



Complete Agenda

Democratic Service
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Date and Time

10.30 am, MONDAY, 14TH FEBRUARY, 2022

Location

Virtual Meeting - Zoom

(For public access to the meeting, please contact us)

Contact Point

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(DISTRIBUTED 07/02/22)

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Membership

Elected Members (3)

Councillors

Anne Lloyd Jones
Beth Lawton
Dewi Wyn Roberts

Independent Members (with a vote) (5)

Aled Jones
Margaret E. Jones
David Wareing
Einir Young
Hywel Eifion Jones

Community Committee Member (with a vote) (1)

Richard Parry Hughes

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chair for consideration.

4. MINUTES

4 - 15

The Chair shall propose that the minutes of the meetings of this committee held on the following dates be signed as true records:-

- 26th October, 2021 (Special Meeting)
- 8th November, 2021
- 8th December, 2021 (Special Meeting)

5. TASK AND FINISH GROUP - ETHICAL STANDARDS FRAMEWORK

16 - 18

To submit the report of the Propriety and Elections Manager.

6. REPORT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE INVESTIGATION OF A COMPLAINT AGAINST COUNCILLOR MICHAEL STEVENS OF TYWYN TOWN COUNCIL

19 - 25

To submit the report of the Propriety and Elections Manager.

7. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MEMBERS

26 - 27

To submit the report of the Propriety and Elections Manager.

8. ADJUDICATION PANEL FOR WALES ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20 AND 2020-21

28 - 60

To submit the report of the Monitoring Officer.

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE, 26/10/21

Present:

Elected Members: Councillors Beth Lawton and Dewi Roberts

Independent Members: Mr Aled Jones, Mr Hywel Eifion Jones, Miss Margaret E.Jones, Mr David Wareing and Dr Einir Young (Chair)

Community Committee Member: Mr Richard Parry Hughes

Also in attendance: Sion Huws (Senior Solicitor – Corporate) and Eirian Roberts (Democracy Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Councillor Anne Lloyd Jones.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

3. URGENT ITEMS

No urgent matters were raised.

4. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the meeting during the discussion on the following item due to the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 18C, Section 4, Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972. This paragraph applied because it concerned the deliberations of the Standards Committee in reaching a decision on a matter referred to it by the Public Standards Ombudsman for Wales. It was believed that the information should not be disclosed so that the councillor was not prejudiced by any possible publicity of the case before any hearing. Consequently, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

5. APPLICATION FOR INDEMNITY BY A COUNCILLOR UNDER THE COUNCIL'S POLICY

Submitted – the report of the Senior Solicitor (Corporate) inviting the committee to determine the application for indemnity from a councillor under the Council's indemnity terms for Members and Officers.

RESOLVED, having looked very carefully at the application, and considering Gwynedd Council's Indemnity Policy attached as Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the committee, that the Chair should write to inform the member that the Standards Committee is not in a position to offer him indemnity in relation to legal representation at a hearing of the Standards Committee. The case the councillor is defending deals entirely with his role as a Town Council Councillor. Any decision would impact on that role only, and would not have any effect on the councillor's role as a member of Gwynedd Council.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 10.55am.

CHAIR

STANDARDS COMMITTEE 8/11/21

Present:

Elected Members: Councillors Anne Lloyd Jones, Beth Lawton and Dewi Roberts.

Independent Members: Mr Aled Jones, Mr Hywel Eifion Jones, Miss Margaret E. Jones, Mr David Wareing and Dr Einir Young (Chair)

Community Committee Member: Mr Richard Parry Hughes

Also in Attendance: Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer), Siôn Huws (Senior Solicitor - Corporate) and Eirian Roberts (Democracy Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

3. URGENT ITEMS

No urgent matters were raised.

4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meetings of this committee held on 14 June and 7 July 2021 as a true record.

5. REVIEW OF THE ETHICAL STANDARDS FRAMEWORK FOR WALES

Submitted - the report of the Monitoring Officer presenting information to the committee on the Review of the Ethical Standards Framework for Wales.

The Monitoring Officer drew attention to some points in the report, as follows:

- Although One Voice Wales and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) were consulted as part of the review, it was surprising that there was no further consultation with a group of elected members, as this perspective would have been an important contribution to the creation of the report.
- It was not anticipated that legislative work would begin on the statutory changes, etc., until after the May 2022 Elections, as so much was happening in local government legislation at present.
- Although the recommendation that training on the Code of Conduct be made mandatory for all members of main councils and community councils was welcomed, there were questions arising as to the practicality of this, given that there were approximately 750 community and town council members across Gwynedd, and approximately 7,500 across Wales as a whole.
- Although the recommendation that more complaints should be resolved locally seemed sensible at one level, such an approach inevitably required resources and time to investigate those issues. This was true of Gwynedd's internal affairs and

community council matters, also bearing in mind that not all community councils had the professional resource to undertake the work.

- As the report highlighted the various ways in which standards committees across Wales operated, in terms of where the committee sat within the authority, its role and how proactive it was, etc., there may be issues here on which this committee should reflect, regardless of what would derive from the legislation.
- The statutory responsibility of leaders of political groups for the conduct of their members (under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021) interwove with elements of this report, and created a platform to raise the profile of the Standards Committee, giving it a more prominent day-to-day role in matters of members' conduct.

The following main matters arising from the review were discussed:

Training

- It was noted that online training could be organised for members of community and town councils, or paper-based training for anyone without a computer. As well as eliminating the need to organise face-to-face training with so many members, it would also allow everyone to complete the training at a time convenient to them within a given time window. It was noted, however, that the resources were needed to ensure that it was the correct training and was properly marked.
- It was asked whether councils could work together to design training so that everyone received the same training, and that resources were pooled to put this together. In response, the Monitoring Officer noted that this was essential, and for the May 2022 Elections, the WLGA together with a group of monitoring officers were already working on a consistent training package across Wales.

The role of community/town council clerks

- It was noted that the post of clerk of a community/town council was a responsible one, and should be a full-time position, possibly with clerks serving more than one council, and possessing a professional qualification. The big question, however, was how, and what were the resources to do that.
- It was asked if there was room to strengthen the clerk's role, as they were at the scene when anything happened. Also, if the council had respect for the clerk, and the clerk had the strength and powers, this may be a way of sorting it out in the first place. It was noted that the chair of the council also had a prominent role to play in this.
- It was noted that the size and resources of community councils varied considerably, and that rural councils had a much smaller resource to deal with issues of dispute, with the clerk working heroically to maintain this broad role. There was room to develop this support, but the report did not suggest that there was a structure for that.
- It was noted that Partneriaeth Ogwen, for example, offered clerical support to community councils, and it was suggested that community groups of this type could partially professionalise clerks through such support.
- It was noted that having a strong monitoring officer and a strong chair was key to managing any county council, and similarly, it was important to have a strong clerk and strong chair to manage community councils, and to identify any risks before they arose.

Referrals to Standards Committees

- The Ombudsman's acceptance of the need for more referrals to standards committees when he refused to investigate complaints was welcomed, as there

were still complaints that matters were not shared. There was an opportunity here to resolve complaints more locally, and it was important to take that forward if possible.

- To the contrary, it was suggested that the local resolution process reduced the Ombudsman's workload. It was asked why the Ombudsman did not have regional/sub-regional/local representation across Wales to filter complaints in the first place, as this would lighten the work of the county council and remain at arm's length from the council.
- It was noticed that the report noted that concern had been expressed that the low number of referrals to standards committees as a proportion of complaints received by the Ombudsman was adversely affecting the ability of standards committees to maintain public confidence in elected members, and that complainants felt that their concerns were not being taken seriously. This concern was expressed at the full Council meeting annually, and it would be helpful to inform the Council that the comments we had been making over the years were set out in this report as a general complaint, and not just from Gwynedd Council.

Other matters raised:

- The reference to establishing an all-Wales Standards Committee Forum was welcomed.
- It was noted that the collaboration between the Standards Committee and the Leaders of Political Groups was going to be important for the future.
- It was noted that it was noticed from the website that very few Gwynedd councillors published annual reports, especially last year, and it was asked whether the Standards Committee should be promoting that. In response, it was explained that members were reminded to produce annual reports, but it was believed that the requirement had been paused last year as part of the Covid Emergency Regulations. It was also noted that some councillors provided weekly updates for their constituents via Facebook.
- It was noted that it was important that anyone who put their name forward for election as a councillor was clear about what was expected of them, and that they understood exactly what the Code of Conduct meant. In response, the Monitoring Officer explained that every new member of the Council received a presentation on the Code before signing up for the post, and that the Code would also be part of the briefing sessions arranged by the Democracy Service for potential candidates for the May 2022 Election. He further stated that he would check the information sent out to potential candidates to ensure that the information was up to date, as councillors signed up to be community leaders, along with all the expectations in relation to conduct associated with that. The Chair suggested that the relationship between the Standards Committee and the Democracy Service needed to be strengthened, as they may be operating in separate boxes at present.
- The fact that councillors would not be required to put their home addresses on the acceptance statement for the post was welcomed, but bullying, etc., on social media was noted as an ongoing problem.
- In response to a comment that the threshold for receiving gifts and hospitality varied across Wales, it was noted that the need to reconcile arrangements in many aspects was an emerging theme, but no doubt the new technology would facilitate the running of an All-Wales forum, which could discuss this sort of thing.
- In response to a question, the Monitoring Officer confirmed that there were times when officers had suggested to the complainant that it was not a matter of a breach of code or protocol.
- It was suggested that the report highlighted a conflict between two principles, i.e. the desire to reduce the number of complaints and the desire to reduce the threshold.

- It was noticed that the report stated that the chair of the standards committee should play a leadership role, along with the chief executive, monitoring officer and leaders of political groups, in promoting high standards of conduct throughout the council, and the view was expressed that this was something that should be done more in Gwynedd.
- The fact that there were clear and accessible guidelines on Gwynedd Council's website on how to lodge a complaint, including a language complaint, was welcomed.
- It was noticed that the report stated that the primary focus of standards committees should be on proactive measures to support members of their council to maintain appropriate standards of conduct, thereby avoiding breaches of the Code, and that standards committees did this in a variety of ways, such as working with leaders of political groups, attending and monitoring Council meetings and submitting annual reports to councils on their activities and standards of conduct within the authority. In light of this, it was suggested that it would be beneficial to establish a Task and Finish Group to discuss our response to the report, bringing together the proposals highlighted during this discussion, and reporting back to the next committee meeting. In response, the Monitoring Officer stated that he believed it was timely, prior to the May 2022 Council Elections, to look at the future of the Gwynedd Standards Committee in light of the issues raised in the report, as well as the new legislation and the statutory responsibility of political group leaders for the conduct of their members, considering the future format of the committee, how it could be made more visible and operational within the Council, and how to strengthen and make the connection between the committee and various Council services, e.g. Democracy Services, more prominent.

RESOLVED to accept the report for information, and to establish a Task and Finish Group, consisting of the Chair of the Standards Committee, together with one elected member (Councillor Anne Lloyd Jones), one independent member (Mr Dave Wareing) and the Community Committee Member (Mr Richard Parry Hughes) with the support of the Senior Solicitor (Corporate), to discuss the findings of the Independent Review of the Ethical Standards Framework in Wales, paying particular attention to the following matters, and to submit recommendations to the next meeting of the Standards Committee on 14 February, 2022:

- **The future format of the Standards Committee;**
- **How to make the committee more visible and operational within the Council; and**
- **How to strengthen and make the connection between the committee and various Council services, e.g. Democracy Services, more prominent.**

6. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MEMBERS

Submitted - the report of the Senior Solicitor (Corporate) presenting information about the Ombudsman's decisions on formal complaints against members.

RESOLVED to note the information.

7. THE OMBUDSMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

Submitted for information – the report of the Monitoring Officer appending the Ombudsman's 2020-21 Annual Report.

During the discussion, the following matters were raised:

- It was noted from the table showing the proportion of complaints received under each principle compared to 2019/20 (page 101 of the agenda) that the number of

complaints relating to promoting equality and respect had increased significantly, and the need to focus on this area when conducting the training was emphasised. It was also noted that the number of disclosure and registration of interest complaints had decreased, suggesting that the message in relation to this was starting to get through.

