

# Public Document Pack



Neuadd y Sir  
Y Rhadyr  
Brynbuga  
NP15 1GA

Dydd Gwener, 6 Medi 2024

## Notice of meeting

### Pwyllgor safonau

**Dydd Llun, 16eg Medi, 2024 at 10.00 am,  
Council Chamber - Council Chamber**

## AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	Ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb	
2.	Datganiadau o Fuddiant	
3.	Cofnodion y cyfarfod blaenorol	1 - 4
4.	Llythyr Blynyddol gan PSOW 2023/24	5 - 16
5.	Diweddariad y Cadeirydd: Fforwm Cenedlaethol ar gyfer Cadeiryddion Pwyllgor Safonau National	17 - 18
6.	Adroddiad Blynyddol y Pwyllgor Safonau 2023/24	19 - 20
6.1.	Atodiad 1	21 - 24
7.	Dyddiad y cyfarfod nesaf – 16eg Rhagfyr 2024	

**Paul Matthews  
Chief Executive**

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillors:

R. Price  
A. Blackmore  
John  
R Williams-Flew  
P. Easy  
M. Gibson  
Frances Taylor  
Fay Bromfield  
Catherine Fookes

## Public Information

### Access to paper copies of agendas and reports

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### Watch this meeting online

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### Welsh Language

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public through the medium of Welsh or English. We respectfully ask that you provide us with adequate notice to accommodate your needs.

# Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

## Our purpose

- to become a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life.

## Objectives we are working towards

- Fair place to live where the effects of inequality and poverty have been reduced;
- Green place to live and work with reduced carbon emissions and making a positive contribution to addressing the climate and nature emergency;
- Thriving and ambitious place, where there are vibrant town centres and where businesses can grow and develop
- Safe place to live where people have a home where they feel secure in;
- Connected place where people feel part of a community and are valued;
- Learning place where everybody has the opportunity to reach their potential

## Our Values

**Openness.** We are open and honest. People have the chance to get involved in decisions that affect them, tell us what matters and do things for themselves/their communities. If we cannot do something to help, we'll say so; if it will take a while to get the answer we'll explain why; if we can't answer immediately we'll try to connect you to the people who can help – building trust and engagement is a key foundation.

**Fairness.** We provide fair chances, to help people and communities thrive. If something does not seem fair, we will listen and help explain why. We will always try to treat everyone fairly and consistently. We cannot always make everyone happy, but will commit to listening and explaining why we did what we did.

**Flexibility.** We will continue to change and be flexible to enable delivery of the most effective and efficient services. This means a genuine commitment to working with everyone to embrace new ways of working.

**Teamwork.** We will work with you and our partners to support and inspire everyone to get involved so we can achieve great things together. We don't see ourselves as the 'fixers' or problem-solvers, but we will make the best of the ideas, assets and resources available to make sure we do the things that most positively impact our people and places.

**Kindness:** We will show kindness to all those we work with putting the importance of relationships and the connections we have with one another at the heart of all interactions.



# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 3

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Standards Committee held  
at Conference Room - Usk, NP15 1AD on Monday, 10th June, 2024 at 10.00 am**

**PRESENT:** County Councillors: Frances Taylor, Fay Bromfield,  
Catherine Fookes

Independent Members: Ruth Price, Michael John, Rhian Williams-  
Flew, Peter Easy (Chair), Marian Gibson

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Nicola Perry Senior Democracy Officer  
James Williams Chief Officer Law & Governance

### **APOLOGIES:**

Councillors A. Blackmore

#### **1. Election of Chair**

Peter Easy was elected as Chair of Standards Committee for the year 2024/25.

#### **2. Election of Vice Chair**

Rhian Williams Flew was elected as Vice Chair of Standards Committee for the year 2024/25.

#### **3. Declarations of Interest**

County Councillor Frances Taylor declared a prejudicial interest in relation to item 8 and agreed to leave the meeting for the duration of that item.

#### **4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023 were accepted as an accurate record.

#### **5. Local Resolution Protocol**

Deferred.

#### **6. Planning Code of Practice**

The Chief Officer for Law and Governance, and Monitoring Officer presented the report to provide an update to Standards Committee in relation to the Planning Code of Practice.

