

Meeting of:	Standards Committee
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 30 July 2026
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	No Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Item which the Chair has decided is urgent (Part I) (If yes, why)	Not applicable
Urgent Decision Procedure Used (15.14 of the Constitution) (If yes, why)	Not applicable
Item Type	Part I
Report Title:	Observations by Independent Members of Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council Committee Meetings.
Portfolio Holder:	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources
Strategic Leadership Team:	Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Lead Officer:	Principal Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer.

1.0 What is this report about?

- 1.1 To provide the Standards Committee with an overview of observation visits undertaken by Independent Members of the Committee at Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council meetings.
- 1.2 To update Members on findings arising from observations conducted since the previous meeting of the Committee.
- 1.3 To provide an update on progress against the agreed two-year observation programme for 2025/26 and 2026/27.

2.0 What are the Recommendations?

	Recommendations – What and How?	Reason for Recommendation – Why?
2.1	T H A T the reports and feedback received in respect of observation visits undertaken by Independent Members of the Standards Committee be noted.	Having regard to the observations undertaken and the role of the Standards Committee.
2.2	T H A T where matters following observation visits are highlighted by Independent Members as requiring further attention, further visits be arranged as and when required.	To maintain a watching brief having regard to the role of the Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer.

3.0 What is the background to this report?

- 3.1 The Standards Committee has a statutory responsibility to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst elected and co-opted members across the Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Councils.
- 3.2 Since 2018 Independent Members have undertaken observations of Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings and, since 2019, Town and Community Council meetings, to support that responsibility.
- 3.3 Observation visits provide constructive and impartial feedback regarding governance arrangements, conduct, and the management of meetings.
- 3.4 Observation findings are reported confidentially to the Monitoring Officer, with generic feedback provided to the Standards Committee. Any significant concerns are raised directly with the relevant Council, Chair or Clerk where appropriate.
- 3.5 An observation programme covering the period May 2025 to April 2027 was agreed by the Standards Committee on 30 January 2025. Outcomes from the programme to date are set out in **Appendix B**.

4.0 What issues are there to be considered?

- 4.1 Independent Members continue to undertake observations as part of the agreed work programme. Observation reports assist the Committee in assessing whether standards of conduct are being maintained and identifying areas of good practice.
- 4.2 **Appendix A** provides an update on progress against the current programme in relation to observations conducted during the 2025/26 Municipal year, as well as assignments amongst Independent Members for the 2026/27 Municipal year. Assignments have been proposed

taking in to account the assignment criteria previously agreed by the Standards Committee as per those set out in **Appendix C**.

- 4.3 Since the meeting of 26 March 2026, eight further observations have been scheduled, with one to be reported upon as follows:

Member	Council	Meeting Date
Watkins	Welsh St. Donats Community Council	21 st July 2026

- 4.4 The Monitoring Officer is in regular contact with a number of Clerks in the Vale of Glamorgan Council principal area and has liaised with a number of Clerks from Town and Community Councils relating to observation visits undertaken by the Independent Members.
- 4.5 Following the Boundary Commission for Wales Community Review, the Welsh Government confirmed changes to community governance arrangements. However, these changes will not take effect until the 2027 Local Government Elections. It was therefore agreed by the Committee that observations continue on the basis of the current Town and Community Council arrangements during the remainder of the current observation cycle. Following the 2027 Elections, observation arrangements will be revised to reflect the new community governance structure.

5.0 How has evidence been used to inform the report, including the views of others?

- 5.1 The report is informed by observation reports completed by Independent Members following attendance at Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council meetings.
- 5.2 Feedback received from Town and Community Council Clerks indicates that the observation process is valued and assists councils in sharing good practice and strengthening governance arrangements.
- 5.3 Discussions have taken place between the Monitoring Officer and several Community Council Clerks regarding good governance, meeting management and continuous improvement.
- 5.4 Previous Standards Committee decisions have informed the proposed programme for 2026/27. A summary of this is available at Appendix C.