- It was noted that paragraph 3.2.1 of the Independent Review of the Ethical Standards Framework stated that equality and respect for others had been added to the Nolan Principles by the Welsh Government, but that these principles were not included in the Model Code of Conduct. Therefore, failure to comply with equality and respect did not in itself constitute a breach of the Code, although failure to adhere to the principle of equality and respect would probably amount to a breach of the requirements set out in paragraphs 4 (a) and 4 (b) of the Code.
- It was noticed that only 10 out of 500 complaints had been referred to standards committees over the entire year. It was suggested that this might be a point to note in the full Council, although it was accepted that the sense of frustration would continue. In response, the Monitoring Officer noted that, despite acknowledging the criticism of the procedure, etc., the low number of referrals could also be positive, as it suggested that the majority of complaints were not serious enough to warrant an investigation.
- It was suggested that if people were more willing to apologise, many of these issues would soon be forgotten.

RESOLVED to note the report.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 11.45 am

CHAIR

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE, 8/12/21

Present:-

Elected Members:- Councillors Beth Lawton and Dewi Roberts.

Independent Members: Mr Aled Jones, Mr Hywel Eifion Jones, Miss Margaret E. Jones, Mr Dave Wareing and Dr Einir Young (Chair)

Community Committee Member: Mr Richard Parry Hughes

Also Present: On behalf of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales - Katrin Shaw (Chief Legal Adviser and Director of Investigations) and Leigh McAndrew (Investigating Officer); Gwynedd Council Officers - Sion Huws (Senior Solicitor – Corpoarte) and Eirian Roberts (Democratic Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

3. ALLEGATION OF A BREACH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT REFERRED TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE BY THE PUBLIC SERVICE OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the hearing and the Ombudsman's officers introduced themselves to members.

The Chair then explained the nature / format of the hearing.

Background

1. The Committee considered a report from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales ("the Ombudsman") into a complaint from the Chair of the Personnel Committee of Tywyn Town Council ("the Council"), Councillor John Pughe, that Councillor George Michael Stevens ("the Member") had failed to observe the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.

2. It was alleged that the Member had been disrespectful to the Clerk of the Council ("the Clerk") and had repeatedly undermined her. The complaint related to correspondence sent by the Member to the Clerk and correspondence sent by the Member about the Clerk.

3. The Ombudsman concluded that the Member's correspondence included derogatory personal comments which were disrespectful and that comments about the Clerk's experience were intended to undermine the Clerk. The Member also used gendered language when commenting on the Clerk.

4. The Ombudsman determined that the Member may have breached the Council's Code of Conduct, in particular, paragraphs 4(a), 4(b) and 4(c), which provide:

"4. You must —

- (a) carry out your duties and responsibilities with due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people, regardless of their gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age or religion;*
- (b) show respect and consideration for others;*
- (c) not use bullying behaviour or harass any person;”*

The Ombudsman also found that the Member's actions could reasonably be regarded as behaviour which might have breached paragraph 6(1)(a) of the Code of Conduct:

6.—(1) You must — (a) not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute;

5. The Ombudsman referred his investigation report to the Monitoring Officer of Gwynedd Council for consideration by its Standards Committee.

The Hearing

6. The Senior Solicitor (Corporate) (Gwynedd Council's Deputy Monitoring Officer, who advised the Committee) presented his report at the commencement of the hearing. He explained that the Member had resigned as a member of Tywyn Town Council on 4 December 2021, and that the Member had confirmed that he did not intend to attend the hearing. He explained that the resignation of the Member did not alter the fact that the Committee was required to consider and decide on the Ombudsman's report. However, the sanction of suspension was no longer available to the Committee, should it conclude that the Member had breached the Code.

7. The Committee resolved to proceed with the hearing and considered the Ombudsman's written report together with the further documents submitted by the Member and the Ombudsman in accordance with the Committee's pre-hearing procedure. The Committee also considered oral submissions from Katrin Shaw, Chief Legal Adviser and Director of Investigations of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and from Leigh McAndrew, the Ombudsman's Investigating Officer.

The Decision

8. The Committee first considered any finding of fact that it needed to make. The complaint concerned correspondence from the Member over a period of approximately 12 months. This correspondence was contained in the written evidence before it and therefore there was no doubt about what the Member had written. The one relevant disputed factual issue noted in the report was that the member denied that he intended to send his email dated 22 January 2020 to all members of Gwynedd Council.

9. In relation to this e-mail, the Committee considered the fact that the member had emphasised that he was always very careful as to what he puts in writing, and the fact that, at the time of writing and before it was sent, it would be obvious that the email would be sent to a large number of people. The e-mail in question was a response to a general invitation to all Gwynedd Council members by the Head of Finance. The fact that the Member had chosen to make critical comments about the Monitoring Officer in his response rather than just sending his apologies, strongly suggested that he intended for members to see these comments. The fact that the email did not specifically address one recipient (unlike many of his other emails) further reinforced this interpretation.

10. The Committee therefore decided that it was satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that the Member intended to send the e-mail to all members.

11. The Committee proceeded to consider the Member's conduct, and after careful consideration of all the evidence presented, the Committee determined that the Member had failed to comply with the Code of Conduct as follows:

12. The Committee found that the Member had breached paragraph 4 (a) of the Code of Conduct for the following reasons:

12.1 The Committee found that the Member had used gender-based language in his correspondence using words such as "misandrist" and "overbearing school mistress" to describe the Clerk and described her as "slowly emasculating the Council". He had continued to use such language when interviewed by the Ombudsman and referred to the Clerk several times as "this / that woman" and that he thought it true (as someone had told him) that the Clerk was a "man-hating vegan" due to her connection with the Women's Equality Party.

12.2 The Committee was of the opinion that there was a pattern of using discriminatory language towards, and about the Clerk and that taken as a whole showed that the Member had failed to behave in a manner which had due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all, irrespective of (among other issues) their gender.

13. The Committee found that the Member had breached paragraph 4 (b) of the Code of Conduct for the following reasons:

13.1 Whilst accepting that the Member had the right to criticise the Clerk's performance of her duties, the Committee considered how that criticism was expressed. The Committee found, in the correspondence, a pattern of criticism that was made in a manner that went beyond what it considered acceptable, whatever the Member's view of the Clerk's conduct as the clerk of the Council.

13.2 The Committee felt that the words used by the Member and also the tone of the emails were unacceptable. This was not an isolated case, but a consistent pattern of criticism over a considerable period of time using derogatory personal terms. He had also referred to her on many occasions as being new and inexperienced despite having been in post for 3 years, stating that she had a far too high opinion of herself and her ability, and was out of control. Furthermore, members of the Council were included in this correspondence.

13.3 Although it was not within the Committee's remit or powers to decide on the Clerk's own conduct, the Committee did take it into consideration as context for the Member's behaviour. Whilst accepting that the member had strong views about the way in which the Council was run and felt frustrated, it did not provide an excuse for behaving in the way he did. The conduct of the Member was his own responsibility and no one else's.

13.4 The Committee was very concerned, when considering this particular paragraph of the Code, about the view expressed by the Member at his interview with the Ombudsman when discussing his conduct towards the Clerk. The Member said that he believed that respect was not "a divine right" and had to be earned. The Committee disagreed, and the Code makes it clear that members must show respect and consideration for others.

13.5 Having concluded that the conduct was in breach of this paragraph, the Committee then went on to consider the behaviour in the context of Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The Committee accepted that political expression attracted an enhanced level of protection, and this could include the expression of views in relation to the way in which an authority was administered. However, as the Ombudsman explained in his report, "*the right of enhanced protection afforded to Councillors to make political representations does not include the right to make unwanted or insulting personal remarks, nor any representations discriminatory*". The Committee also took into account that these

comments were directed to a paid officer of the Council and not to another member, who could be expected to have a “thicker skin”.

13.6 The Committee therefore considered that the comments went beyond what could be considered as political comment that would be protected under Article 10.

14. The Committee found that the Member had breached paragraph 4 (c) of the Code of Conduct for the following reasons:

14.1 The Committee found that the Member's behaviour amounted to bullying and harassment. It was noted that the Ombudsman's Guidelines described bullying as behaviour that seeks to undermine an individual, is detrimental to their confidence and ability and can adversely affect their health. Harassment is described in the Guidelines as repeated behaviour which annoys or upsets people.

14.2 The Committee considered that the Member, through his correspondence sought to undermine the Clerk and was damaging to her confidence. He criticised not only her work and her ability but also attacked her character, and did so in correspondence that had been shared with other members of the Council. It was also noted that the Clerk had been absent from work as a result of this behaviour. The Committee also found that as there was a pattern of such behaviour that it also constituted harassment.

14.3 Whilst the Member was entitled to scrutinise and criticise the Clerk's performance, his conduct, and in particular the manner in which he had chosen to express his dissatisfaction, far exceeded what was acceptable to him even after allowing for the enhanced protection afforded to political expression.

15. The Committee found that the Member had breached paragraph 6 (1) (a) of the Code of Conduct for the following reasons:

15.1 Looking at the conduct of the Member as a whole, the Committee considered that it was sufficiently serious in nature to bring the Council and his office as a member into disrepute. The behaviour had been detrimental to the relationships within the Council and to its administration, and had damaged its reputation

Sanction

16. The Committee considered that this a serious breach of a code of conduct. In considering what sanction was appropriate, it took into account what the Ombudsman's representative had to say at the hearing and also the issues set out in the Sanctions Guidance issued by the Adjudication Panel for Wales, as mitigating and aggravating factors.

16.1 With regard to mitigating factors:

The Committee acknowledged that the Member had engaged in the investigation process, but on the other hand also noted the Ombudsman's comments that it had proved a very difficult investigation due to the Member's conduct.

It was also acknowledged that the Member felt very strongly about the way the Council was run, that he felt that his comments were not listened to and that he believed he was acting in good faith.

16.3 Turning to the consideration of aggravating factors, the Committee found that a number of these were present in the conduct leading up to the complaint and during the course of the investigation:

Seeking to blame others unfairly for the Member's own actions

A lack of understanding or acceptance of the misconduct and any consequences

Failure to heed previous advice and/or warnings, specifically from the Ombudsman and following an investigation by One Voice Wales.

Refusal to accept the facts despite the clear evidence to the contrary

16.4 Having considered the seriousness of the conduct in question and having considered the relevant mitigating and aggravating factors, the Committee resolved that the Member should be censured, as this is the maximum sanction that the Committee can impose following the Member's resignation from the Council.

16.5 The Committee nevertheless wished to put on record that, except for his resignation from the Council, it was likely to have suspended the Member from the Council and to have done so for the maximum possible period.

16.6 The Committee also asks the Member to consider and reflect on his conduct, in particular the way he speaks and corresponds with others in any other current or future public role. The Committee also encourages him to take advantage of any training opportunities available in relation to the Code of Conduct for Members

Appeal

17. It was noted that the Member may seek permission to appeal against the Committee's determination to an appeals tribunal drawn from the Adjudication Panel for Wales by giving notice in writing within 21 days of receiving the notification of determination to the president of the Adjudication Panel for Wales. The notice seeking permission to appeal must specify the grounds of appeal and whether or not permission to appeal is granted, he consents to the appeal being conducted by written representations.

18. In accordance with the Local Government Investigations (Functions of Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees) (Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended) the Member, the complainant and the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales will be notified of the Committee's decision by Notice of Determination.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 3.00 pm

CHAIR

Agenda Item 5

Committee:	The Standards Committee
Date:	14 February 2022
Title:	Task and Finish Group – Ethical Standards Framework
Author:	Siôn Huws, Propriety and Elections Manager
Purpose:	To report back to the Committee

Background

1. The Committee considered the Monitoring Officer's report on the Review of the Ethical Standards Framework for Wales at its last meeting. The committee resolved to establish a Task and Finish Group to discuss the findings of the Review, paying particular attention to the following issues, and to make recommendations to the next meeting of the Committee: -

- The future shape of the Standards Committee;
- How the committee can be made more visible and more active within the Council; and
- How the co-ordination between the Committee and various Council services, such as Democracy Services, can be strengthened and enhanced.

