisation of services would inevitably lead to some service delivery reductions. In such circumstances there is a need for organisations to consult and inform the public of proposed changes and to ensure resilience of corporate complaint handling to both ensure service delivery but also provide information for future budget allocation decisions.

4. Current situation / proposal

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer wrote to the Ombudsman on 28 November 2016 outlining the concerns of the Committee. A copy of the Ombudsman's response is attached as **Appendix 1**.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

- 5.1 None.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 None.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 None.

8. Recommendation

8.1 The Committee is recommended to note the report.

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Background Documents

None