6.0 What are the next steps if the recommendations are approved?

- 6.1 Independent Members will undertake the remaining observation visits scheduled within the current two-year programme and observation reports and feedback will continue to be reported to the Standards Committee.

- 6.2 Additional observation visits will be arranged where concerns are identified or where requested by the Monitoring Officer.
- 6.3 Learning and examples of good practice identified through observations will continue to be shared with Town and Community Councils.
- 6.4 The observation programme will be reviewed and updated following implementation of community boundary changes after the 2027 elections. the Independent Member Observation Schedule will be amended to reflect a total of 19 Town and Community Councils to observe including the introduction of a new Community Council in Rhose.

7.0 How does this report support Vale 2030 and Reshaping?

- 7.1 The report supports strong democratic governance and accountability across the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 7.2 The observation programme contributes to maintaining public confidence in local government decision-making.
- 7.3 The programme promotes continual improvement, transparency and high standards of conduct in support of the Council's corporate ambitions.

8.0 How does this demonstrate the Five Ways of Working?

- 8.1 Long Term – supports sustained improvements in standards and governance across local government.
- 8.2 Prevention – identifies issues early and enables corrective action before concerns become more significant.
- 8.3 Integration – aligns with statutory duties in relation to ethical standards, governance and accountability.
- 8.4 Collaboration – involves engagement between Independent Members, officers, elected Members and Town and Community Councils.
- 8.5 Involvement – encourages participation and feedback from local councils while sharing examples of good practice.

Resources

9.0 Finance

- 9.1 Independent Members may claim remuneration and allowances for attendance in accordance with the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru (DBCC) framework and the

Council's Constitution.

9.2 Any associated costs are met from existing council budgets.

10.0 Workforce

10.1 There are no workforce implications arising directly from this report.

10.2 Administrative support for the observation programme is provided through Democratic Services.

11.0 Legal and Equalities

11.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required as the report is informational in nature and concerns the operation of an existing governance and monitoring process.

11.2 The observation programme assists the Committee in carrying out its statutory functions relating to standards and conduct.

11.3 The Council is required by legislation 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.

12.0 Independent Members are Members who are not either a Councillor or an Officer of the Vale of Glamorgan Council or the spouse of a Councillor or an Officer of the Vale of Glamorgan Council or any other relevant Authority as defined by legislation, appointed in accordance with the procedure set out in the Standards Committees (Wales Regulations) 2001 (as amended) and the Standards Committees (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2006.

13.0 Independent Members are appointed for a period of not less than 4 no more than 6 years in accordance with Regulation 18(i) of the Standards Committees (Wales Regulations) 2001 (as amended) as amended by Regulation 28a of the Local Government (Standards Committees Investigations, Dispensations and Referral) (Wales) Amendment Regulations 2016 and may be re-appointed for one further consecutive term not exceeding 4 years.

Key Contacts

12.1 Who are the primary officers to contact with any comments and/or queries on the report?

Lead Officer: Victoria Davidson Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services vdavidson@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk	Democratic Services Officer: Amy Rudman Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer. 07784 239 277 arudman@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
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Appendix

Appendix A – Independent Member Observation Tracker.

Appendix B – Observation Outcomes.

Appendix C – Observation Programme Timeline.

Background Documents

[The Standards Committees \(Wales\) Regulations 2001.](#)

[Report – 26th March 2026 – Observations by Independent Members of Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council Committee Meetings.](#)

[Agendas, Reports, Minutes and Recordings of Standards Committee Meetings \(as per the Vale of Glamorgan Website\).](#)

[Town Mayors, Chairmen and Clerks to Vale of Glamorgan Town and Community Councils 2026/27.](#)

Standards Committee Independent Member Observation Tracker

Schedule agreed by Standards Committee:	17th July 2025
Reviewed Observation Pro-Forma shared with Independent Members:	28th July 2025
Report and relevant minutes circulated to all Town and Community Council Clerks:	28th July 2025