2. To facilitate the discussion the following points were identified in advance as matters for the Working Group to consider:

- Consideration of the Richard Penn Report, in particular the recommendations
- Consider how the Gwynedd Standards Committee operates (strengths and weaknesses)
- Themes that the Committee could pursue in the future
- Practical ways of discharging the Committee's duties

Task and Finish Group Meeting 20/1/22

3. The findings and recommendations of the Working Group are summarised below:

Community Councils

- The biggest challenges appear to be amongst the community councils.
- The role of the clerk was key, and the type of support that could be offered to them should be explored.
- There appears to be a wide range of responsibilities, experience and remuneration amongst clerks, and further information regarding this would be helpful.
- The Committee would benefit from more specific information on where problems were occurring so that attention could be targeted where needed.

- The circumstances that tended to lead to problems with conduct in community councils should be analysed so that appropriate training and support could be planned.
- That the Chair and Community Committee Member carry out a piece of work with community and town council clerks to better understand their needs. Some specific clerks could be identified for an initial discussion, but it could then be expanded. An arrangement to enable clerks to feed back their views on an ongoing basis could also be explored.

The Code of Conduct

The provisions of the Code of Conduct could be divided into two main categories

- (1) Personal Interests
- (2) The conduct of individuals

Declarations of interest

- There appeared to be a lack of understanding of the requirements of the Code, especially among some town / community councillors, as to when a declaration of interest should be made and regarding participation in meetings.
- The question raised as to what extent there was consistency in the interpretation of these provisions across Wales was raised.
- The declarations of interest provisions are highly technical and require simple guidance.
- There was often frustration that members were not allowed to take part in discussions on issues where they would have a valuable contribution to make.
- Information should be made available on the Council's website about the process of applying for dispensations. This could include practical examples.

Individual Behaviour

- What is acceptable behaviour is to some extent a matter of judgment. The Standards Committee is a body that represents different perspectives and can come to a view on what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable behaviour as required. That said, there are also legal considerations and principles involved - through the provisions of the Equality Act and the Well-being and Future Generations Act for example. It was therefore important to gain an understanding of these issues among Committee members as well as members generally.
- Advantage should be taken of the wider resources and expertise that already exist within a Council, e.g. in the fields of human resources and equality, to provide training on behavioural issues.
- It would be useful to have a small, simple booklet explaining the Code of Conduct that could be issued to members when they took office.
- Discussions should be held with the Chief Executive and Political Group Leaders to ensure that higher standards are in their minds and are promoted throughout the Council, i.e. so that standards do not just sit with the Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer.

The Standards Committee

- There is a need to raise the profile of the Standards Committee. One way of doing this would be to have a dedicated page on the Council's website containing information about its work and resources to assist members and clerks.
- Consideration will need to be given to how a local resolution process would work, including whether for example it would be necessary to form sub-committees or co-operate with other committees to ensure the propriety of any such process.
- A desire was expressed for more information specifically more details on allegations so that the situation across the county could be better understood. It would be necessary to ensure that such information would not jeopardise any live complaints and any future cases that could come before the Committee.

Elections

- The conduct of election candidates was beyond the remit of the committee because the code did not apply to them. It was noted, however, that the code would apply to existing members and that this did not seem fair. The standard of conduct expected of candidates should therefore be drawn to the attention of the political groups.

Recommendation

4. The Committee is asked to consider the Task and Finish Group's recommendations and observations.

Agenda Item 6

Committee	Standards Committee
Date	14 February 2022
Title	Report on the outcome of the investigation of a complaint against Councillor Michael Stevens of Tywyn Town Council
Author	Propriety and Elections Manager
Action	To approve the report on the outcome of the investigation

Background

1. Under the provisions of the Local Government Investigations (Functions of Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees) (Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended) ("the Regulations"), the Committee is required to produce a report on the outcome of the above investigation .

2. This must be done either

(i) after the expiry of the time allowed for lodging an appeal,
(ii) upon receipt of notice of the conclusion of any appeal, or
(iii) following a further determination by the Standards Committee where an appeals tribunal has referred the matter back to the Committee,
whichever occurs last

3. Confirmation was received from the President of the Adjudication Panel for Wales on 24 January 2022 that Cllr. Stevens had submitted an application for leave to appeal against the decision of the Standards Committee, but that she had refused that request on the basis that there was no reasonable prospect that any of the grounds put forward would succeed.

Recommendation

4. The Committee is therefore asked to approve the attached report for submission to the Monitoring Officer, Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, Cllr. Stevens and the complainant in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations

Gwynedd Council Standards Committee

Report on the outcome of a complaint made against Councillor George Michael Stevens, Tywyn Town Council

- 1 This report is produced in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Investigations (Functions of Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees) (Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended) (“the Regulations”).

2. Following an investigation by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales into a complaint against Cllr. Stevens, the matter was referred to the Standards Committee for consideration. The Committee’s decision and the reasons for coming to that decision are set out in full in the **Notification of Decision** attached as an **Appendix** to this report.

3. In accordance with the Regulations, copies of this report will be sent to:
 - The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
 - Gwynedd Council’s Monitoring Officer
 - Cllr M. Stevens
 - The person who made the allegation

4. Following receipt of this report, the Monitoring Officer must:
 - publish the report on the relevant authority’s website and make copies available for inspection without charge at all reasonable hours at one or more of the authority’s offices, where any person shall be entitled to take copies of, or extracts from the report.
 - supply a copy of the report to any person on request
 - not later than 7 days after the report is received give public notice, by advertisement in newspapers circulating in the area and such other ways as appear to him or her to be appropriate that copies of the report will be available as provided for above

GWYNEDD COUNCIL

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Member	Councillor George Michael Stevens
Relevant Authority	Tywyn Town Council
Date and Location of Hearing	8 December 2021, conducted via Zoom
Complainant	Councillor John Pughe
Public Services Ombudsman Reference No.	201906873

Background

1. Gwynedd Council's Standards Committee considered a report from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales ("the Ombudsman") into a complaint from the Chair of the Personnel Committee of Tywyn Town Council ("the Council"), Councillor John Pughe, that Councillor George Michael Stevens ("the Member") had failed to observe the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.

2. It was alleged that the Member had been disrespectful to the Clerk of the Council ("the Clerk") and had repeatedly undermined her. The complaint related to correspondence sent by the Member to the Clerk and correspondence sent by the Member about the Clerk.

3. The Ombudsman concluded that the Member's correspondence included derogatory personal comments which were disrespectful and that comments about the Clerk's experience were intended to undermine the Clerk. The Member also used gendered language when commenting on the Clerk.

4. The Ombudsman determined that the Member may have breached the Council's Code of Conduct, in particular, paragraphs 4(a), 4(b) and 4(c), which provide:

"4. You must —

(a) carry out your duties and responsibilities with due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people, regardless of their gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age or religion;

(b) show respect and consideration for others;

(c) not use bullying behaviour or harass any person;"

The Ombudsman also found that the Member's actions could reasonably be regarded as behaviour which might have breached paragraph 6(1)(a) of the Code of Conduct:

6.—(1) You must — (a) not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute;

5. The Ombudsman referred his investigation report to the Monitoring Officer of Gwynedd Council for consideration by its Standards Committee.

The Hearing

6. The Senior Solicitor (Corporate) (Gwynedd Council's Deputy Monitoring Officer, who advised the Committee) presented his report at the commencement of the hearing. He explained that the Member had resigned as a member of Tywyn Town Council on 4 December 2021, and that the Member had confirmed that he did not intend to attend the hearing. He explained that the resignation of the Member did not alter the fact that the Committee was required to consider and decide on the Ombudsman's report. However, the sanction of suspension was no longer available to the Committee, should it conclude that the Member had breached the Code.

7. The Committee resolved to proceed with the hearing and considered the Ombudsman's written report together with the further documents submitted by the Member and the Ombudsman in accordance with the Committee's pre-hearing procedure. The Committee also considered the oral submissions from Katrin Shaw, Chief Legal Adviser and Director of Investigations of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and from Leigh McAndrew, the Ombudsman's Investigating Officer, who were present at the hearing.

The Decision

8. The Committee first considered any finding of fact that it needed to make. The complaint concerned correspondence from the Member over a period of approximately 12 months. This correspondence was contained in the written evidence before it and therefore there was no doubt about what the Member had written. The one relevant disputed factual issue noted in the report was that the member denied that he intended to send his email dated 22 January 2020 to all members of Gwynedd Council.

9. In relation to this e-mail, the Committee considered the fact that the member had emphasised that he was always very careful as to what he puts in writing, and the fact that, at the time of writing and before it was sent, it would be obvious that the email would be sent to a large number of people. The e-mail in question was a response to a general invitation to all Gwynedd Council members by the Head of Finance. The fact that the Member had chosen to make critical comments about the Monitoring Officer in his response rather than just sending his apologies, strongly suggested that he intended for members to see these comments. The fact that the email did not specifically address one recipient (unlike many of his other emails) further reinforced this interpretation.

10. The Committee therefore decided that it was satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that the Member intended to send the e-mail to all members.

11. The Committee proceeded to consider the Member's conduct, and after careful consideration of all the evidence presented, the Committee determined that the Member had failed to comply with the Code of Conduct as follows:

12. The Committee found that the Member had breached paragraph 4 (a) of the Code of Conduct for the following reasons:

12.1 The Committee found that the Member had used gender-based language in his correspondence using words such as "misandrist" and "overbearing school mistress" to describe the Clerk and described her as "slowly emasculating the Council". He had continued to use such language when interviewed by the Ombudsman and referred to the Clerk several times as "this / that woman" and

that he thought it true (as someone had told him) that the Clerk was a "man-hating vegan" due to her connection with the Women's Equality Party.

12.2 The Committee was of the opinion that there was a pattern of using discriminatory language towards, and about the Clerk and that taken as a whole showed that the Member had failed to behave in a manner which had due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all, irrespective of (among other issues) their gender.

13. The Committee found that the Member had breached paragraph 4 (b) of the Code of Conduct for the following reasons:

13.1 Whilst accepting that the Member had the right to criticise the Clerk's performance of her duties, the Committee considered how that criticism was expressed. The Committee found, in the correspondence, a pattern of criticism that was made in a manner that went beyond what it considered acceptable, whatever the Member's view of the Clerk's conduct as the clerk of the Council.

13.2 The Committee felt that the words used by the Member and also the tone of the emails were unacceptable. This was not an isolated case, but a consistent pattern of criticism over a considerable period of time using derogatory personal terms. He had also referred to her on many occasions as being new and inexperienced despite having been in post for 3 years, stating that she had a far too high opinion of herself and her ability, and was out of control. Furthermore, members of the Council were included in this correspondence.

13.3 Although it was not within the Committee's remit or powers to decide on the Clerk's own conduct, the Committee did take it into consideration as context for the Member's behaviour. Whilst accepting that the member had strong views about the way in which the Council was run and felt frustrated, it did not provide an excuse for behaving in the way he did. The conduct of the Member was his own responsibility and no one else's.

13.4 The Committee was very concerned, when considering this particular paragraph of the Code, about the view expressed by the Member at his interview with the Ombudsman when discussing his conduct towards the Clerk. The Member said that he believed that respect was not "a divine right" and had to be earned. The Committee disagreed, and the Code makes it clear that members must show respect and consideration for others.

13.5 Having concluded that the conduct was in breach of this paragraph, the Committee then went on to consider the behaviour in the context of Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The Committee accepted that political expression attracted an enhanced level of protection, and this could include the expression of views in relation to the way in which an authority was administered. However, as the Ombudsman explained in his report, "*the right of enhanced protection afforded to Councillors to make political representations does not include the right to make unwanted or insulting personal remarks, nor any representations discriminatory*". The Committee also took into account that these comments were directed to a paid officer of the Council and not to another member, who could be expected to have a "thicker skin".

13.6 The Committee therefore considered that the comments went beyond what could be considered as political comment that would be protected under Article 10.

