

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

18 FEBRUARY 2021

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

STANDARDS COMMITTEE – HEARINGS PROCESS

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to note the adopted procedure to determine Code of Conduct complaints which are referred to the Committee to ensure that matters are dealt with fairly and efficiently.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objective under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:-**

Smarter use of resources – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1 Under the Local Government Act 2000 all allegations and breaches of the Code of Conduct are submitted to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales for investigation in the first instance.
- 3.2 The Ombudsman may determine a matter be referred to the Authority's Monitoring Officer for investigation or may as in this case undertake the investigation and refer the matter to the Monitoring Officer for consideration by the Standards Committee.
- 3.3 The Local Government Investigations (Functions of Monitoring Officers and Standards Committee) (Wales) Regulations 2001, as amended, set out the functions of the Monitoring Officer and the Standards Committee in relation to investigations and determinations.

4. Current situation / proposal

- 4.1 Attached as **Appendix 1** is the adopted procedure that the Committee will follow where it is required to make decisions about the conduct of Councillors following investigations by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales or the Council's Monitoring officer. If there is any conflict between this document and any statutory requirements then those statutory requirements will prevail.
- 4.2 All Elected Members receive training on the Code of Conduct as part of their induction training. Refresher training was recently arranged for Elected Members and Committee Members in January 2021.

5. Effect upon policy framework & procedure rules

5.1 There is no effect upon the Policy Framework. The Procedure for the Investigation of Complaints is supplementary to the Procedural Rules applicable to the Standards Committee.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 The report does not give rise to concerns on equality grounds and does not impact sections of society differentially.

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

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

7.2 Compliance with the Code of Conduct by members ensures the Council maintains a high standard of behaviour and conduct and thereby encouraging and promoting democracy throughout society thereby contributing to the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015:

- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

8. Financial Implications

8.1 None.

9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that Members note the adopted procedure to be applied to hearings before the Committee attached as **Appendix 1**.

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Background documents: None