

Committee	Standards Committee
Date :	3 October 2016
Title	The Ombudsman's Annual Report 2015/16
Author	Monitoring Officer
Action :	Note for Information

Background

1. The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales has published his annual report for the year 2015-2016.
2. A copy of those parts of the report relevant to code of conduct complaints is attached to this report as an **Appendix**. The report can be found on the Ombudsman's website (www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk)
3. The Ombudsman also produces an annual letter. This is what he has to say in that letter in relation to Code of Conduct complaints:

"The number of Code of Conduct complaints rose by 19% compared with 2014/15 (274 in 2015/16 against 231). It is disappointing to see this rise, although it is almost entirely attributable to community councils where there has been a 49% increase.

Last year I introduced a public interest test for code of conduct complaints and I am pleased to say this has helped my office in dealing with these complaints in an effective manner.

I am only too aware that we are in the run-up to the local elections where historically there is a spike in code of conduct complaints against local authority members. I have spoken previously about vexatious complaints and I would be most disappointed to see an increase in complaints of a trivial matter over the next 12 months when my office is dealing with issues of real concern across public services in my jurisdiction."

Recommendation

4. The Committee is asked to note the report.