14. The Committee found that the Member had breached paragraph 4 (c) of the Code of Conduct for the following reasons:

14.1 The Committee found that the Member's behaviour amounted to bullying and harassment. It was noted that the Ombudsman's Guidelines described bullying as behaviour that seeks to undermine an individual, is detrimental to their confidence and ability and can adversely affect their health. Harassment is described in the Guidelines as repeated behaviour which annoys or upsets people.

14.2 The Committee considered that the Member, through his correspondence sought to undermine the Clerk and was damaging to her confidence. He criticised not only her work and her ability but also attacked her character, and did so in correspondence that had been shared with other members of the Council. It was also noted that the Clerk had been absent from work as a result of this behaviour. The Committee also found that as there was a pattern of such behaviour that it also constituted harassment.

14.3 Whilst the Member was entitled to scrutinise and criticise the Clerk's performance, his conduct, and in particular the manner in which he had chosen to express his dissatisfaction, far exceeded what was acceptable to him even after allowing for the enhanced protection afforded to political expression.

15. The Committee found that the Member had breached paragraph 6 (1) (a) of the Code of Conduct for the following reasons:

15.1 Looking at the conduct of the Member as a whole, the Committee considered that it was sufficiently serious in nature to bring the Council and his office as a member into disrepute. The behaviour had been detrimental to the relationships within the Council and to its administration, and had damaged its reputation

Sanction

16. The Committee considered that this a serious breach of a code of conduct. In considering what sanction was appropriate, it took into account what the Ombudsman's representative had to say at the hearing and also the issues set out in the Sanctions Guidance issued by the Adjudication Panel for Wales, as mitigating and aggravating factors.

16.1 With regard to mitigating factors:

The Committee acknowledged that the Member had engaged in the investigation process, but on the other hand also noted the Ombudsman's comments that it had proved a very difficult investigation due to the Member's conduct.

It was also acknowledged that the Member felt very strongly about the way the Council was run, that he felt that his comments were not listened to and that he believed he was acting in good faith.

16.3 Turning to the consideration of aggravating factors, the Committee found that a number of these were present in the conduct leading up to the complaint and during the course of the investigation:

Seeking to blame others unfairly for the Member's own actions

A lack of understanding or acceptance of the misconduct and any consequences
Failure to heed previous advice and/or warnings, specifically from the Ombudsman and following an investigation by One Voice Wales.

Refusal to accept the facts despite the clear evidence to the contrary

16.4 Having considered the seriousness of the conduct in question and having considered the relevant mitigating and aggravating factors, the Committee resolved that the Member should be censured, as this is the maximum sanction that the Committee can impose following the Member's resignation from the Council.

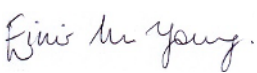
16.5 The Committee nevertheless wished to put on record that, except for his resignation from the Council, it was likely to have suspended the Member from the Council and to have done so for the maximum possible period.

16.6 The Committee also asks the Member to consider and reflect on his conduct, in particular the way he speaks and corresponds with others in any other current or future public role. The Committee also encourages him to take advantage of any training opportunities available in relation to the Code of Conduct for Members

Appeal

17. The Member may seek permission to appeal against the Committee's determination to an appeals tribunal drawn from the Adjudication Panel for Wales by giving notice in writing within 21 days of receiving this notification of determination to the president of the Adjudication Panel for Wales. The notice seeking permission to appeal must specify the grounds of appeal and whether or not permission to appeal is granted, he consents to the appeal being conducted by written representations. (Further details can be found on the Adjudication Panel's website www.adjudicationpanel.gov.wales)

18. In accordance with the Local Government Investigations (Functions of Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees) (Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended) the Member, the complainant and the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales are notified of the Committee's decision by this Notice of Determination.

Signed: 

Dr Einir Young, Chair, on behalf of the Standards Committee

Dated: 17th December 2021

Agenda Item 7

Committee:	The Standards Committee
Date:	14 February 2022
Title:	Allegations against members
Author:	Siôn Huws, Propriety and Elections Manager
Purpose:	For information

1. Background

The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the Ombudsman's decisions on formal complaints against members.

2. Decisions

We have received the following decisions from the Ombudsman since the last report.

Complaint	Decision
Complaint No. 202002215 & 202002555	<p>Following an investigation, the Ombudsman referred complaints against Councillor Roy Owen to the Adjudication Panel for Wales.</p> <p>A Tribunal decided that he should be suspended from membership of Gwynedd Council and the Caernarfon Royal Town Council for a period of 9 months or, if less, until the end of his term of office.</p> <p>The full decision of the Panel can be found on its website (www.adjudicationpanel.gov.wales) or by following the following link</p> <p>Decisions The Adjudication Panel for Wales (gov.wales)</p>
Complaint No. 201906873	<p>Following an investigation, the Ombudsman referred complaints against Councillor Mike Stevens, Tywyn Town Council to the Standards Committee.</p> <p>The Committee decided that the member should be censured. This was the maximum sanction available to the Committee following the resignation of the member</p>

	from the Town Council. Further details are contained in a separate report to the Committee.
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3. Analysis of the Complaints

Below is an analysis of this year's complaints (2021/22) where a decision has been received:

Member who is subject of the complaint	
Member of community council	5
Member of Gwynedd Council	1
Member of Gwynedd Council and community council	
Nature of the complainant	
Councillor	3
Member of the public	3
Officer	1
Nature of the allegation	
General conduct	7
Declaration of Interest	
Conduct & Declaration of Interest	
Outcome	
No Investigation	4
Investigation – No evidence of breaching the Code of Conduct	0
Investigation - No further steps required	1
Investigation – Referral to Standards Committee	1
Investigation – Referral to Adjudication Panel for Wales	1

4. Open Cases

4.1 The situation in relation to other cases is as follows:

- **Ombudsman considering whether to investigate** 1
- **Ombudsman investigating** 2
- **Referred to Standards Committee** 0
- **Referred to Adjudication Panel for Wales** 0

5. Recommendation

5.1 The Committee is asked to note the information.

Agenda Item 8

Committee :	Standards Committee
Date :	14 February 2022
Title :	Adjudication Panel for Wales – Annual Reports 2019-20 and 2020-21
Author :	Monitoring Officer
Purpose :	Presented for information

Background

1. Members will be aware that the Adjudication Panel for Wales' role is to form case tribunals to consider allegations that members have breached the Code of Conduct. The Panel will receive such allegations in one of two ways – either directly from the Ombudsman or in the form of Appeals against decisions made by Standards Committees.

2. A copy of the Panel's Annual Reports are attached for the Committee's attention.

Recommendation

3. The Committee is asked to note this report for information.



Adjudication Panel for Wales Annual Report

Year 2019 – 2020

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Section 4	Business Priorities	15
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Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Foreword

This is my fifth annual report as President of the Adjudication Panel for Wales. The report covers the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020.

We aim to ensure that the Panel serves the public interest by dealing with any disputes both efficiently and effectively. We make every effort to ensure that all those involved in the dispute feel that the dispute has been fairly resolved within as short a timescale as is reasonable. We are conscious that the public must have confidence that any breaches of the Code of Conduct will be dealt with fairly in order to uphold trust and confidence in local democracy.

The cases heard during this financial year involved a variety of alleged breaches of the Code, but for all cases the question of whether the councillor had brought the authority or his office into disrepute arose. The purpose of the Code, standards committees and the Panel is to ensure that not only are standards in public life set out clearly and followed, but to maintain public confidence in local democracy. This aspect of “public interest” remains of central importance as reflected in the Sanctions Guidance.

The Panel has grown to ensure cases are resolved efficiently and to expand the skills and knowledge available to it. Two new legal members were appointed, and the APW took part in the cross-ticketing of lay members to appoint another member. I was gratified to see the success of our members in being cross-ticketed to sister tribunals, demonstrating the abilities of our members and developing cross-jurisdictional judgecraft.

This financial year the Panel gained access to technology allowing it to hear cases remotely and in public. This has enabled the Panel’s work to continue unaffected by the pandemic underway as this report is written, and may lead to changes in our procedures; for example, pre-hearing reviews may be heard virtually, saving costs and travel time. The first Panel Practice Direction was issued to ensure councillors fully understand the importance in completing the response form and the consequences of failing to do so.

Any questions or comments arising as to any aspect of the workings of the Panel, or as to the contents of the Report, are most welcome and should in the first instance be addressed to the Registrar.



Claire Sharp
President, Adjudication Panel for Wales

Section 1 – About Us

In this section:

- Basis for the APW
- The APW's Function
- The APW's Regulations
- The APW's Process
- Members of the APW
- Appointments
- Training
- Contacting the APW
- Accessing the APW

Basis for the APW

The Adjudication Panel for Wales (APW) is an independent tribunal that has 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.

The APW was established under Part III of the Local Government Act 2000.

The APW's Function

The Code of Conduct for an authority provides its members with a set of standards expected of them in public life. The code of conduct covers various requirements as to how members should conduct themselves and includes requirements in relation to equality, personal and prejudicial interests, confidential information, their authority's resources and the need to avoid bringing their office or authority into disrepute.

The APW has two statutory functions in relation to breaches of the Code of Conduct:

- to form case or interim case tribunals ("Case Tribunals") to consider **references** from the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW), following the investigation of allegations that a member has failed to comply with their authority's Code of Conduct; and
- to consider **appeals** from members against the decisions of local authority standards committees that they have breached the Code of Conduct ("Appeal Tribunals").

The APW's Regulations

- The APW operates in accordance with its procedural regulations and other associated legislation. The regulations ensure that all cases heard by the APW are treated fairly, consistently, promptly and justly. They ensure that everyone who comes before the APW clearly understands the steps they must take so that the facts of the dispute and the relevant arguments can be presented effectively to the APW. They also ensure that every party to a case understands the arguments of the other party and can respond to them.

APW's procedures are governed by the following legislation:

- The Local Government Act 2000 (as amended);
- The Adjudications by Case Tribunals and Interim Case Tribunals (Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended), and
- The Local Government Investigations (Functions of Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees (Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended)).

The APW's Process

Anyone wishing to respond to a reference from the PSOW or to make an application for permission to appeal to the APW must complete and send the relevant form to the APW.

At an APW hearing the panel is composed of a legally qualified chairperson and 2 lay members. Legally qualified members can also sit as a lay member. APW hearings are normally held in public and take place near to the authority area.

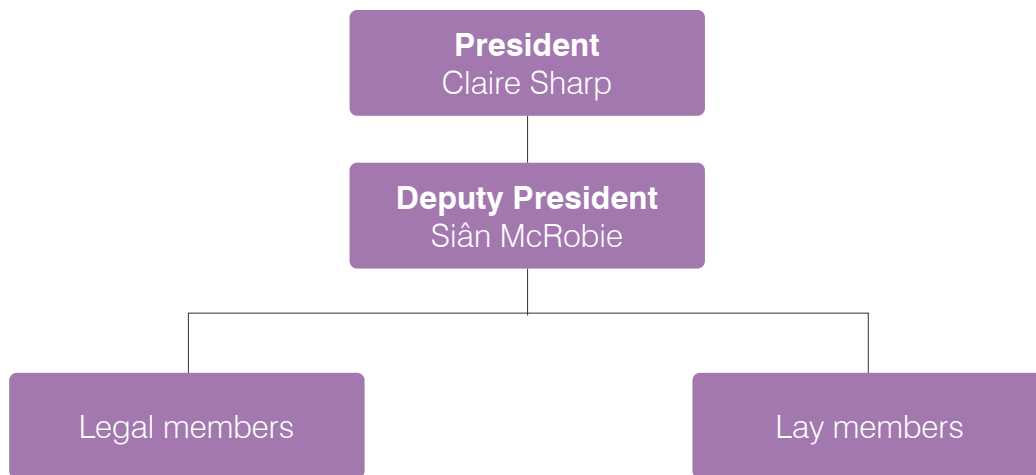
The APW publishes its decisions on the website for the APW. Decisions of Case Tribunals can be appealed on limited grounds to the High Court. Permission to appeal to the High Court must first be sought from the High Court.

Full information and guidance about the APW and its procedures, are provided on the website for the APW. Alternatively, please contact the APW administration for further information or if you would like to receive publications in a different format. The contact details can be found on page 7.