It was explained that the Planning Code of Practice had been updated and approved by Planning Committee. Next steps, to go to Democratic Services Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2024, be added to the Constitution, and be approved at Full Council in October 2024.

**The Committee resolved to accept the recommendation that Standards Committee notes the position in relation to the Planning Code of Practice, attached at Appendix 1.**

## **MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting of Standards Committee held  
at Conference Room - Usk, NP15 1AD on Monday, 10th June, 2024 at 10.00 am**

### **7. Adoption of Procedure for dealing with referrals from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales**

The report was presented for the Standards Committee to adopt a procedure to deal with investigation reports referred to it by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW).

**The Committee resolved to accept the recommendation that the Standards Committee adopts the procedure for dealing with referrals from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, attached to the report as Appendix 1.**

### **8. PSOW Decision Notices**

The report was presented to provide the Standards Committee with the decision notices issued by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales ("the Ombudsman") following complaints against elected members in respect of breaches of the Member Code of Conduct.

**The Committee resolved to note the contents of this report and the decision notices attached at Appendices 1-3.**

### **9. Referral from the PSOW**

The report was presented for the Standards Committee to consider a referral from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and to decide arrangements for it to be dealt with under its adopted procedure.

**The Committee resolved to establish a Panel to deal with the Ombudsman referral in accordance with its adopted procedure; and instruct the Monitoring Officer to make arrangements for the hearing of the complaint.**

**It was noted the Michael John must be a member of the panel. Marion Gibson, Ruth Price and Andrew Blakemore were happy to be selected for the panel.**

### **10. Verbal Update: PSOW Independent Review**

The Ombudsman had announced there would be an independent investigation following the suspension and resignation of a senior member of staff.

Dr Melissa McCulloch has been appointed to conduct the review. The terms of reference were shared with the Monitoring Officer Group and Senedd Finance Committee prior to being finalised.

The terms of reference were highlighted as:

1. To review the code of conduct, processes, and delegations to ensure they are appropriate, fair and impartial and free from political bias.
2. To review the decisions taken by the former team leader and her team, between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 and 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2022.
3. To review cases, where the former team leader was the case owner, which were investigated and closed without reference to a Standards Committee.
4. To establish whether there is evidence that the team expressed personal views on political matters.
5. To make recommendations which Dr. McCulloch considers appropriate.

**MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting of Standards Committee held  
at Conference Room - Usk, NP15 1AD on Monday, 10th June, 2024 at 10.00 am**

A final report will be shared with Standards Committee in due course.

**11. Next Meeting 16th September 2024**

Noted.

**The meeting ended at Time Not Specified**

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**Ombwdsmon  
Ombudsman**  
Cymru • Wales

Ask for: Communications



01656 641150



Caseinfo@ombudsman.wales

Date: 6 September 2024

Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby  
Monmouthshire County Council

**By email only**

maryannbrocklesby@monmouthshire.gov.uk  
paulmatthews@monmouthshire.gov.uk  
JamesWilliams@monmouthshire.gov.uk

## Annual Letter 2023/24

Dear Councillor Brocklesby

### Role of PSOW

As you know, the role of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales is to consider complaints about public services, to investigate alleged breaches of the councillor Code of Conduct, to set standards for complaints handling by public bodies and to drive improvement in complaints handling and learning from complaints. I also undertake investigations into public services on my own initiative.

### Purpose of letter

This letter is intended to provide an update on the work of my office, to share key issues for local government in Wales and to highlight any particular issues for your organisation, together with actions I would like your organisation to take.

### Overview of 2023/24

This letter, as always, coincides with my Annual Report – “A New Chapter Unfolds” – and comes at a time when public services continue to be in the spotlight, and under considerable pressures. My office has seen another increase in the number of people asking for our help – a 17% increase in overall contacts compared to the previous year, with nearly 10,000 enquiries and complaints received. Our caseload has increased substantially - by 37% - since 2019.

During 2023/24 we considered and closed more enquiries and complaints than we ever have done before, and we reduced the average cost for each case and investigation. We started the year with a focus on reducing our aging cases, those over 12 months old, by 50% by the end of the year. These cases are often the most complex and distressing for the people making the complaint. I am extremely pleased to say we exceeded this target, reducing our aged investigations by over 70%. We are now well on track to meeting our objective to complete investigation of complaints within 12 months.

