

SUBJECT:	Code of Conduct Training - Community & Town Councils
MEETING:	Standards Committee
DATE:	16th December 2024
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	All

1. PURPOSE

To advise members of the extent and uptake of code of conduct training among members of the Community and Town Councils (“the Councils”) in the administrative area of Monmouthshire County Council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) note the information set out in the report relating to the arrangements for code of conduct training for members of the Councils; and
- b) instruct the Monitoring Officer to liaise with the clerks of the Councils to encourage the uptake of training on the code of conduct.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Code of Conduct training is provided to all County Councillors following local government elections. Community and Town Councillors are also invited to this training. The last session took place in May 2022, the next such session will take place following the next local government election.

3.2 The Monitoring Officer also ensures that new members and co-opted members of the County Council who join between elections receive code of conduct training. It is for Community & Town Councils to arrange training for their own members, either internally or via OVW.

3.3 At its meeting on 16th September 2024 members received a report from the chair following his attendance at the National Forum for Chairs of Standards Committees. The chair reported that Mr Paul Egan, the Deputy Chief Executive of One Voice Wales (“OVW”), attended and gave a presentation relating to the support offered by OVW to Councils, including the training, support and information provided by OVW in relation to standards of behaviour and code of conduct matters

3.4 Members requested that enquiries be made with the Councils in respect of their arrangements for Code of Conduct training.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer wrote to the clerks of all Councils to establish what training their members have undertaken in relation to the Code of Conduct and when this was last done. Responses were received from 15 of the Councils indicating a mixed picture, as summarised in the table below:

Community Council	Summary of Code of conduct training
Portskewett Community Council	7 of the 10 councillors re-elected in May 2022 renewed their training following the election. 2 co-opted councillors completed training in 2023. The Councillor co- opted in March 2024 completed the training after joining.
Rogiet Community Council	6 of the 7 councillors have completed code of conduct training, ranging from November 2020- March 2024. Newly co-opted councillor will be completing the training shortly.
Whitecastle Community Council	All received training in May 2022.
Devauden Community Council	2 councillors have received code of conduct training 1 councillors has received training on aspects of the code
Gobion Fawr Community Council	Some councillors have received code of conduct training. Figures not provided
Goetre Fawr Community Council	All 8 councillors received code of conduct training between 2022-2024.
Llanbadoc Community Council	6 of the 7 councillors have received code of conduct training between 2017-2024.
Llanelly Community Council	No councillors has received code of conduct training in the last 4 years.
Llanfoist Fawr Community Council	All 10 councillors have received code of conduct at some point during their service, but a training record is not accurately kept.
Llangybi Fawr Community Council	All councillors have received training, most recently in 2022
Llantristant Fawr Community Council	Code of conduct training is undertaken at Council meetings but no records of training are kept.

Magor with Undy Town Council	8/10 councillors have received code of conduct training.
Mathern Community Council	All councillors received code of conduct training.
Abergavenny Town Council	11 out of 17 councillors have received training between 2022 and 2023.
Chepstow Town Council	11 out of 19 Councillors received training in 2022

- 4.2 The Monitoring Officer also contacted OVW to obtain details of training resources available to the Councils and was informed that code of conduct training is part of their on-going training programme, details of which are regularly circulated to all Councils. Each Council is entitled to two free training places per year, which is funded by Welsh Government, with all other sessions chargeable at the rates set out in the table below.

Member Councils (Less than 200 dwellings)	£28.00
Member Councils (More than 200 dwellings)	£40.00
Non-Member Councils (Less than 200 dwellings)	£51.00
Non-Member Councils (More than 200 dwellings)	£63.00

- 4.3 The responsibilities of the Standards Committee include promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Councillors. These requirements apply to Town and Community Council members as well as County Councillors.
- 4.4 Whilst attending training on the Code of Conduct is likely to be considered good practice by the Committee, there is no statutory requirement for Councillors to participate in training on the Code of Conduct. Therefore, whilst the Committee cannot compel Councillors to undergo training, it can encourage the uptake of such training in order to promote and maintain high standards of conduct.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None.

6. CONSULTEES

Chair of Standards Committee – Peter Easy

7. REPORT AUTHOR

James Williams, Chief Officer Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer)