

No.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Remote Meeting held on 27th January, 2022.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#).

The Meeting recording is available [here](#).

Present: R. Hendicott (Chair); L. Tinsley (Vice-Chair); R. Alexander, P. Hallett and G. Watkins (Independent Members); and Councillors R.M. Birch and B.T. Gray.

800 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Chairman read the following statement: “May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be live streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing.”

801 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillors M. Cuddy (Town and Community Council Representative) and A.R. Robertson (Vale of Glamorgan Council)

802 MINUTES –

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 25th November, 2021 be approved as a correct record.

803 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations were received.

804 APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION (MO / HLDS) –

The Standards Committee (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations 2001 permitted Members to apply to the Standards Committee to speak, and if appropriate, to vote on issues which due to prejudicial interests, they might not otherwise be able to speak or vote on or remain in the room. The Monitoring Officer advised that no applications had been received prior to the meeting and the report had been placed on the agenda to allow for consideration should any applications be received following despatch of the agenda.

RESOLVED – T H A T it be noted that no applications had been received.

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Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the report and that no application forms for dispensation had been submitted. .

805 STANDARDS CONFERENCE WALES: FEBRUARY 2022 (MO / HLDS) –

The report advised Members that the Standards Conference would take place on 9th February, 2022.

The Monitoring Officer, in presenting the report, stated that the conference would be held on a virtual basis. The Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer commented that a number of Members of the Committee had already confirmed their availability and Members contact details had been requested to be forwarded to the organiser in order that the necessary paperwork and virtual invite could be emailed to Members in time for the conference.

RESOLVED – T H A T it be noted that the Standards Conference would be held on 9th February, 2022.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.

806 MONITORING OFFICER MEETINGS WITH CLERKS OF TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS (MO / HLDS) –

One of the roles of the Standards Committee was to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Councillors, Co-opted Members and Church and Parent Governor representatives of the Council.

To assist in this process, the Monitoring Officer held meetings with Clerks of Town and Community Councils to provide opportunities for discussion on matters of mutual concern, to have regard to the principles of standards in public life and to provide networking opportunities.

The Monitoring Officer drew attention to paragraph 2.2 of the report which advised of matters that had been discussed at the last meeting with Clerks held on 24th November, 2021 which had included for example items relating to the sharing of good practice, the “Becoming a Councillor” initiative, Independent Review of Ethical Standards Framework in Wales, the Vale of Glamorgan Council’s current Action Plan in respect of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and generic observations undertaken by Independent Members of the Standards Committee of Town and Community Council meetings.

Discussions had also taken place regarding the Audit Wales Public Interest Report relating to Sully and Lavernock Community Council with the Monitoring Officer informing the Standards Committee that a meeting between the Chair, Vice Chair

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and Clerk of the Sully and Lavernock Community Council, the Chair of Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer was scheduled to take place on Monday, 31st January, 2022.

RESOLVED – T H A T the report and the Monitoring Officer's verbal update in respect of the Clerks meeting held on 24th November, 2021 be noted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the report, the verbal update provided by the Monitoring Officer and discussions at the meeting.

807 DRAFT MEMBER INDUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2022 (MO / HLDS) –

The report outlined the importance of ongoing Member Development and presented a proposed Induction Event and subsequent Development Programme Timetable (Appendix A) for consideration by the Committee.

A comprehensive Induction and Development Programme had been undertaken following the 2017 Local Government Election which had informed the structure for the 2022 proposed schedule. The proposed Programme, by its very nature and timescale, contained some dates/ times and draft content which were indicative and subject to change.

The proposed Programme had also been reported to the Democratic Services Committee and Cabinet in July 2021 with the recommendations from those meetings being approved to allow work to progress over the summer period. It was noted that Co-Opted Members would also be included in the Induction Programme.

Mrs. Tinsley enquired as to the evaluation process that would take place following the training and suggested that attendees be requested to confirm whether they understood the contents of the training. The Monitoring Officer advised that feedback evaluation forms were part of the process and these would be analysed to assist with the provision of any further training that may be required. Following a comment as to whether the training was mandatory it was noted that the Council had determined that some training had been deemed to be mandatory training which was highlighted on the Programme at Appendix A to the report.

Having considered the report it was subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T the draft Member Induction and Development Programme, attached as Appendix A to the report, be noted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.

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808 CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES (MO/HLDS) –

The report outlined that the Monitoring Officer would provide an update to Members of the Committee at the meeting under Part II of the agenda in relation to recent correspondence and matters arising in line with the procedures of the Ombudsman which were confidential in nature.

The item was a standing item on the agenda in order that the Monitoring Officer could apprise Members as appropriate.

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the Monitoring Officer's verbal update relating to the decisions of the Standards Committee meeting on 26th January, 2022 be noted.

(2) T H A T the contents of the report be noted and having regard to the fact that an update on the correspondence received from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and any matters arising under Part II of the report would be considered under Part II of the agenda.

Reason for decisions

(1&2) To apprise Members of the Committee.

809 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC –

RESOLVED – T H A T under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 4 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Act, the relevant paragraphs of the Schedule being referred to in brackets after the minute heading.

810 CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES (MO/HLDS) (EXEMPT INFORMATION – PARAGRAPHS 12, 13 AND 14) –

As outlined at Part I of the agenda, it had been agreed by the Standards Committee that a standing item appear on the Committee's agenda in order that the Monitoring Officer be able to apprise Standards Committee Members of correspondence received from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (the Ombudsman) on any matters arising, the items being confidential in nature in line with the Ombudsman's procedure.

The Monitoring Officer therefore provided the Committee with a verbal update in respect of recent confidential correspondence with the Ombudsman. There being no questions in relation to the information provided at the meeting, it was

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RESOLVED – T H A T the confidential information provided by the Monitoring Officer at the meeting be noted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to correspondence received from the Ombudsman, noting that it was confidential at this stage.