### **Public Services Complaints and compliance with recommendations**

In total 1,108 complaints about local authorities were made to us last year – broadly the same number as the previous year. During this period, we intervened in (upheld, settled or resolved at an early stage) 14% of local authority complaints – a similar proportion to recent years.

We received 29 complaints about Monmouthshire County Council in 2023/24 and closed 32 - some complaints were carried over from the previous year. Monmouthshire County Council's intervention rate was 9%. Further information on complaints about your organisation can be found in the appendices.

We made 4 recommendations to your council during the year. To ensure that our investigations and reports drive improvement, we follow up compliance with the recommendations agreed with your organisation. In 2023/24, 4 recommendations were due and 25% were complied with in the timescale agreed. The remainder were complied with, but outside the timescales agreed or remain outstanding as at 9 April 2024.

Recommendations and timescales for complying with recommendations are always agreed with the public body concerned before being finalised, and we therefore expect organisations to comply within the timescales agreed.

### **Our Code of Conduct work**

My role is to investigate allegations that councillors have breached their Code of Conduct. Where an investigation finds evidence to support the complaint on a matter which is serious enough to require a referral in the public interest, these cases are referred either to the local Standards Committee or to the Adjudication Panel for Wales for consideration.

In 2023/24, we received 16% more Code of Conduct complaints than the previous year, relating to both Principal Councils and Town and Community Councils. My office made 21 referrals – to Standards Committees or the Adjudication Panel for Wales, an increase from 12 the previous year.

I am grateful to your Monitoring Officer for their positive engagement with my office over the last year. We will continue to engage with them on matters relating to the ethical standards framework, including Local Resolution Procedures this year.

## **Independent Review**

As you will be aware, I became aware of inappropriate comments, of a political nature, made by a member of my staff via social media. These comments were widely reported in the media. The member of staff in question was suspended and subsequently resigned. However, the comments prompted questions about my office's work on councillor Code of Conduct cases.

In view of the seriousness of the matter, I commissioned Dr Melissa McCullough to conduct an independent review of our Code of Conduct work, and I have published the full [Terms of Reference](#) for that review. I and my staff are engaging closely with the Monitoring Officer Group and the National Forum for Standards Committee Chairs in relation to this matter. I will be publishing Dr McCullough's final report on completion of the review and sharing it with the Senedd's Finance Committee this Autumn.

## **Supporting improvement of public services**

We continued our work on supporting improvement in public services last year and worked on our second wider Own Initiative investigation. The investigation includes four local authorities and considers carers' needs assessments. I am grateful to the investigated authorities for their co-operation and candour throughout the year, and we look forward to sharing our finalised report this Autumn. This will make recommendations to the investigated authorities and will ask all local authorities across Wales to make similar improvements.

We have continued our work on complaints handling standards for public bodies in Wales and now have 56 public bodies following our model complaints handling policy. These public bodies account for around 85% of the complaints we receive. We have continued our work to publish complaints statistics, gathered from public bodies, with data published twice a year.

We continued our work to publish complaints statistics into a third year, with data now published twice a year. This data allows us to see information with greater context – for example, last year 15% of complaints made to Monmouthshire County Council's went on to be referred to PSOW.

## **Action we would like your organisation to take**

Further to this letter can I ask that your Council takes the following actions:

- Present my Annual Letter to the Cabinet and to the Governance and Audit Committee at the next available opportunity and notify me of when these meetings will take place.
- Consider the data in this letter, alongside your own data, to understand more about your performance on complaints, including any patterns or trends and your organisation's compliance with recommendations made by my office.

- Inform me of the outcome of the Council's considerations and proposed actions on the above matters at the earliest opportunity.

I would like to thank you, and your officers, for your continued openness and engagement with my office. Our information shows that local authorities are looking into more complaints than ever before and are using information from complaints to deliver better outcomes for the people of Wales.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M.M. Morris'.

