

Meeting of:	STANDARDS COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	7 OCTOBER 2026
Report Title:	PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES ANNUAL LETTER 2025/26
Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member	MONITORING OFFICER
Responsible Officer:	LAURA GRIFFITHS GROUP MANAGER LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & EMERGENCY PLANNING
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no effect upon the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.
Executive Summary:	To present to the Committee the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter 2025/26.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present to the Standards Committee the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter 2025/26 for noting.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Public Service Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) is independent of all government bodies and has legal powers to investigate complaints about public services and independent care providers in Wales. They also investigate complaints that Members of local government bodies have breached their authority's Code of Conduct.
- 2.2 The PSOW reports annually on the number of complaints against public bodies received by its office.
- 2.3 The Complaints Officer is the Contact Officer for the PSOW, and the Monitoring Officer is responsible for liaising with the PSOW regarding Member Code of Conduct complaints.

3. Current situation / proposal

- 3.1 **Appendix 1** provides the PSOW Annual Letter for 2025/26.

- 3.2 Appendix F within the Annual Letter outlines Code of Conduct complaints received against Bridgend County Borough Council Members For 2025/26, 19 complaints were closed by the Ombudsman. Appendix G shows that for the same period, 22 complaints were closed relating to Town and Community Councils within the Borough.
- 3.3 The PSOW Complaints Standards Authority publishes datasets on complaints handled by local authorities. These datasets are now published on the Ombudsman's website and on the Council's website.
- 3.4 Section 115 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 provides that the Governance and Audit Committee (GAC) should "*review and assess the authority's ability to handle complaints effectively and to make reports and recommendations in relation to the authority's ability to handle complaints effectively*". GAC will receive an Annual Report on complaints at its November meeting to include the PSOW Annual Letter. Anonymised data is also shared quarterly with the PSOW Complaints Standards Authority as part of the Authority's commitment to accountability and learning from complaints.
- 3.5 The Authority takes complaints and concerns seriously and will try to learn from any mistakes made. The Information Team (responsible for the management of the Corporate Complaints process) has developed a process to monitor both the effectiveness of the complaints process and how complaints data is being used to improve services and delivery of care. Services should consider any emerging themes and identify any service improvements required as a result of concerns raised. The information identified will be used to contribute to service development which could include additional training, changes to internal procedures, increased monitoring etc.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act 2010, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

- 5.1 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 wellbeing goals/objectives as a result of this report.
- 5.2 Standards are an implicit requirement in the successful implementation of the corporate well-being objectives.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 6.1 There are no climate change or nature implications.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no safeguarding and corporate parent implications.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the report.

Background documents:

None