

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

**Standards Committee
28th June 2017**

REPORT BY: Solicitor to the Council

SUBJECT: Standards Issues

REPORT FOR: Decision, Information and Discussion

A. General Standards Issues for County Councillors and Co-opted Members

A1 Code of Conduct Training

Code of Conduct training was held on the 16th May 2017. Four County Councillors and one Independent Member were unable to attend the training (one County Councillor was on other Council business). A further date will be arranged for these Members.

B. Referral of Councillors to Public Services Ombudsman

B1. County Councillor Referrals

B1.1 The current position regarding existing matters with the Ombudsman is as follows:

6/15/CC	Referred back to the Standards Committee	}
8/15/CC	Referred to the Standards Committee	}see below
9/15//CC	Referred to the Standards Committee	}
04/16/CC	Ombudsman investigating	
09/CC/2016	Investigated – no evidence of failure to comply	
10/CC/2016	Investigated – no evidence of failure to comply	
15/CC/2016	Investigated – no evidence of failure to comply	
16/CC/2016	Investigated – no evidence of failure to comply	
17/CC/2016	Investigated – no evidence of failure to comply	
01/CC/2017	Ombudsman decided not to investigate	
02/CC/2017	Ombudsman decided not to investigate – complainant submitted a request for a review of that decision	
03/CC/2017	Complaint received – Ombudsman decided not to investigate	

6/15/CC – County Councillor Gary Price

This case was referred by the Ombudsman to the Standards Committee who heard the matter on 2nd November 2016 determining that a breach had occurred and a suspension of 5 months was imposed. Councillor Price appealed and the Adjudication Panel for Wales held an appeal hearing where it was determined that Councillor Price had breached the Code of Conduct and recommended that the suspension should be for three months. The

Standards Committee held an appeal review hearing and determined that the three month suspension should be imposed. The suspension runs from 27th May 2017 to 26th August 2017.

A copy of the report of the Standards Committee of 26th May 2017 is attached at **Appendix A**.

8/15/CC – County Councillor Aled Davies

This case was referred by the Ombudsman to the Standards Committee who heard the matter on 13th March 2017 determining that a breach of the Code of Conduct had occurred and imposing a suspension of 2 weeks. This decision was not appealed and the suspension ran from 11th April 2017 to 25th April 2017.

A copy of the report of the Standards Committee of 13th March 2017 is attached at **Appendix B**.

9/15/CC – County Councillor Gwynfor Thomas

This case was referred by the Ombudsman to the Standards Committee who heard the matter on 15th March 2017 determining that a breach of the Code of Conduct had occurred and imposing a suspension of 4 weeks. This decision was not appealed and the suspension ran from 19th April 2017 to 8th May 2017 when the term of office came to an end.

A copy of the report of the Standards Committee of 15th March 2017 is attached at **Appendix C**.

C. Other Standards Issues

Standards Conference.

The next Standards Conference is due to be held in Spring 2018. The date and venue of the Conference are to be confirmed.

D Dispensations

D1. General Dispensations

During the previous lifetime of the Council a number of general dispensations were granted for ongoing or single issues. These dispensations ceased at the end of the term of the last Council and the Committee need to consider the approval of dispensations for the current term of office. A report on general dispensations is attached at **Appendix D**.

D2. Applications - County Councillors

No applications for dispensation have been received from County Councillors.

F Ombudsman's Casebook

The Ombudsman has published Code of Conduct Casebooks for the following periods:

- October 2016 – December 2016
- January 2017 – March 2017

A copy of these Casebooks are attached at **Appendix E**.

Back copies of the casebooks can be accessed from the website of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales at:

<http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk/en/publications/The-Code-of-Conduct-Casebook.aspx>

G Late payment of expenses

One claim for late payment of expenses has been received from County Councillor Sarah Williams for travel claims. A copy of the claim will be circulated at the meeting.

H Appointment of Independent Member

A report on the process for the appointment of the Independent Member to replace Mrs S Jarman who is coming to the end of her term of office was taken to the Annual Meeting of County Council on the 18th May 2017 and approved. A copy of the report and appendices are attached at **Appendix F**.

The Committee is requested to nominate Members to sit on the interview panel.

I. Meeting Dates

To note dates of future meetings as follows:

Wednesday 4th October 2017 10.00 Standards Committee

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