

Meeting of:	<b>Standards Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Thursday, 11 July 2019</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	No Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Observations by Independent Standards Committee Members at Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council Meetings
Purpose of Report:	To provide the Committee with an update of the observations by Independent Standards Committee Members at Town and Community Council meetings
Report Owner:	Ms. Debbie Marles, Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Responsible Officer:	Mrs. Karen Bowen, Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	This report does not require consultation to be undertaken
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for decision by the Standards Committee
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In March 2018, Independent Members of the Standards Committee agreed to undertake observations at Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings. Members also considered that in the future observations would also be undertaken of Town and Community Council meetings.</li> <li>• To approve a checklist for use by Independent Members when observing Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council meetings.</li> <li>• The Monitoring Officer also intends to continue holding six monthly meetings with Clerks of Town and Community Councils (in part) to brief them on generic observations received, with feedback to individual Clerks following each visit by an Independent Member of the Standards Committee.</li> </ul>	

## **Recommendations**

1. To consider a verbal update from Independent Members of Standards Committee following attendance at meetings.
2. That the checklist for attendances at Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council meetings be approved.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

1. Having regard to the observations undertaken and the role of the Standards Committee.
2. To assist Independent Members of the Standards Committee to record observations.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 There are a number of roles and functions of the Standards Committee, one of which is:
  - (a) To promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Councillors, Co-opted Members and Church and Parent Governor Representatives of the Council.
- 1.2 In considering the Committee's work programme report at its meeting in January 2018, the proposal for Independent Members of the Committee to observe Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings was agreed to be an appropriate opportunity to not only build on knowledge but to assist with the process of promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct.
- 1.3 As part of the Committee's work programme, it was agreed that Independent Members of the Standards Committee would attend a number of Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council meetings during the Municipal Year 2019/20 to observe meetings with a view to promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct in line with the Members' Code of Conduct.
- 1.4 Feedback reports would also be presented to the Standards Committee on a quarterly basis following the observations.

## **2. Key Issues for Consideration**

- 2.1 Having regard to a calendar of meetings for Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Councils' meetings, Independent Members are requested to consider the dates and advise the Principal Democratic Services Officer of meetings they intend to attend.
- 2.2 Following attendance at meetings, it is expected that each Independent Member will report their findings to the Standards Committee on a regular basis.
- 2.3 The Monitoring Officer will also establish a schedule of meetings with Clerks of Town and Community Councils within the Vale of Glamorgan on a six monthly

basis to discuss Monitoring Officer matters. The first meeting of this group was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2019. The meetings will include discussions of matters of mutual concern and the sharing of information and good practice. The Monitoring Officer will also discuss the findings arising from the Independent Members of the Standards Committee observations of Town and Community Council meetings, the intention being to brief the Clerks with generic guidance. Feedback will also be provided to individual Clerks following each visit to the respective Town or Community Council.

- 2.4** To aid Independent Members in their observations, a checklist attached at Appendix A to this report has been produced for Members' consideration for use when attending meetings. Committee is requested to agree / consider the suggested checklist for use.

### **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

- 3.1** The role of the Standards Committee is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Councillors, Co-opted Members and Church and Parent Governor Representatives. It is intended that the process adopted within this report will aim to promote that role.

## **4. Resources and Legal Considerations**

### **Financial**

- 4.1** Members will be remunerated for attendance under the allowance scheme agreed by the Independent Remuneration Panel and the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Constitution. Independent Members are able to claim for a maximum of 10 days per annum as detailed within the Council's Constitution.

### **Employment**

- 4.2** Members will be remunerated for attendance under the allowance scheme agreed by the Independent Remuneration Panel and the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Constitution. Independent Members are able to claim for a maximum of 10 days per annum as detailed within the Council's Constitution.

### **Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 4.3** The Council has a duty to establish and maintain a Standards Committee as defined by legislation as set out in the Standards Committees Rules and Regulations 2001 and the Standards Committee (Wales) Amendment Regulations 2006.
- 4.4** The role of the Standards Committee is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Councillors, Co-opted Members and Church and Parent Governor Representatives.

## **5. Background Papers**

None.

## OBSERVATIONS CHECKLIST

**Observations of Independent Members of Standards Committee at Council Meeting of .....**  
**Town/Community Council on .....**

	Yes	No	Comments
Were you welcomed by the Clerk and seated in the public gallery?			
Were Members advised that you were observing the Meeting?			
<p><b>Room set up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From the seating arrangement was it clear who the Members, the Officer(s) and the public were?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did Members and Officer(s) have name cards identifying who they were?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was the room well lit?</li> </ul>			

	Yes	No	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could you hear what was being said?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was the room of an appropriate size?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were a reasonable number of copies of the agenda available in the public gallery (other than any Part II reports)?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did the meeting commence on time?</li> <li>• Does the Council have a procedure for public speaking or is there an opportunity to suspend Standing Orders to allow a person to speak?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Decision Making</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were motions moved and seconded?</li> </ul>			

	Yes	No	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If there wasn't agreement by the meeting as a whole was the motion voted on?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were any amendments moved and seconded?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were votes on the amended motion taken before the original motion? [A vote on an original motion is only necessary if the vote on an amendment is lost]</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was only one amendment at any given time the subject of discussion prior to taking a vote on the amendment?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did the meeting follow the agenda?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were rulings by the Chair adhered to?</li> </ul>			

	Yes	No	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If Part II items appeared on the agenda, did Members agree to move into Part II of the agenda?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were Members of the Public (including the Independent [Standards Committee] Member) asked to leave the meeting room prior to the discussion of Part II matters?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were there any other items discussed at the meeting without a report being available and no prior notice given?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Conduct of Members</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did Members show respect and consideration for others?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If a Member declared a personal interest, did the Member explain the nature of the interest?</li> </ul>			



	Yes	No	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If a Member declared a personal and prejudicial interest in a report did they leave the Meeting Room during the consideration of the relevant report?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did a Member declare a personal and prejudicial interest and that they had a dispensation to speak from the Standards Committee? And if so, did the Member leave the Meeting Room having spoken on the matter?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did a Member declare a personal and prejudicial interest and that they had a dispensation to speak and vote?</li> </ul>			
What time did the Meeting end?			