

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

7 MARCH 2019

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

WLGA SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE FOR COUNCILLORS

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a copy of guidance produced by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) regarding social media guidance for Councillors.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The Standards Committee functions directly support the Corporate Priorities.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Members Code of Conduct does not specifically include any obligations in relation to social media however the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales has seen an increase in the number of complaints made regarding comments that have been placed by Elected Members throughout Wales on social media platforms.
- 3.2 Personal use of social media will fall outside the ambit of the Code, however if a Member mentions public issues or Council activity on social media then those comments are likely to be perceived as having been made in an official capacity.

4. Current situation / proposal

- 4.1 The WLGA recognises that social media is playing an increasingly important role in local politics and has prepared a guide for Elected Members in relation to its use (attached as **Appendix 1**). The purpose of the guidance is to enable Members to benefit from the use of social media whilst minimising the associated risks such as reputational damage, breaching the code of conduct.
- 4.2 Guidance has also been published providing advice to Members on how to manage or report online abuse or harassment (**Appendix 2**).

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

- 5.1 None.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

7.1 There will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 None.

9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that Members note the WLGA guidance.

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Background documents

None