

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Minutes of the meeting of Standards Committee held in The Conference Room, County Hall, Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Monday, 16th March, 2020 at 10.00 am

**PRESENT:** Mr. R Stow (Vice Chair) (In the Chair)

County Councillors: D. Evans and S. Woodhouse

I. Cameron (Community Council representative)

Independent Members:

T. Auld (remote attendance), P. Easy, R. McGonigle and R. Williams-Flew

#### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Matt Phillips  
Richard Williams

Head of Law/ Monitoring Officer  
Democratic Services Officer

#### **APOLOGIES:**

County Councillor P. Clarke

##### **1. Declarations of interest.**

None.

##### **2. Standards Committee Work Programme.**

We received the Standards Committee Work Programme. In doing so, the following points were noted:

- The Monitoring Officer has appointed two deputy Monitoring Officers from within his Department.
- The Local Government and Elections Bill will receive assent in July 2020.
- The Standards Committee will meet twice a year ( approximately April and October).
- Monmouthshire County Council's Standards Committee could meet with other Local Authority Standards Committees, particularly around training delivery.
- In response to a question raised regarding remote attendance at meetings, it was noted that the Authority was moving from Skype to Microsoft Teams.

## **MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Standards Committee held in The Conference Room, County Hall, Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Monday, 16th March, 2020 at 10.00 am**

- In response to questions raised in respect of paragraphs 3.5. b & c of the report, it was noted that Chief Internal Auditor would be involved in this matter with a view to closer working links being established between the Standards Committee and the Audit Committee.
- Details of Members' training is available on Monmouthshire County Council's website. Members' personal development plans have been despatched to Members via the Democratic Services Manager.

We resolved:

- 1) to meet twice a year around April and October, and as required by matters arising such as dispensation requests or disciplinary hearings;
- 2) to convene with these set meetings as required to deal with matters arising, hearings and dispensation requests;
- 3) to receive those reports relevant to its functions listed in the Constitution, including those set out at 3.7 of the report.
- 4) That the Standards Committee, on assent of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act, present a report to Council in the first meeting after the Annual General Meeting (AGM) annually.

#### **3. Confirmation of Minutes**

The minutes of the Standards Committee dated 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019 were confirmed and signed.

#### **4. Local Government and Elections Bill**

We noted that this matter had been discussed earlier in the meeting under the Standards Committee Work Programme agenda item.

#### **5. Constitution Update**

We receive a verbal update by the Head of Law / Monitoring Officer regarding the County Council's constitution. In doing so, the following points were noted:

- The Head of Law / Monitoring Officer had been appointed the Head of Recovery during the recent flooding events and had been taken away from his duties in preparing the draft Constitution.
- The draft Constitution has been prepared but requires further reviewing before it is presented to the Democratic Services Committee and Council.
- The COVID 19 Coronavirus pandemic is currently taking precedence across all services within the Authority. The draft Constitution will be

## **MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Standards Committee held in The Conference Room, County Hall, Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Monday, 16th March, 2020 at 10.00 am**

presented to the relevant Committees in due course but will be subject to this unprecedented event that is currently occurring.

- The Head of Law / Monitoring Officer will share the details in the draft constitution relating to the role of Committees with Members of the Standards Committee, for comment.
- In response to a question raised that the Planning Code of Conduct was not located within the current Constitution, the Head of Law / Monitoring Officer stated that he would investigate this matter.

We noted the update.

#### **6. Recent Adjudication Panel for Wales Case Discussion**

We resolved to defer consideration of this item to the next Standards Committee meeting.

#### **7. Dispensation Exercise**

We resolved to defer consideration of this item to the next Standards Committee meeting.

#### **8. Next Meeting**

The next Standards Committee meeting will be held in October 2020. The date to be confirmed in due course.

**The meeting ended at 11.28 am.**