Members of the APW

Appointments to the APW are made by the First Minister after consideration of recommendations made by the Judicial Appointments Commission.

President	The President has judicial responsibility for the APW and its members.
Deputy President	The Deputy President supports the President and fulfils the duties of President if the President is unable to carry out her duties, either temporarily or permanently.
Legal Members	Legal members are qualified lawyers and have responsibility for conducting proceedings at hearings and advising the administration on matters of law. Legal members write APW decisions and give directions where necessary.
Lay Members	Lay members have a wide range of knowledge and experience relevant to the work of the APW.
Administration	The day-to-day administration is largely delegated to the administration which deals with all the preliminary paperwork and the processing of applications to the APW. The administration consults the President and/or legal members on all legal points arising during the preliminary pre-hearing stages of the proceedings and sends rulings and directions in writing to the parties. The administration acts as a point of contact for chairpersons, members and APW users and attends hearings to help with the efficient running of proceedings.



Appointments

During this period, we have appointed 1 new lay member cross ticketed from another tribunal. 2 new legal members were appointed (through the Judicial Appointments Commission) under the Local Government Act 2000.

Training

A training seminar was held on 10 May 2019, with a continued emphasis on judgecraft. Sessions on communication and freedom of expression were also delivered. All new members received induction training in addition (legal members in May 2019 and lay member in April 2020).

A programme of performance appraisal for APW members has been completed over previous years. It is anticipated that the next round of performance appraisal for APW members will start during the course of the 2020/21 year, depending on the pandemic.

Contacting the APW

To contact the APW Administration:

APW Address: Adjudication Panel for Wales
Oak House
Cleppa Park
Celtic Springs
Newport
NP10 8BD

APW Helpline: 03000 259805
APW E-mail: adjudication.panel@gov.wales

Accessing the APW

The APW is happy to communicate with you in Welsh or English. If a Welsh speaker is not immediately available then we will arrange for a Welsh-speaking member of staff to phone you back.

You can choose to have your hearing conducted in Welsh or English. If your first language is not Welsh or English and you wish to speak in your first language during the hearing, we can arrange for an interpreter to be present. If you need a sign language interpreter to attend the hearing we will arrange this.

If you or anyone you are bringing to the hearing has any other access requirements that may affect our arrangements for the hearing, provisions will be made.

To enable arrangements for interpreters or to make provisions for any additional needs of attendees, sufficient notice must be given to the administration.

Section 2 – Performance and Progress

In this section:

- Numbers and statistics
- Hearings Data
- Onward appeals
- Achievement against key performance indicators
- Complaints

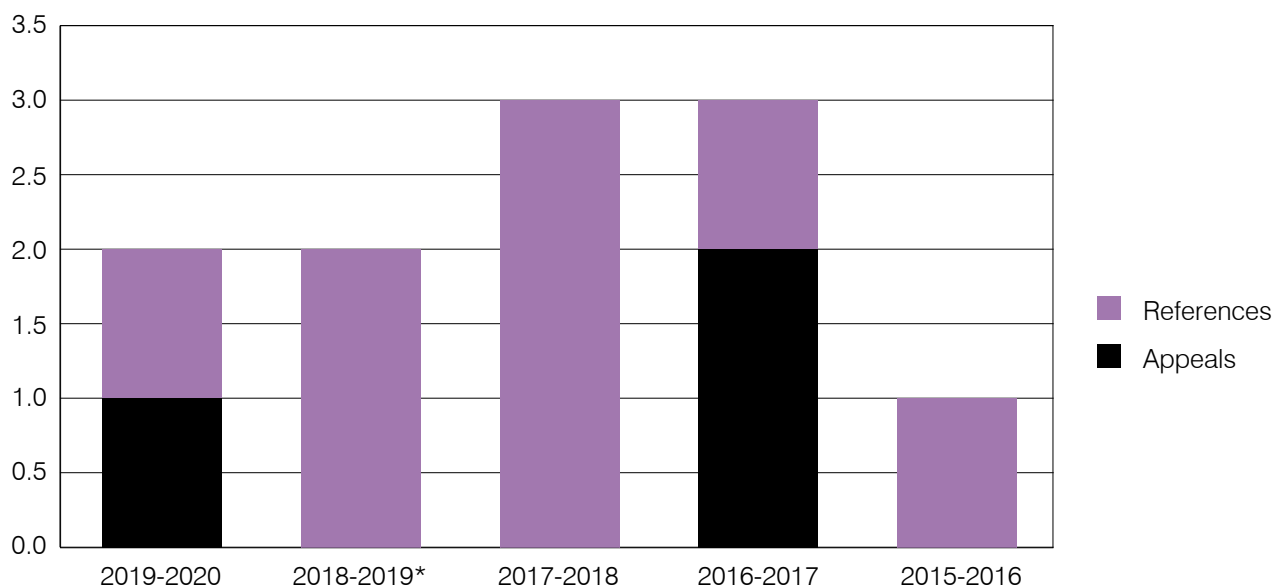
Numbers and Statistics

A Tribunal year runs from April to March. As the numbers of cases received are relatively low, figures are given for a 5 year period to allow for comparison.

The following statistics are collated:

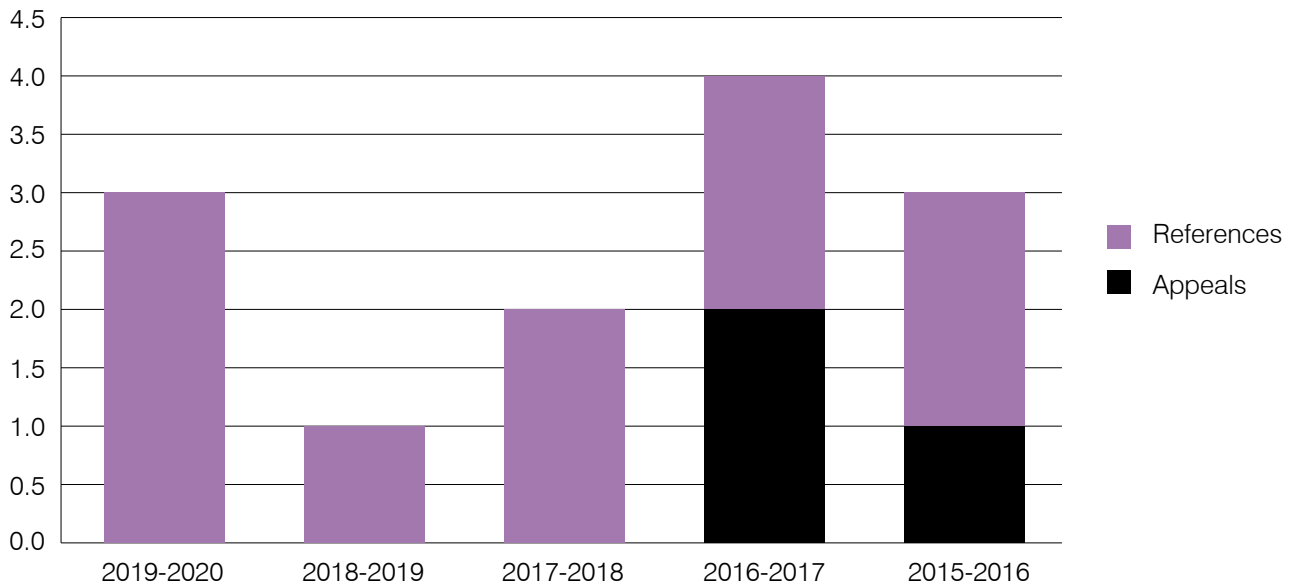
- Number of references and appeals received
- Type of applications received and registered
- Number of applications finalised
- Outcome of applications.

Graph 2.1: Number of references and appeals received by year



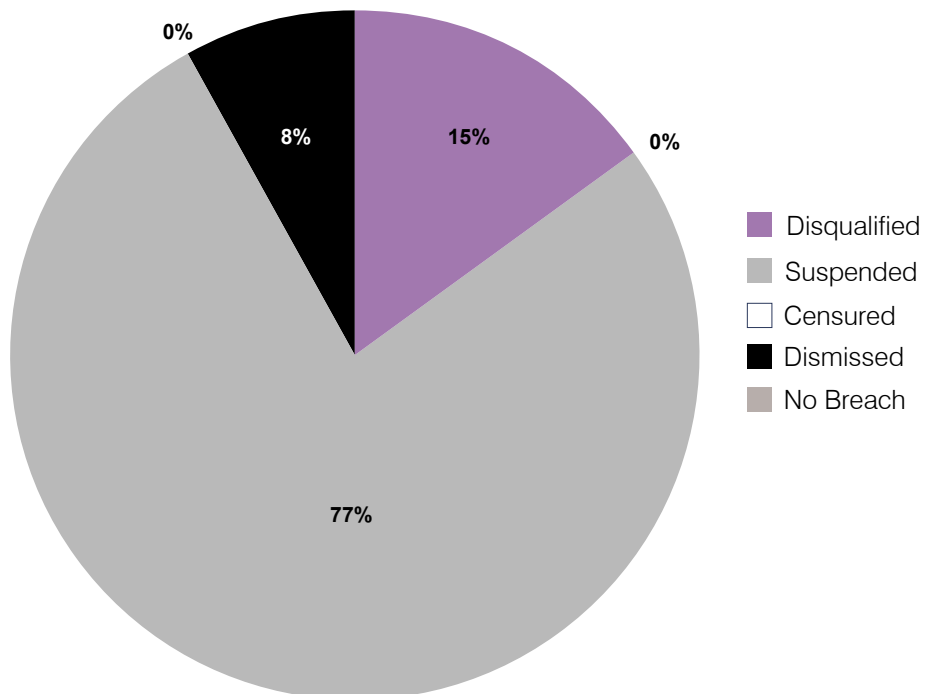
*The 2018-2019 figure was incorrectly detailed in the 2018-2019 Annual Report which has been corrected above.

Graph 2.2: Number of references and appeals decided by year April 2015-March 2020

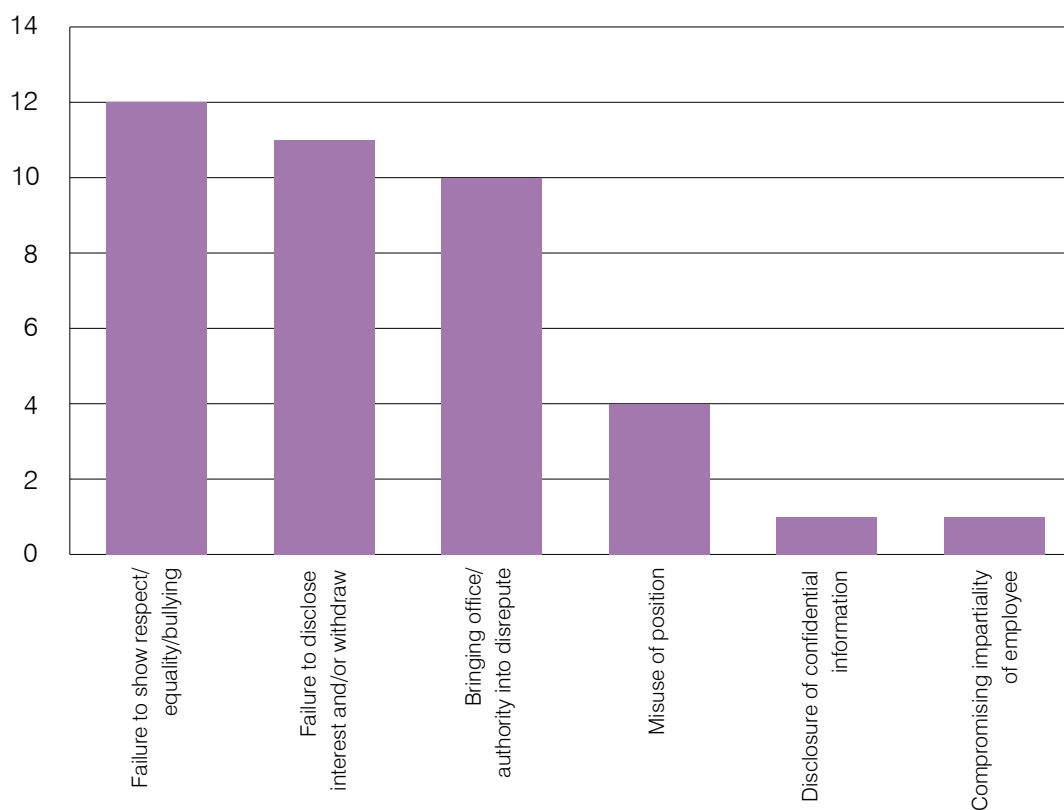


Charts 2.3: Outcomes of references and appeals April 2015-March 2020

The chart below shows the outcome of references and appeals decided by the Adjudication Panel over the last 5 years



Graph 2.4: Breaches by type April 2015-March 2020



Hearings data

During 2019-2020:

Type	Length (in days)
Reference	5 hearing days
Appeal	0 hearing days

There was also 3 telephone conferences which took place in relation to these cases.

