

STANDARDS COMMITTEE - THURSDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2017

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 2/3 - CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON THURSDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2017 AT 11.30 AM

Present

Councillor Mr C Jones OBE – Chairperson

Mr P Clarke

MC Clarke

Mrs J Kiely

Mr G Walter

Apologies for Absence

DRW Lewis and Mr J Baker

Officers:

Julie Ellams

Democratic Services Officer - Committees

Andrew Jolley

Corporate Director Operational & Partnership Services

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings of the Standards Committee of 22 June and 27 July 2017 be approved as a true and accurate record.

11. OMBUDSMAN CASEBOOK

The Corporate Director – Operational and Partnership Services provided Members with a summary of cases that had been undertaken by the Ombudsman's Office. The Ombudsman's Casebook was published on a quarterly basis and contained the summaries of all reports issued during the quarter, as well as a selection of summaries relating to quick fixes and voluntary settlements.

The Committee noted that there appeared to be an increase in the number of complaints in relation to health and in particular to Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

The Corporate Director – Operational and Partnership Services explained that the Ombudsman appeared to be focusing on the health service and maladministration and there were a fewer number of complaints being investigated.

The Chairman stated that if there were not enough staff to investigate complaints thoroughly then Betsi Cadwaladr could be more inclined to settle and the disproportionate number of complaints could be down to a reputation that the Health Board would pay out.

A Member commented that this was an area where residents were encouraged to complain with "no win, no fee" offers.

RESOLVED The Committee noted the report.

12. ONE VOICE WALES - MODEL PROTOCOL

The Corporate Director – Operational and Partnership Services provided Members with the Model Protocol for low level complaints issued by One Voice Wales. The Model Protocol was meant as a starting point for Community and Town councils and they could add or amend this model to suit their particular needs.

Members agreed that this was a good process for Town and Community Councils to adopt.

RESOLVED The Committee noted the report.

13. ADJUDICATION PANEL FOR WALES ANNUAL REPORT

The Corporate Director – Operational and Partnership Services provided Members with the Adjudication Panel for Wales Annual Report 2014-15/2015-16 (combined).

The Adjudication Panel for Wales (APW) was an independent tribunal that had been set up to determine alleged breaches against an authority's statutory Code of Conduct by elected and co-opted members of Welsh county, county borough and community councils, fire and national park authorities.

Members noted the performance and progress data contained within the report and the reduction in the level of work submitted to Standards Committee.

RESOLVED The Committee noted the report.

14. REVIEW OF ELECTED MEMBER ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

The Corporate Director – Operational and Partnership Services presented a report on Elected Member Role Descriptions for consideration.

Elected Members had a wide range of roles and responsibilities which they were expected to undertake. Elected Member Role Descriptions provided a framework which described the purposes, activities and responsibilities regarding a variety of the key roles which they undertook.

He explained that all role descriptions were being reviewed to ensure they effectively covered the diversity of roles undertaken and met the requirements of Elected Members and the WLGA Charter for Member Development and Support. Any concerns raised would be forwarded to the Democratic Services Committee.

RESOLVED The Committee noted the report.

15. ELECTED MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Corporate Director- Operational and Partnership Services presented the Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy for information.

The Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy 2012-17 was approved by Council in 2013. It provided a framework which set out the structure of learning and development for all Elected Members from their election and throughout a term of office. At Council on 6 September 2017, the intention to make a submission to the WLGA for

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Member Support and Development was approved. One of the requirements of the Charter was for a Member Development Strategy to be approved by Council.

The Corporate Director- Operational and Partnership Services explained that this was particularly helpful for new Members with little or no experience. When they had received the required training then their individual needs could be met with ongoing training.

A new Member commented that he thought the training provided was good but he was concerned at the low rate of take up of some Members to undertake training to carry out their roles. The Corporate Director – Operational and Partnership Services explained that this continued to be a challenge and he welcomed the stronger view that Members could not sit on certain Committees before they had been trained. A number of training sessions had been arranged on different days at different times and it was disappointing that some members had still failed to undertake any training.

There was a requirement that Members received training on the Community Action Fund, a fund for expenditure in their electoral wards which benefited the local population and some Members had also failed to attend this training.

The Corporate Director- Operational and Partnership Services explained that it was difficult when there was a large change in membership and a significant number without experience.

The Chairman commented that training provided by BCBC was comprehensive and prevented Members from getting into difficulties with declarations of interest etc.

RESOLVED The Committee noted the report and the Strategy attached to the report.

16. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

17. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, as the report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 12 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A and Paragraph 21 of Part 5 of Schedule 12A of the Act:-

Following the application of the public interest test it was resolved that pursuant to the provisions of the Act referred to above, to consider the under-mentioned item in private with the public being excluded from the meeting, as it would involve the disclosure to them of exempt information as stated above.

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18. APPROVAL OF EXEMPT MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Exempt Minutes of the meetings of the Standards Committee of 22 June and 27 July 2017 be approved as a true and accurate record.

The meeting closed at 12.30 pm