**Michelle Morris**  
Public Services Ombudsman

Cc. Paul Matthews, Chief Executive, Monmouthshire County Council  
James Williams, Monitoring Officer, Monmouthshire County Council



## Factsheet

### Appendix A - Complaints Received

Local Authority	Complaints Received	Received per 1,000 residents
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	15	0.22
Bridgend County Borough Council	59	0.41
Caerphilly County Borough Council	56	0.32
Cardiff Council*	149	0.41
Carmarthenshire County Council	69	0.37
Ceredigion County Council	32	0.45
Conwy County Borough Council	36	0.31
Denbighshire County Council**	31	0.32
Flintshire County Council	51	0.33
Cyngor Gwynedd	38	0.32
Isle of Anglesey County Council	38	0.55
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	12	0.20
Monmouthshire County Council	29	0.31
Neath Port Talbot Council	35	0.25
Newport City Council	52	0.33
Pembrokeshire County Council	40	0.32
Powys County Council	54	0.41
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	64	0.27
Swansea Council	81	0.34
Torfaen County Borough Council	14	0.15
Vale of Glamorgan Council	77	0.58
Wrexham County Borough Council	76	0.56
<b>Total</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>0.36</b>
* inc 2 Rent Smart Wales		
** inc 1 Wales Penalty Processing Partnership		



Appendix B - Received by Subject

<b>Monmouthshire County Council</b>	<b>Complaints Received</b>	<b>% share</b>
Adult Social Services	0	0%
Benefits Administration	1	3%
Children's Social Services	7	24%
Community Facilities, Recreation and Leisure	0	0%
Complaints Handling	5	17%
Covid-19	0	0%
Education	0	0%
Environment and Environmental Health	0	0%
Finance and Taxation	1	3%
Housing	3	10%
Licensing	0	0%
Planning and Building Control	4	14%
Roads and Transport	4	14%
Various Other	4	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	



# Ombwdsmon Ombudsman

Cymru • Wales

## Appendix C - Complaint Outcomes (\* denotes intervention)

<b>Monmouthshire County Council</b>		<b>% Share</b>
Out of Jurisdiction	6	19%
Premature	10	31%
Other cases closed after initial consideration	13	41%
Early Resolution/ voluntary settlement*	3	9%
Discontinued	0	0%
Other Reports - Not Upheld	0	0%
Other Reports Upheld*	0	0%
Public Interest Reports*	0	0%
Special Interest Reports*	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	



## Appendix D - Cases with PSOW Intervention

	No. of interventions	No. of closures	% of interventions
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	1	16	6%
Bridgend County Borough Council	8	59	14%
Caerphilly County Borough Council	3	48	6%
Cardiff Council	28	144	19%
Cardiff Council - Rent Smart Wales	0	3	0%
Carmarthenshire County Council	8	60	13%
Ceredigion County Council	7	32	22%
Conwy County Borough Council	0	37	0%
Denbighshire County Council	2	32	6%
Denbighshire County Council - Wales Penalty Processing Partnership	0	1	0%
Flintshire County Council	8	57	14%
Cyngor Gwynedd	6	39	15%
Isle of Anglesey County Council	10	41	24%
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	3	14	21%
Monmouthshire County Council	3	32	9%
Neath Port Talbot Council	5	34	15%
Newport City Council	5	51	10%
Pembrokeshire County Council	7	38	18%
Powys County Council	7	53	13%
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	11	63	17%
Swansea Council	12	77	16%
Torfaen County Borough Council	2	14	14%
Vale of Glamorgan Council	15	71	21%
Wrexham County Borough Council	7	79	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>1095</b>	<b>14%</b>





## Appendix E – Compliance performance comparison

Local Authority	Number of recommendations made in 2023-24	Number of recommendations falling due in 2023-24	% of recommendations, complied with on time
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	1	1	100%
Bridgend County Borough Council	18	20	35%
Caerphilly County Borough Council	9	9	11%
Cardiff Council	74	75	92%
Carmarthenshire County Council	25	25	52%
Ceredigion County Council	23	23	78%
Swansea Council	29	32	63%
Conwy County Borough Council	0	1	0%
Denbighshire County Council	5	6	67%
Flintshire County Council	17	17	59%
Cyngor Gwynedd	12	19	74%
Isle of Anglesey County Council	26	24	92%
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	11	9	56%
Monmouthshire County Council	4	4	25%
Neath Port Talbot Council	14	14	29%
Newport City Council	10	7	43%
Pembrokeshire County Council	24	23	96%
Powys County Council	18	16	31%
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	26	26	77%
Torfaen County Borough Council	3	3	67%
Vale of Glamorgan Council	50	48	92%
Wrexham County Borough Council	16	19	42%