Onward appeals

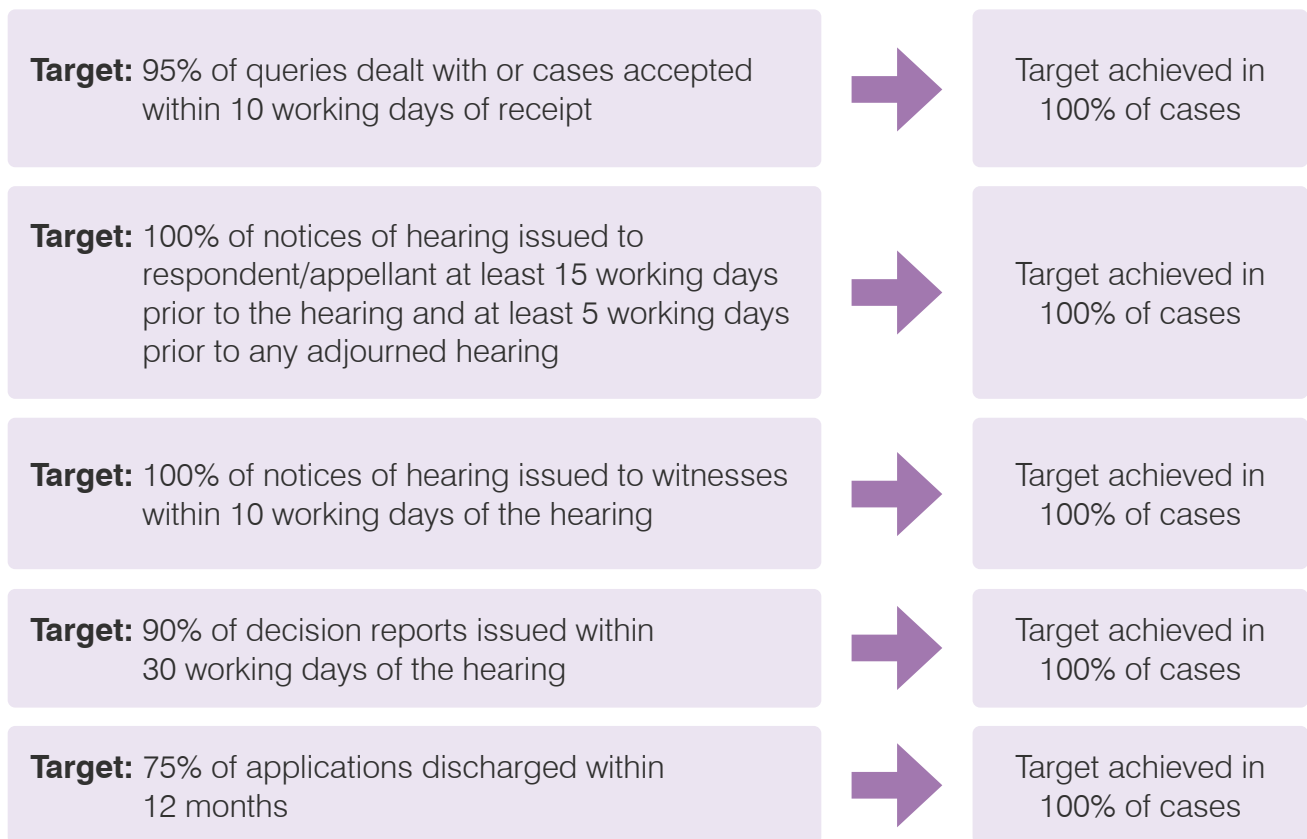
Applications for permission to appeal a decision of a Case Tribunal or Interim Case Tribunal can be made on limited grounds to the High Court. Over the period of this report, no applications for permission were made.

Achievement against key performance indicators

To monitor how effectively services are delivered, we have key performance indicators aimed at measuring two key aspects of our business; the speed of our service and the quality of service through customer satisfaction.

To measure the speed of our service, we have a series of primary performance indicators based on the time taken to process an application – from receipt to the hearing or disposal (see below).

Speed of our service 2018-2019



Complaints

The APW received no formal complaints during the reporting period.

Section 3 – Case summaries

In this section:

- References
- Appeals

References

During the reporting period, 3 case tribunals took place resulting from a reference from the Ombudsman. A summary of the cases determined by the APW appears below.

APW/001/2018-019/CT

Monmouthshire County Council (currently Mathern Community Council)

The allegations were that the councillor had breached the Code of Conduct of Monmouthshire County Council by conducting himself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing his office or the authority into disrepute.

The conduct arose during a previous case tribunal involving the councillor (in which he had been found to have homophobic statements over several months in 2016 and had been suspended by Panel for two months) and shortly after that hearing. The councillor made two statements in July 2018 when the Panel was delivering its finding regarding sanction at the first case tribunal and in a letter sent afterwards to the Panel, which were alleged to be a breach of paragraph 6(1)(a) of the Code.

The case tribunal dismissed the reference on the basis that the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales had not received a written allegation as required under section 69(1) of the Local Government Act 2000 to commence an investigation to come before a second case tribunal. It did not accept that the Ombudsman could rely on the written allegation received for the first case tribunal as the allegations before the second case tribunal did not come to his attention as a result of the investigation undertaken for the first case tribunal.

APW/002/2018-019/CT

Powys County Council and Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

The allegations were that the councillor had breached the Code of Conduct for Powys County Council and Brecon Beacons National Park Authority by failing to show respect and consideration for others, conducting himself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing his office or the authority into disrepute, and using or attempting to use his position improperly to confer on or secure for himself or any other person an advantage or create or avoid for himself or any other person a disadvantage.

The proceedings arose from an incident at a meeting of the National Park Authority where the councillor made contact with part of another councillor's anatomy, which led to a complaint being raised. The accused councillor later made a number of comments to third parties which appeared to be threatening consequences if the complaint was continued; these comments led to a new complaint from one of the third parties present.

The case tribunal found by unanimous decision that the councillor had failed to comply with the Code of Conduct for Powys County Council and Brecon Beacons National Park Authority as follows.

- You must show respect and consideration for others (paragraph 4(b));
- You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute (paragraph 6(1)(a));
- You must not in your official capacity or otherwise, use or attempt to use your position improperly to confer on or secure for yourself, or any other person, an advantage or create or avoid for yourself, or any other person, a disadvantage (paragraph 7(a)).

The case tribunal concluded by unanimous decision that the councillor should be suspended for four months from being a member of Powys County Council and Brecon Beacons National Park Authority within the meaning of the Local Government Act 2000. It also recommended that the councillor received further training regarding his duties under the Code of Conduct from or on behalf of the monitoring officer of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority by 31 January 2020.

APW/001/2019-020/CT
Flintshire County Council

The allegations were that the councillor had breached the Code of Conduct of Flintshire County Council by conducting himself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing his office or the authority into disrepute; by using or attempting to use his position improperly to confer on or secure for himself or any other person an advantage or create or avoid for himself or any other person a disadvantage; and by using or authorising others to use the resources of the authority imprudently, in breach of the authority's requirements, unlawfully, other than in a manner which is calculated to facilitate or to be conducive to the discharge of the functions of the authority or office to which he had been elected or appointed, or improperly for political or private purposes.

The allegations centred on alleged conduct by the councillor involving one member of council staff. It was alleged that the councillor had assisted the member of staff to giving her an opportunity to view interview questions, and that he had used or allowed the member of staff to use a vehicle hired through a council scheme in breach of paragraph 7(b) of the Code. It was further alleged that the councillor had conducted himself in a manner that could reasonably be regarded as bringing his office or the authority into disrepute through the use or authorisation of the use of the vehicle, and by the exchange of inappropriate messages, including those of a sexual nature, with the member of staff.

The case tribunal found by unanimous decision that the councillor had failed to comply with Flintshire County Council's Code of Conduct as follows:

- You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute (paragraph 6(1)(a));
- You must not in your official capacity or otherwise, use or attempt to use your position improperly to confer on or secure for yourself, or any other person, an advantage or create or avoid for yourself, or any other person, a disadvantage (paragraph 7(a)).

The case tribunal concluded by unanimous decision that the councillor should be suspended for three months from being a member of Flintshire County Council within the meaning of the Local Government Act 2000.

Appeals

One application to appeal was made to the President of the APW during the reporting period. Permission was granted to appeal the sanction imposed by the standards committee of the relevant authority and the appeal was concluded during the following financial year.

Section 4 – Business Priorities

In this section:

- Business priorities for 2020-2021

It is important that the APW continues to develop in order to deliver the best possible service for our customers. This section is about how the APW will build on its achievements through focusing on business priorities and our commitment to our customers.

Business Priorities 2020-2021

- Plan and deliver an all-members training event;
- Complete a communication strategy in order to inform the public in a more accessible manner about the APW and its work, including updating the APW website to include non-written forms of communication;
- Deliver an effective and efficient service, meeting key performance indicators;
- Provide further guidance to users on a variety of topics.

Section 5 – Expenditure

In this section:

- Expenditure for 2019-2020

Expenditure for 2019-2020

Content	Amount
Members Fees and Expenses (proceedings and training)	£30,072
Tribunal events (hearing and other costs)	£4,006
Total	£34,078

rounded to the nearest £1,000



Adjudication Panel for Wales Annual Report

Year 2020 – 2021

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Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Foreword

This is my sixth report as President of the Adjudication Panel for Wales. The report covers the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021.

We aim to ensure that the Panel serves the public interest by dealing with any disputes both efficiently and effectively. We make every effort to ensure that all those involved in the dispute feel that the dispute has been fairly resolved within as short a timescale as is reasonable. We are conscious that the public must have confidence that any breaches of the Code of Conduct will be dealt with fairly in order to uphold trust and confidence in local democracy.

This year has undoubtedly been a year like no other, not only for the APW, but for everyone. Remote technology has enabled the Panel to continue its work unabated. While the use of such technology is likely to remain for the long-term, the return of the “face to face” aspect of our work is hoped for by the end of the next financial year (depending on social distancing guidance). That said, virtual hearings may make it easier for members of the public to attend our hearings which are principally held in public to ensure transparency and uphold the open justice principle. The APW will review for each case the best way to hold a hearing.

During the year covered by this report, the APW issued three Presidential Guidance documents on disclosure, anonymity and the role of the monitoring officer. These documents were prepared following consultation with stakeholders and to ensure both consistency and a deeper understanding of our processes. I also hope that the guidance might assist local government standards committees where appropriate when dealing with their own hearings.

The APW has updated its website to include information videos and briefings about the Panel and its processes, aimed to explain in an accessible way to the public our work and role. Due to the pandemic, we were unable to attend planned outreach events.

I would like to pay tribute to, and thank, all the members of the Panel and the administration, including the Registrar, for continuing to perform their public duty fairly, efficiently and professionally. Their commitment to doing so, even when they, their loved ones or community were affected by COVID-19, is something of which I am immensely proud.

Any questions or comments arising as to any aspect of the workings of the Panel, or as to the contents of the Report, are most welcome and should in the first instance be addressed to the Registrar.

