
STANDARDS COMMITTEE 3/10/16

Present:-

Elected Members:- Councillors Lesley Day and Eryl Jones-Williams.

Independent Members:- Ms Jacqueline Hughes, Mr Aled Jones, Miss Margaret Jones, Mr David Wareing and Dr Einir Young (Chair)

Also in Attendance: Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer), Siôn Huws (Senior Solicitor) and Eirian Roberts (Members Support Officer).

Apologies: Councillor Michael Sol Owen and Mr David Clay.

1. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received from any members present.

2. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous committee meeting held on 27 June 2016, as a true record.

3. PREPARATIONS FOR THE 2017 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Submitted – the report of the Monitoring Officer appending a report that appeared before the Council's Democratic Services Committee on the 20th of September on the work that is in progress to prepare for inducting new members to the authority as a result of the May 2017 elections.

The committee was asked to consider the report and offer guidance on possible further training on the Code of Conduct.

The Chairman noted that she welcomed the fact that plans are in the pipeline to prepare for the elections.

During the discussion, the following observations were noted:-

- That it is essentially important that the new members receive training on the Code of Conduct.
- That there is a need to think about a format that introduces the Code of Conduct's main points for new members in a light-hearted and engaging way but also respecting the subject's seriousness.
- That the new members need to receive guidance at the beginning in terms of how to operate over the first few weeks as a councillor without breaking the Code of Conduct.
- It is not felt that calling at a stand at the Information Fair on the induction days is a sufficient way in itself of presenting the Code of Conduct to new members and needs to be followed soon after by a more detailed presentation by the Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED to note the report.

4. LOCAL RESOLUTION PROCEDURE FOR COMMUNITY COUNCILS

Submitted – the oral report of the Monitoring Officer noting:-

- That this matter had been included in the work programme of the Standards Committee, but that Unllais Cymru by now has started on the work of drawing up a national procedure for community councils with an Ombudsman, Welsh Local Government Association and monitoring officers as part of the process also.
- This news would be welcomed and it was hoped that this new procedure would create a practical and more robust mechanism that will enable community councils to solve problems easier.

During the discussion, it was noted that Unllais Cymru should be contacted in due course to suggest that any training on the new procedure would be held locally.

RESOLVED to note the report.

5. THE OMBUDSMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

Submitted for information – the report of the Monitoring Officer appending a copy of those parts of the Ombudsman's Annual Report 2015/16 relevant to code of conduct complaints and noted what the Ombudsman has to say in his annual letter regarding complaints and code of conduct.

The Chair noted that a small percentage of the complaints are taken further and it appears that respect and uniformity are the matters that are raised the most.

RESOLVED to note the report.

6. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MEMBERS

Submitted, for information – the report of the Monitoring Officer on formal complaints made against members.

The Senior Solicitor noted that another two complaints had come to hand since the report had been prepared and that he would report on them at the next meeting.

RESOLVED to note the report.

The meeting commenced at 11.00 am and concluded at 11.30 am

CHAIRMAN