2025 - 26		Observation Date	Date confirmation received from IM.	Notice provided to relevant Clerk / Chair.	Meeting details confirmed with IM. Clerk or AR	Via	Completed Pro-Forma returned to Democratic Services.	Feedback presented to Standards Committee.	Feedback presented to Clerks Meeting.
Alexander	St. Nicholas and Bonvilston Community Council (1)	12.08.25	04/08/2025 09:04	04/08/2025 09:28	Weds 06/08/25 12:31		13/08/2025 17:34	20/11/2025	11/11/2025
	St. Nicholas and Bonvilston Community Council (2)	20.01.26	07/01/2026 13:06	12/01/2026 13:05	Thurs 15/01/26 22:34		23/01/2026 15:27	26/03/2026	06/04/2026
	Wenvoe Community Council	16.10.25	04/08/2025 09:00	17/09/2025 20:12	Weds 24/09/2025 14:42		20/10/2025 09:22	20/11/2025	11/11/2025
	Llancarfan Community Council	18.12.25	20/11/2025 10:00	25/11/2025 18:12	Tues 16/12/2025 23:44		19/12/2025 09:32	29/01/2026	06/04/2026
Hendicott	Llantwit Major Town Council	24.07.25	17/07/2025 14:30	21/07/2025 08:23	Mon 21/07/2025 10:33		25/09/2025 10:00	25/09/2025	11/11/2025
	Penarth Town Council	11.09.25	17/07/2025 14:30	28/07/2025 14:45	Wed 30/07/2025 19:42		25/09/2025 10:00	25/09/2025	11/11/2025
	St. Athan Community Council	02.09.25	17/07/2025 14:30	28/07/2025 14:48	Wed 30/07/2025 13:47		25/09/2025 10:00	25/09/2025	11/11/2025
	VoG Governance & Audit	23.02.26	23/12/2025 17:37	24/12/2025 09:12	Wed 18/02/2026 08:10		18/03/2026 14:30	26/03/2026	n/a
Olphert	Dinas Powys Community Council	16.10.25	24/09/2025 10:55	24/09/2025 14:36	Wed 15/10/2025 18:01		17/10/2025 11:47	20/11/2025	11/11/2025
	Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council	28.10.25	17/07/2025 14:44	28/07/2025 15:07	Wed 30/07/2025 17:49		30/10/2025 11:00	20/11/2025	11/11/2025
	VoG Full Council	01.12.25	17/07/2025 14:44	28/07/2025 15:14	Thur 20/11/2025 15:55		02/12/2025 11:11	29/01/2026	n/a
Watkins	Barry Town Council	16.02.26	28/10/2025 10:48	28/10/2025 15:27	Fri 07/11/2025 12:35		17/02/2026 11:29	26/03/2026	06/04/2026
	Sully and Lavernock Community Council	08.12.25	28/10/2025 10:52	28/10/2025 15:33	Wed 03/12/2025 09:03		15/12/2025 14:45	29/01/2026	06/04/2026
	Penllyn Community Council	03.11.25	22/10/2025 17:01	27/10/2025 15:33	Fri 31/10/2025 13:58		08/11/2025 11:42	20/11/2025	11/11/2025
	VoG Planning	15.01.26	12/11/2025 15:38	12/11/2025 15:38	Tues 06/01/2026 16:17		16/01/2026 14:37	29/01/2026	n/a