Claire Sharp
President, Adjudication Panel for Wales

Section 1 – About Us

In this section:

- Basis for the APW
- The APW's Function
- The APW's Regulations
- The APW's Process
- Members of the APW
- Appointments
- Training
- Contacting the APW
- Accessing the APW

Basis for the APW

The Adjudication Panel for Wales (APW) is an independent tribunal that has 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.

The APW was established under Part III of the Local Government Act 2000.

The APW's Function

The Code of Conduct for an authority provides its members with a set of standards expected of them in public life. The code of conduct covers various requirements as to how members should conduct themselves and includes requirements in relation to equality, personal and prejudicial interests, confidential information, their authority's resources and the need to avoid bringing their office or authority into disrepute.

The APW has two statutory functions in relation to breaches of the Code of Conduct:

- to form case or interim case tribunals ("Case Tribunals") to consider **references** from the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW), following the investigation of allegations that a member has failed to comply with their authority's Code of Conduct; and
- to consider **appeals** from members against the decisions of local authority standards committees that they have breached the Code of Conduct ("Appeal Tribunals").

The APW's Regulations

The APW operates in accordance with its procedural regulations and other associated legislation. The regulations ensure that all cases heard by the APW are treated fairly, consistently, promptly and justly. They ensure that everyone who comes before the APW clearly understands the steps they must take so that the facts of the dispute and the relevant arguments can be presented effectively to the APW. They also ensure that every party to a case understands the arguments of the other party and can respond to them.

APW's procedures are governed by the following legislation:

- The Local Government Act 2000 (as amended);
- The Adjudications by Case Tribunals and Interim Case Tribunals (Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended), and
- The Local Government Investigations (Functions of Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees (Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended)).

The APW's Process

Anyone wishing to respond to a reference from the PSOW or to make an application for permission to appeal to the APW must complete and send the relevant form to the APW.

At an APW hearing the panel is composed of a legally qualified chairperson and 2 lay members. Legally qualified members can also sit as a lay member. APW hearings are normally held in public and take place near to the authority area.

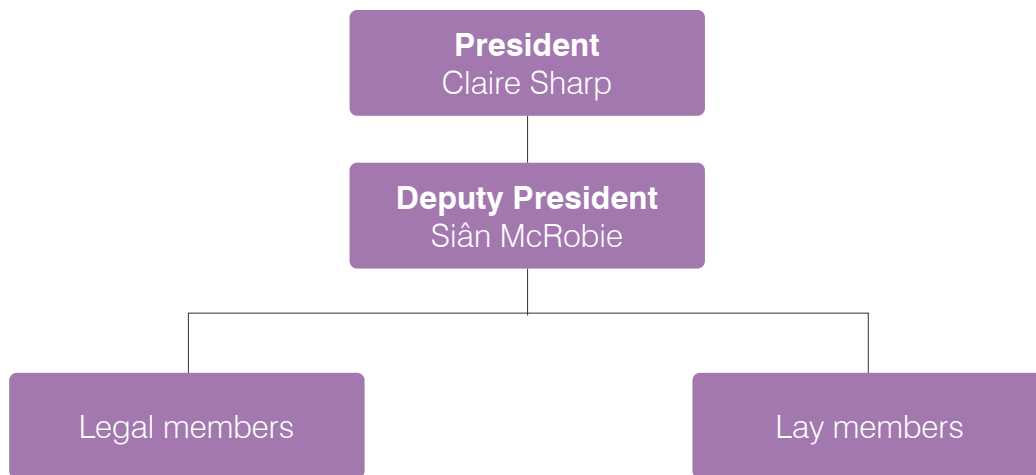
The APW publishes its decisions on the website for the APW. Decisions of Case Tribunals can be appealed on limited grounds to the High Court. Permission to appeal to the High Court must first be sought from the High Court.

Full information and guidance about the APW and its procedures, are provided on the website for the APW. Alternatively, please contact the APW administration for further information or if you would like to receive publications in a different format. The contact details can be found on page 7.

Members of the APW

Appointments to the APW are made by the First Minister after consideration of recommendations made by the Judicial Appointments Commission.

President	The President has judicial responsibility for the APW and its members.
Deputy President	The Deputy President supports the President and fulfils the duties of President if the President is unable to carry out her duties, either temporarily or permanently.
Legal Members	Legal members are qualified lawyers and have responsibility for conducting proceedings at hearings and advising the administration on matters of law. Legal members write APW decisions and give directions where necessary.
Lay Members	Lay members have a wide range of knowledge and experience relevant to the work of the APW.
Administration	The day-to-day administration is largely delegated to the administration which deals with all the preliminary paperwork and the processing of applications to the APW. The administration consults the President and/or legal members on all legal points arising during the preliminary pre-hearing stages of the proceedings and sends rulings and directions in writing to the parties. The administration acts as a point of contact for chairpersons, members and APW users and attends hearings to help with the efficient running of proceedings.



Appointments

During this period, we have had no new appointed members.

Training

A training seminar was held on 1 May 2020, with a continued emphasis on judgecraft; particularly regarding vulnerability and developing a reflective practice. Sessions on applications to hear matters in private and the technology to support the Panel's work were also delivered. A lay member received induction training in April 2020.

A programme of performance appraisal for APW members has been completed over previous years. It is anticipated that the next round of performance appraisal for APW members will start during the course of the 2021/22 year, depending on the pandemic.

Contacting the APW

To contact the APW Administration:

APW Address: Adjudication Panel for Wales
Oak House
Cleppa Park
Celtic Springs
Newport
NP10 8BD

APW Helpline: 03000 259805

APW E-mail: adjudication.panel@gov.wales

Accessing the APW

The APW is happy to communicate with you in Welsh or English. If a Welsh speaker is not immediately available then we will arrange for a Welsh-speaking member of staff to phone you back.

You can choose to have your hearing conducted in Welsh or English. If your first language is not Welsh or English and you wish to speak in your first language during the hearing, we can arrange for an interpreter to be present. If you need a sign language interpreter to attend the hearing we will arrange this.

If you or anyone you are bringing to the hearing has any other access requirements that may affect our arrangements for the hearing, provisions will be made.

To enable arrangements for interpreters or to make provisions for any additional needs of attendees, sufficient notice must be given to the administration.

Section 2 – Performance and Progress

In this section:

- Numbers and statistics
- Hearings Data
- Onward appeals
- Achievement against key performance indicators
- Complaints

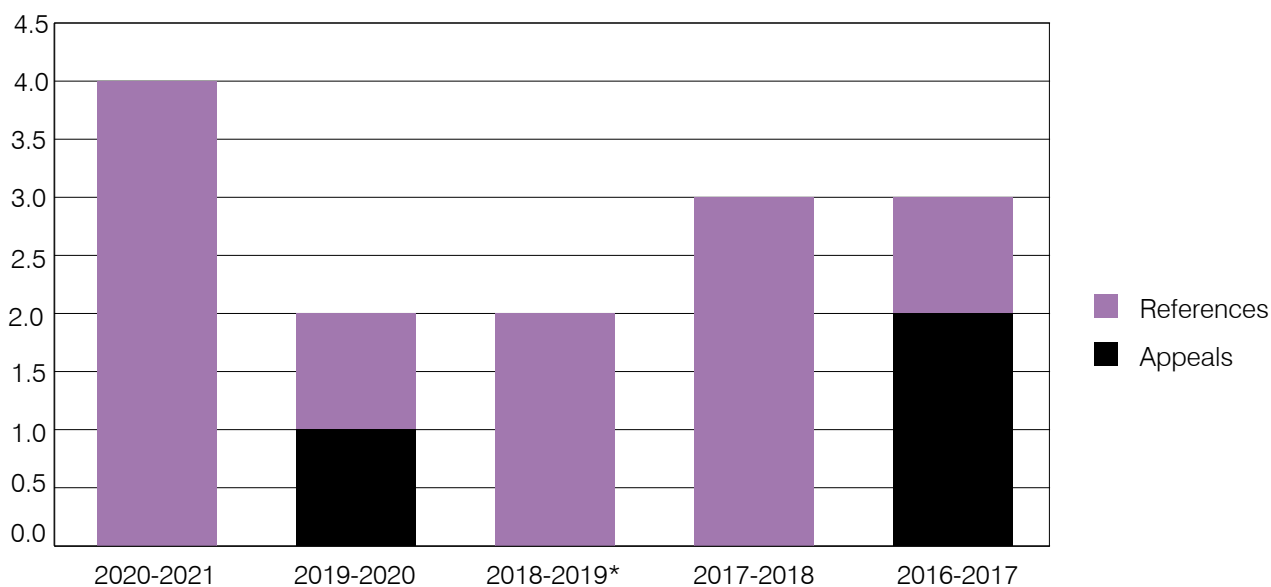
Numbers and Statistics

A Tribunal year runs from April to March. As the numbers of cases received are relatively low, figures are given for a 5 year period to allow for comparison.

The following statistics are collated:

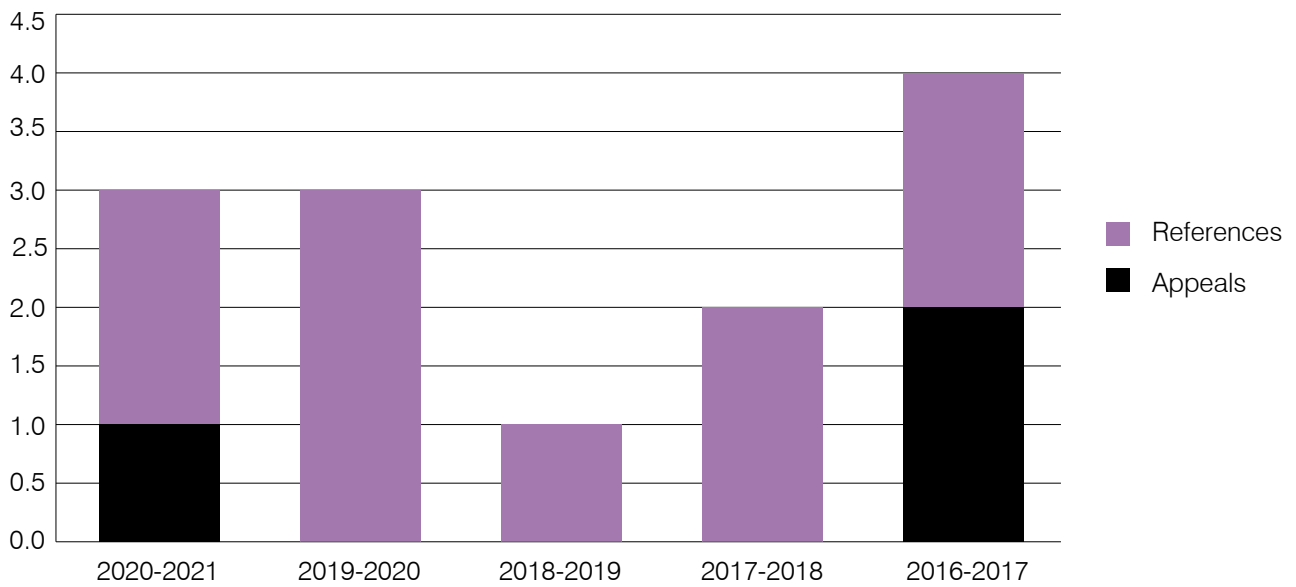
- Number of references and appeals received
- Type of applications received and registered
- Number of applications finalised
- Outcome of applications.

