

Meeting of:	Standards Committee
Date of Meeting:	Friday, 02 February 2024
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	No Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Review Report – Panel of Independent Members of the Standards Committee
Purpose of Report:	Report on the outcome of the Review by the Panel of the Independent Members of the Standards Committee
Report Owner:	D. Marles, Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Responsible Officer:	K. Bowen, Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer
Elected Members and Officer Consultation:	This report does not involve any consultation with other parties
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Standards Committee
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Standards Committee resolved on the 26th January 2023 to appoint a Panel of three Independent Members of the Standards Committee to undertake a review having regard to comments made at Full Council meeting on the 5th of December 2022, resolving that the Panel convene in the weeks which followed to consider a draft Terms of Reference for the review. • The Committee on the 8th June 2023 resolved that the draft Terms of Reference as presented to the Committee be approved. • The Panel met on several occasions during the period of the review and considered a number of elements as outlined in the Review report, and in line with the Terms of Reference agreed by the Committee on the 8th June 2023. 	

Recommendation

1. That the Standards Committee considers the Review report under the Part II report on the agenda.

Reason for Recommendation

1. For the Standards Committee's consideration and approval.

1. Background

- 1.1 At the Full Council meeting on 5th December 2022 a Member asked whether the Leader was prepared to undertake an Inquiry in relation to a former Vale of Glamorgan Councillor who had recently been found guilty of offences before the Newport Crown Court on 25th November 2022. (Min. No. 512 (xxxiii) refers.). The link to the Council minutes of 5th December 2022 being reproduced below.
[Minutes – 22-12-05](#)
- 1.2 A meeting regarding this matter was convened in December 2022 attended by the Members making the above request, his Group Leader, the Chair of Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services.
- 1.3 The Standards Committee resolved on the 26th January 2023 to appoint a Panel of Independent Members of the Standards Committee to conduct a review having regard to comments made at the Full Council meeting on 5th December 2023.
- 1.4 The Panel consisted of three Independent Members of the Standards Committee, the Chair, Mr. R. Hendicott, the Vice-Chair, Mrs. L. Tinsley, and Mr. R. Alexander.
- 1.5 Standards Committee resolved that the Panel be convened over the weeks which followed to consider the Terms of Reference for the review.
- 1.6 The Panel were due to sit in March 2023 to consider the Terms of Reference, however, the Monitoring Officer was advised that an appeal may be pending and therefore the Panel Meeting was postponed pending further enquiries.
- 1.7 Following enquiries with the Court of Appeal the Monitoring Officer was advised that no appeal had been lodged within the time allowed for an appeal against a criminal conviction / sentence.
- 1.8 1.8 As a result of this information the Panel subsequently met on the 23rd May 2023 to consider the draft Terms of Reference. The draft Terms of Reference for the review were approved by the Standards Committee at its meeting on the 8th June 2023.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 Having regard to paragraph 1.1 above, Committee are reminded that there is no legal basis for the Council to undertake an Inquiry of its own volition as it is a matter for Ministerial Authorisation.
- 2.2 The Standards Committee determined on resolving to establish a Panel of Independent Members deemed it appropriate to undertake a review of the matters as outlined in paragraph 1.1 above and min no 512 (xxxiii). Link to Council minutes below
[Minutes – 22-12-05](#)
- 2.3 The Panel undertook the review in line with the Terms of Reference as agreed by the Standards Committee on the 8th June 2023.
- 2.4 The Panel met on three separate occasions on the 13th and 18th July and the 24th October 2023 to as part of the review.

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.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1 None as a direct result of this report

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1 None as a direct result of this report

Employment

- 5.2 None as a direct result of this report

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 It is a matter for the Standards Committee to determine the appropriateness of undertaking a review and the establishment of a Panel to do so.

6. Background Papers

[Council minutes: 5th December 2022](#)