2026 - 27		Observation Date	Date confirmation received from IM.	Notice provided to relevant Clerk / Chair.	Meeting details confirmed with IM.	Completed Pro-Forma returned to Democratic Services.	Feedback presented to Standards Committee.	Feedback presented to Clerks Meeting.
Olphert	Colwinston	30.11.26	25/06/2026 14:28	25/06/2026 15:37				
	Llangan	TBC						
	Ewenny	09.09.26	10/06/2026 09:36	06/10/2026 18:31				
	VoG Public Protection Licensing	06.10.26	16/04/2026 13:29	11/06/2026 09:27				
Hendicott	Llandough	18.11.26	23/06/2026 18:51	24/06/2026 11:51				
	Michaelston Le Pit and Leckwith	TBC						
	Llanfair	TBC						
Watkins	Pendoylan	TBC						
	Welsh St. Donats	21.07.26	24/04/2026 15:20	11/06/2026 09:42	20/07/26			03.09.2026
	St. Georges and St. Brides-Super-Ely	18.11.26	06/03/2026 12:58	11/06/2026 09:49				
Evans	St. Donats	TBC						
	Llanmaes	TBC						
	Llandow	TBC						
	VoG Resources Scrutiny Committee	TBC						
Alexander	St. Brides Major	TBC						
	Peterston Super Ely	11.01.27	09/06/2026 12:48	11/06/2026 09:56				
	Wick	19.11.26	09/06/2026 12:46	11/06/2026 10:02				

Vale of Glamorgan Standards Committee

Observations by Independent Members of Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council Committee Meetings.

Observation Outcomes May 2025 to April 2027.

At the **26th of March 2026** Committee Meeting, observation findings were presented for the following councils and agreed that the relevant reports and feedback received by Independent Members be noted:

Member	Council	Meeting Date
Alexander	St. Nicholas and Bonvilston Community Council (2)	20 th January 2026
Watkins	Barry Town Council	16 th February 2026
Hendicott	Vale of Glamorgan Governance & Audit Committee	23 rd February 2026

The Committee also resolved:

- T H A T the proposal for observations to be held within the 2026 – 27 Municipal Year, as presented within Appendix 1 of the report, be agreed.

Reason for decision

- To complete the two-year observation cycle, as previously agreed by the Committee, having regard to the outcomes of the 2025 Boundary Commission for Wales Community Review.

At the **29th of January 2026** Committee Meeting, observation findings were presented for the following councils and agreed that the relevant reports and feedback received by Independent Members be noted:

Member	Council	Meeting Date
Olphert	Vale of Glamorgan Full Council	1 st December 2025
Watkins	Sully and Lavernock Community Council	8 th December 2025
Alexander	Llancarfan Community Council	18 th December 2025
Watkins	Vale of Glamorgan Planning Committee	15 th January 2026

The Committee also resolved:

- T H A T a proposal for observations to be held within the 2026 – 27 Municipal Year be presented to Committee at its next meeting scheduled for 26th March 2026.

Reason for decision

- To complete the two year observation cycle, as previously agreed by the Committee, having regard to the outcomes of the 2025 Boundary Commission for Wales Community Review.

At the **20th November 2025** Committee Meeting, observation findings were presented for the following councils and agreed that the relevant reports and feedback received by Independent Members be noted:

Member	Council	Meeting Date
Alexander	St. Nicholas with Bonvilston Community Council	12 th August 2025
Olphert	Dinas Powys Community Council	16 th October 2025
Alexander	Wenvoe Community Council	16 th October 2025
Olphert	Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council	28 th October 2025
Watkins	Penllyn Community Council	3 rd November 2025

The Committee also resolved:

- T H A T a second observation be arranged for St. Nicholas and Bonvilston Community Council in the current Municipal year.
- T H A T Independent Members attend observation meetings in person as standard, and where practical to do so, depending on the arrangements put in place by the respective Council for the meeting in question.

Reasons for decisions

- As requested by the Monitoring Officer, on the advice provided by Mr. Alexander following an initial observation undertaken on 12th August, 2025.
- To support the observation process.

At the **25th September 2025** Committee Meeting, observation findings were presented for the following councils and agreed that the relevant reports and feedback received by Independent Members be noted:

Member	Council	Meeting Date
Hendicott	Llantwit Major Town Council	24 th July 2025
Hendicott	St. Athan Community Council	2 nd September 2025
Hendicott	Penarth Town Council	11 th September 2025

Vale of Glamorgan Standards Committee

Observations by Independent Members of Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council Committee Meetings.