Graph 2.1: Number of references and appeals received by year



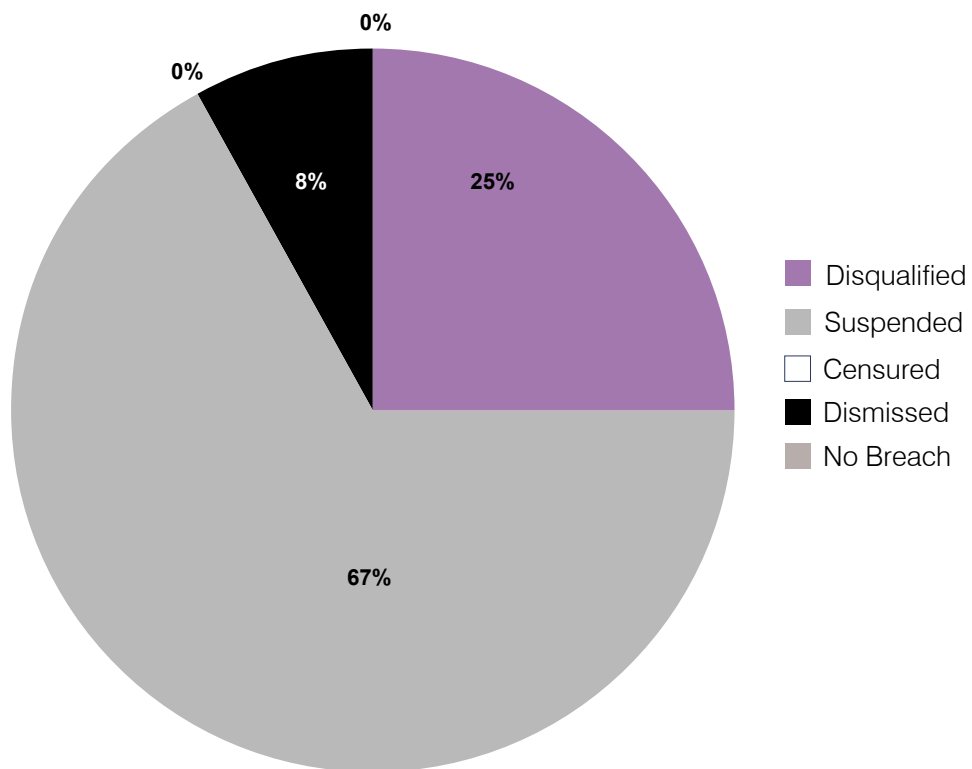
* The 2018-2019 figure was incorrectly detailed in the 2018-2019 Annual Report which has been corrected above.

Graph 2.2: Number of references and appeals decided by year April 2016-March 2021

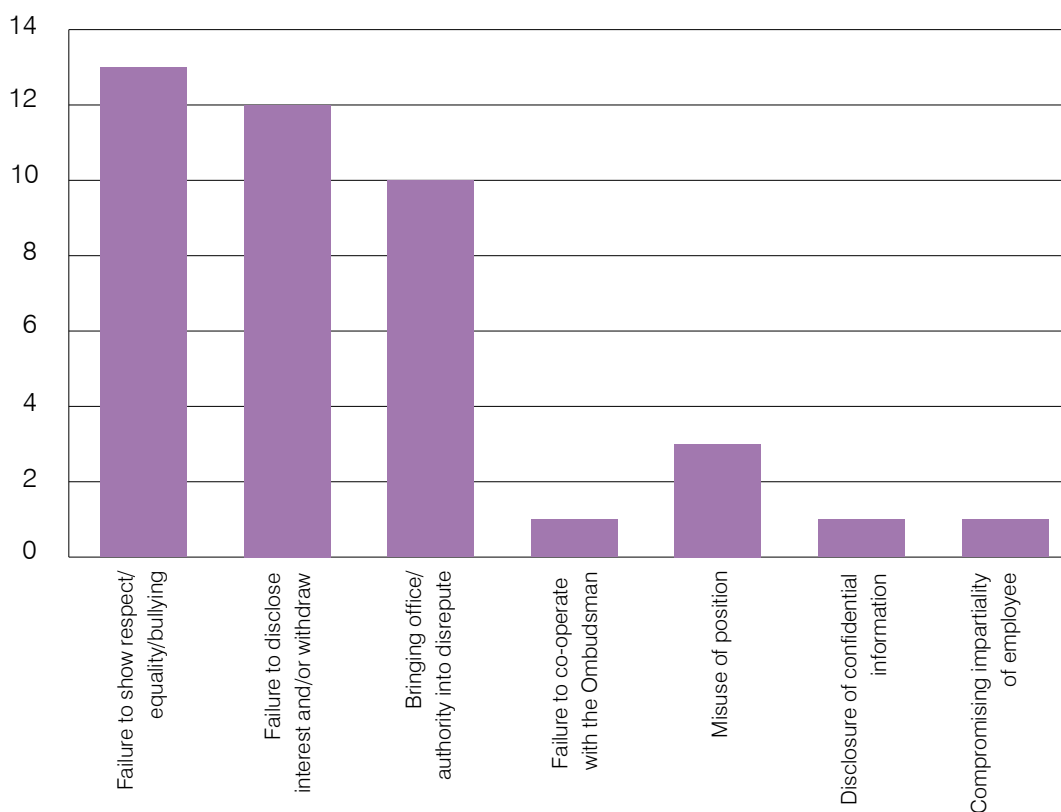


Charts 2.3: Outcomes of references and appeals April 2016-March 2021

The chart below shows the outcome of references and appeals decided by the Adjudication Panel over the last 5 years



Graph 2.4: Breaches by type April 2016-March 2021



Hearings data

During 2020-2021:

Type	Length (in days)
Reference	3 hearing days
Appeal	1 hearing day

1 listing conference took place in relation to these cases.

Onward appeals

Applications for permission to appeal a decision of a Case Tribunal or Interim Case Tribunal can be made on limited grounds to the High Court. Over the period of this report, no applications for permission were made, though one councillor obtained an extension of time to appeal.

Achievement against key performance indicators

To monitor how effectively services are delivered, we have key performance indicators aimed at measuring two key aspects of our business; the speed of our service and the quality of service through customer satisfaction.

To measure the speed of our service, we have a series of primary performance indicators based on the time taken to process an application – from receipt to the hearing or disposal (see below).

Speed of our service 2020-2021

Target: 95% of queries dealt with or cases accepted within 10 working days of receipt	➔	Target achieved in 100% of cases
Target: 100% of notices of hearing issued to respondent/appellant at least 15 working days prior to the hearing and at least 5 working days prior to any adjourned hearing	➔	Target achieved in 100% of cases
Target: 100% of notices of hearing issued to witnesses within 10 working days of the hearing	➔	Not Applicable as none issued
Target: 90% of decision reports issued within 30 working days of the hearing	➔	Target achieved in 100% of cases
Target: 75% of applications discharged within 12 months	➔	Target achieved in 100% of cases

Complaints

The APW received no formal complaints during the reporting period.

Section 3 – Case summaries

In this section:

- References
- Appeals

References

During the reporting period, 2 case tribunals took place resulting from a reference from the Ombudsman. A summary of the cases determined by the APW appears below:

APW/001/2020-021/CT

Merthyr County Borough Council

The allegations were that the councillor had breached the Code of Conduct for Merthyr County Borough Council by failing to show respect and consideration for others, conducting himself in a manner reasonably regarded as bringing the office or authority into disrepute, failing to disclose a personal interest in council business when attending a meeting or making written representations, seeking to influence decisions by the council when he had a prejudicial interest (without obtaining a dispensation), and making oral representations in respect of a matter in which he had a prejudicial interest (without obtaining a dispensation).

The councillor was Leader of the Council. The proceedings arose from the purchase of a property next door to the councillor's home by a private organisation intending to house children from troubled backgrounds. In addition, the councillor's conduct towards the then chief executive of the council in front of other officers was alleged to have been in breach of the Code of Conduct.

The Case Tribunal found by unanimous decision that the councillor had failed to comply with the Code of Conduct for Merthyr County Borough Council as follows:

- You must show respect and consideration for others (paragraph 4(b));
- You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute (paragraph 6(1)(a));
- Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you attend a meeting at which that business is considered, you must disclose orally to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest before or at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent (paragraph 11(1));
- Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you make –
(a) written representations (whether by letter, facsimile or some other form of electronic communication) to a member or officer of your authority regarding that business, you should include details of that interest in the written communication (paragraph 11(2)(a));
- Where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority, you must, unless you have obtained a dispensation from your authority's Standards Committee, you must not seek to influence a decision about that business (paragraph 14(1)(c));

- Where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority you must, unless you have obtained a dispensation from your authority's standards committee, not make any written representations (whether by letter, facsimile or some other form of electronic communication) in relation to that business (paragraph 14(1)(d));
- Where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority, you must, unless you have obtained a dispensation from your authority's Standards Committee, you must not make any oral representations in respect of that business (paragraph 14(1)(e)).

The Case Tribunal concluded by unanimous decision that the councillor should be suspended for a period of 7 months and recommended that he attend further training on the Code of Conduct within a month of resuming his office as councillor. It found that the councillor's interest was both personal and prejudicial, and he had failed to follow the advice of the monitoring officer about how to deal with the matter. The Case Tribunal also concluded that the councillor's conduct towards the chief executive was "inappropriate, hectoring and uninterruptible, and went beyond assertiveness". It judged that the councillor showed a lack of insight into his misconduct.

The councillor obtained an extension of the period to appeal the decision of the Case Tribunal from the High Court, but did not ultimately appeal the decision.

[APW/002/2020-021/CT](#)

[Sully and Lavernock Community Council](#)

The allegations were that the councillor had breached the Code of Conduct for Sully and Lavernock Community Council by bringing his office or authority into disrepute and failing to supply information and evidence requested by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales in connection with an investigation conducted in accordance with his statutory powers.

The proceedings arose from posts made by the councillor on his Facebook account between 10 January 2019 and 11 March 2019. Within those posts, the councillor made a number of comments about three elected female politicians and Shamina Begum. He claimed to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales that his posts were not visible to the public, but failed to disclose his activity log and confirmations he claimed he received from Facebook about the status of his account, despite requests from the Ombudsman.

The Case Tribunal found by unanimous decision that the councillor had failed to comply with the Code of Conduct for Sully and Lavernock Community Council as follows:

- You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute." (Paragraph 6(1)(a));
- You must comply with any request of your authority's monitoring officer, or the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, in connection with an investigation conducted in accordance with their respective statutory powers." (Paragraph 6(2)).

The Case Tribunal concluded by unanimous decision that the councillor should be disqualified from office in a relevant authority for a period of 15 months. It found that the councillor's comments were inflammatory and extreme, threatening in nature and promoted violence towards individuals. The tribunal added that the councillor had deliberately avoided providing information or full and frank responses to the Ombudsman.

Appeals

During the reporting period, 1 appeal tribunal took place arising from a decision made by a local government standards committee. A summary of the cases determined by the APW appears below:

APW/002/2019-020/AT Cardiff Council

An appeal was received against the determination of the standards committee that the councillor had breached Cardiff Council's Code of Conduct and should be suspended from office for 4 months.

The proceedings arose from the councillor's conduct towards staff at a children's home and his involvement in the case of a child in its care. The standards committee had found on 14 January 2020 that the councillor on 29 April 2018 and 11 May 2018 had breached the following paragraphs of the Code of Conduct:

- You must show respect and consideration for others (paragraph 4(b));
- You must not use bullying behaviour or harass any person (paragraph 4c);
- You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute (paragraph 6(1)(a)).

The councillor applied for permission to appeal to the President. The appeal was permitted to proceed in respect of the sanction imposed only; the councillor argued that the sanction was too harsh and/or disproportionate.

The Appeal Tribunal by unanimous decision endorsed the four month suspension sanction imposed by the standards committee. It considered the breaches of the Code by the councillor to be "quite serious, bordering on very serious", and repeated. The Appeal Tribunal noted that the councillor had been subject to previous sanction by the Panel for similar misconduct and showed a lack of insight.

Section 4 – Business Priorities

In this section:

- Business priorities for 2021-2022

It is important that the APW continues to develop in order to deliver the best possible service for our customers. This section is about how the APW will build on its achievements through focusing on business priorities and our commitment to our customers.

Business Priorities 2021-2022

- Plan and deliver an all-members training event;
- Continue to deliver an effective and efficient service, meeting key performance indicators;
- Pandemic permitting, return as appropriate to “face to face” hearings and attend key outreach events;
- Depending on the outcome of the Law Commission report on Welsh tribunals and the review of the Ethical Framework, action any changes as required by the legislature.

Section 5 – Expenditure

In this section:

- Expenditure for 20120-2021

Expenditure for 2020-2021

Content	Amount
Members Fees and Expenses (proceedings and training)	£43,126
Tribunal events (hearing and other costs)	£15,682
Total	£58,808

Rounded to the nearest £1,000