

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

**Standards Committee
24th February 2016**

REPORT BY: Solicitor to the Council

SUBJECT: Matters appertaining to Standards Issues

REPORT FOR: Decision, Information and Discussion

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

A1 Code of Conduct Training

Arrangements will be made for the remaining four Members to receive this refresher training by means of the Members providing written responses to 3 or 4 questions considered at the refresher training sessions. The scenarios have been sent to the four Members and responses are awaited.

The new Independent Member of Standards Committee will have received Code of Conduct training on 22nd February 2016.

A2 Draft Local Government (Wales) Bill

The Draft Local Government (Wales) Bill has proposed a number of new responsibilities for Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees as follows:

- Complaints about a Member's non-compliance with duties (attendance at meetings, holding surgeries, answering correspondence, training) will be made to the Council's Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Standards Committee will decide if the complaint is to be investigated.
- Duty of County Councillors to make annual reports – if the Head of Democratic Services is also the Monitoring Officer, any breaches of this provision can be investigated by the Monitoring Officer in the exercise of his / her responsibilities, but as above has to discuss this with the Chair of the Standards Committee.
- Following an investigation the Monitoring Officer must provide a report to the Standards Committee on the investigation making recommendations which the Monitoring Officer considers appropriate.
- The Standards Committee will consider the report and recommendations and consider if there has been a breach and will have powers to censure or suspend / partially suspend a Member or take no action.
- Leaders of political groups will have a duty to maintain high standards by members of their political group. Standards Committees will have

the responsibility of monitoring compliance by political group leaders of their duties.

- Standards Committees will have a duty to make an annual report to the County Council describing how it discharged its functions during the financial year.

The consultation exercise ended on 15th February, 2016 and the Council will need to await the outcome to see if the proposed provisions become enacted in the final Act.

B. Referral of Councillors to Public Services Ombudsman

B1. County Councillor Referrals

B1.1 The following matters are with the Ombudsman:

6/15/CC	Ombudsman investigating
8/15/CC	Ombudsman investigating
9/15//CC	Ombudsman investigating
10/15/CC	Not investigating
11/15/CC	Not investigating
12/15/CC	Not investigating
13/15/CC	Not investigating
01/16/CC	Awaiting a decision of whether or not to investigate
02/16/CC	Awaiting a decision of whether or not to investigate
03/16/CC	Awaiting a decision of whether or not to investigate
04/16/CC	Awaiting a decision of whether or not to investigate

C. Other Standards Issues

None.

D. Dispensations

D1. Applications - County Councillors

No applications for dispensation have been received.

E. Attendance

E.1 Member attendance

Attendance for Members at main Committees for the period 13th May 2015 to 30th November 2015 has been calculated.

Four Councillors have attendance below 60% namely:

Cllr A Holloway (57%)

Cllr D Bailey (57%)
Cllr P Harris (53%)
Cllr G Ratcliffe (50%)

It is known that Cllr Miss Holloway has had a period of ill-health. The remaining Councillors have received a letter asking for response to put to the Committee.

The responses will be reported verbally to the meeting.

E.2 Calculating attendance

The authority has moved to a new system for managing meetings and this allows greater opportunities for interrogating attendance data for those meetings arranged by the Council. The Committee is asked to consider the list of committees which are currently included for the calculation of attendance statistics should be revised.

F. Meeting Dates

F1 To note dates of future meetings as follows:

Wednesday 29th June 2016
Wednesday 5th October 2016

All meetings to commence at 10.00am with the option of training available afterwards.

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