Observation Programme Context and Timeline.

Context

The Standards Committee plays a vital role in upholding democratic integrity and public trust by promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct among elected and co-opted members across all tiers of local government in the Vale of Glamorgan.

As part of the Committee's forward work programme, and in line with its statutory responsibilities, Independent Members of the Standards Committee undertake observations of Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council (TCC) meetings. This initiative supports the Committee's aim of promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by observing how meetings are conducted in practice and offering constructive, impartial feedback.

Feedback reports in respect of observations undertaken by Independent Members of Town and Community Councils (TCCs) are presented to the Monitoring Officer confidentially and verbal generic updates of the reports are presented to the Standards Committee by Independent Members on a regular basis. Any observations that require specific discussion with the Chief Executive of the Vale of Glamorgan Council or Chair of a Committee and the Clerk / Chair of a TCC are undertaken by the Monitoring Officer and / or Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer.

Observations can be undertaken on a Remote, Hybrid or In-person basis as determined by the relevant Council.

Timeline

In **March 2018**, Independent Members of the Standards Committee agreed to undertake observations at Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings and were reported to the Standards Committee.

In **March 2019**, the process of observing Council meetings was also extended for Independent Members of the Standards Committee to observe and report their findings of TCC meetings. Since then, observations of TCC meetings have become a

standing item in the Standards Committee's work programme, supported by a standardised observation pro-forma.

Independent Member Observations of TCCs were added as a standard item on the Standard Committee's Forward Work Programme for the 2020/21 Municipal Year and a Pro-forma agreed for use by Independent Members during observations.

On **23rd June, 2022** having regard to resourcing implications it was accepted that as a number of Senior Officers and Democratic Services Officers were present at Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings, that such officers be requested to report to the Monitoring Officer any matters that may require attention and / or suggestions for improvement and that such matters subsequently be reported to the Standards Committee as appropriate.

It was however, agreed, that Independent Members would continue to undertake observation visits of TCC meetings on an annual basis and report to the Standards Committee as appropriate.

In **September 2022**, the Monitoring Officer was given discretion to request additional observations of specific TCCs, as needed.

On **8th June 2023**, the Committee subsequently agreed:

- T H A T where observations of TCC meetings are advised by Independent Members to have been managed effectively with no material issues identified observations of such meetings be undertaken on a biennial basis as opposed to on an annual basis.
- T H A T where matters following observation visits of Town and Community Council meetings are highlighted by Independent Members as issues requiring further attention or further visits and / or requests are made by the Monitoring Officer/ Head of Legal and Democratic Services for visits to be undertaken, these be arranged as and when required.
- T H A T where poor practice continued, consideration be given for meetings to be arranged for the Chair and Clerk to either attend a meeting of the Standards Committee or a meeting with the Chair of the Standards Committee and Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

On **30th January 2025**, the Committee subsequently agreed:

- T H A T a schedule of observations visits of Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council meetings be prepared and forwarded to the five Independent Members on the Standards Committee to commence from May 2025 to April 2027 when the timetable of the relevant Council meetings were known.
- T H A T the 26 Town and Community Councils be visited once in the period May 2025 to April 2027 by an Independent Member of the Standards Committee unless further visits were deemed to be required following the observations.

- T H A T the five Independent Members consider the Vale of Glamorgan Council timetable of meetings and undertake an observation of one meeting each in the period May 2025 to April 2027.
- T H A T it be accepted that during any year the Monitoring Officer may advise that additional meetings of Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Councils be observed as considered appropriate.
- T H A T observations following the above visits be verbally reported by the Independent Member to the next available Standards Committee following the visits.

In order that a total of 6 observation visits be undertaken by each Independent Member of the Standards Committee, over a two year period, during the Municipal Years 2025/26 and 2026/27, and that the timetable be assessed on an annual basis to align with the outcomes of the 2025 Boundary Commission for Wales Community Review.

At the same January 2025 meeting, the consensus of the Committee was that TCC visits were a worthwhile exercise and that the allocation of 6 visits per Independent Member (5 x TCC and 1 x VoG) was not considered excessive over a two-year period. Conducting observations provided the Committee with the opportunity to assess if standards were being maintained since previous observations had taken place, as well as offer invaluable support and a critical friend approach for TCCs.

The following suggestions of the Committee were also agreed:

- That, in terms of allocations, Independent Members be rotated across TCC visits to avoid any duplicated observations by the same Independent Member.
- An attempt would be made to conduct visits for half of the 26 TCCs within the 2025-26 Municipal year and the second half in the 2026-27 Municipal Year.
- TCCs to be given advance notice of the Independent Member Observation taking place; and
- Independent Members should remain mindful of the varying size and composition of TCCs when conducting observations.

At the **17th July 2025** Committee Meeting, Members were presented with a report to agree both the Observation Pro-forma and Allocations. Independent Members were also asked to confirm with the Principal Democratic Services Officer their intended dates for attendance at meetings listed in Appendix 2 to that report, as early as possible.

A series of amendments were made to the Observation Pro-forma that was subsequently shared with all Independent Members. To ensure the observation criteria remained relevant, consistent, and fit for purpose.

Following the meeting, the Observation report and the relevant Committee minutes were circulated to all TCC Clerks for information and awareness. To share good practice, support local governance and ensure transparency with TCCs.

At the **20th November 2025** Committee Meeting, the Committee resolved that Independent Members attend observation meetings in person as standard, and where practical to do so, depending on the arrangements put in place by the respective Council for the meeting in question.

2025 Boundary Commission for Wales Community Review

The 2025 Boundary Commission for Wales Community Review in the Vale of Glamorgan followed a multi-year process that began with the publication of Draft Proposals in September 2023 and extensive consultation with Town and Community Councils, stakeholders, and residents. The Commission published its Final Recommendations on 16th April 2024, setting out revised community boundaries designed to better reflect local identities, ensure effective and convenient local government, and improve electoral parity across the county. In May 2025, the Welsh Government accepted these recommendations, confirming significant structural changes including a reduction in the number of community councils from 26 to 19 and a decrease in councillor numbers from 269 to 205, with several communities being merged to create more resilient governance arrangements ahead of the 2027 local elections. These outcomes mark the most substantial reorganisation of community governance in the Vale in over a decade and provide the framework within which the Standards Committee will continue its two-year observation cycle.

In light of the Welsh Government recommendations not coming in to play until the May 2027 local elections, it was agreed by the Committee that Independent members continue to observe the current 26 TCC structure.

Following the May 2027 Local Government Elections, the Independent Member Observation Schedule will be amended to reflect a total of 19 Town and Community Councils to observe including the introduction of a new Community Council in Rhoose.

Previous Committee Reports

[Report – 8th June 2023 - Observations by Independent Members of Town and Community Council Committee Meetings.](#)

[Report – 13th July 2023 - Observations by Independent Members of Town and Community Council Committee Meetings.](#)

[Report – 28th September 2023 - Observations by Independent Members of Town and Community Council Committee Meetings.](#)

[Report – 23rd November 2023 - Observations by Independent Members of Town and Community Council Committee Meetings.](#)

[Report – 2nd February 2024 - Observations by Independent Members of Town and Community Council.](#)

[Report – 30th January 2025 - Observations by Independent Members of Standards Committee of Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council Meetings.](#)

[Report – 17th July 2025 - Observations by Independent Members of Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council Committee Meetings.](#)

[Report – 25th September 2025 - Observations by Independent Members of Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council Committee Meetings.](#)

[Report – 20th November 2025 – Observations by Independent Members of Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council Committee Meetings.](#)

[Report – 29th January 2026 – Observations by Independent Members of Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council Committee Meetings.](#)

[Report – 26th March 2026 – Observations by Independent Members of Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Council Committee Meetings.](#)