Appendix F - Code of Conduct Complaints

**Monmouthshire County  
Council**

<b>Decision not to investigate</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Discontinued</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>No evidence of breach</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>No action necessary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Refer to Adjudication Panel</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Refer to Standards Committee</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>



Appendix G - Town/Community Council Code of Complaints

Town/Community Council	Decision not to investigate	Investigations					Total
		Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Refer to Standards Committee	
Caerwent Community Council	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Llantilio Pertholey Community Council	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Monmouth Town Council	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Raglan Community Council	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

## Information Sheet

**Appendix A** shows the number of complaints received by PSOW for all Local Authorities in 2023/24. These complaints are contextualised by the population of each authority.

**Appendix B** shows the categorisation of each complaint received, and what proportion of received complaints represents for the Local Authority.

**Appendix C** shows outcomes of the complaints which PSOW closed for the Local Authority in 2023/24. This table shows both the volume, and the proportion that each outcome represents for the Local Authority.

**Appendix D** shows Intervention Rates for all Local Authorities in 2023/24. An intervention is categorised by either an upheld complaint (either public interest or non-public interest), an early resolution, or a voluntary settlement.

**Appendix E** shows the compliance performance of each Local Authority.

**Appendix F** shows the outcomes of Code of Conduct complaints closed by PSOW related to Local Authority in 2023/24. This table shows both the number, and the proportion that each outcome represents for the Local Authority.

**Appendix G** shows the outcomes of Code of Conduct complaints closed by PSOW related to Town and Community Councils in the Local Authority's area in 2023/24. This table shows both the number, and the proportion that each outcome represents for each Town or Community Council.



**SUBJECT: Chair's Update: National Forum for Chairs of Standards Committees**

**MEETING: Standards Committee**

**DATE: 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All**

## 1. PURPOSE

For the Chair to update Standards Committee members following his attendance at the National Forum for Chairs of Standards Committees on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

## 2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee notes the contents of the report.

## 3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Chair attended the National Forum for Chairs of Standards Committees on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024. The major points of discussion are set out below.

### Adjudication Panel for Wales

- 3.2 Judge Claire Sharp, the outgoing APW President, spoke about the nature and conduct of hearings by Standards Committees, and appeals against the findings of those hearings. She stressed that the record of the hearing should be comprehensive, and that the reasoning behind a committee's decisions must be clear and detailed. In relation to appeals against the findings of a Standards Committee, Judge Sharp noted that this was a paper process only and was driven by the question: "does the appeal or part of it have a reasonable prospect of success?" It was also emphasized that, in applying sanctions following a hearing, a Standards Committee should use the APW guidance to ensure a level of consistency. She noted that amongst the most common deficiencies in the findings of hearings held by Standards Committees was the lack of a clear record of the reasoning behind a decision or indication of the weight placed on particular evidence.

### One Voice Wales

- 3.3 Paul Egan, the OVW Deputy Chief Executive gave a presentation which covered the support offered by OVW to Town and Community Councils; and the training, support and information provided by OVW in relation to standards of behaviour and code of conduct matters.

### Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

- 3.4 The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, Michelle Morris, discussed the PSOW's increasing case load and its impact on the time available to investigate

complaints. She also covered the independent review set up, after a complaint about a PSOW Team Leader, to check for any political bias in the work of the PSOW. The final report of the review is due in the autumn.

#### Issues raised by Chairs of Standards Committees

- 3.5 There was a brief discussion on the duties of Group Leaders in relation to standards and how these duties were being carried out.

#### Any Other Business

- 3.6 There was a discussion of the basis for the Forum's meetings and whether the matters covered were on or off the record. It was agreed that notes of the meetings could be shared with Standards Committees but not be placed in the public domain. It was suggested that a two-part format to meetings could be adopted with the second part containing confidential business.

#### **4. REPORT AUTHOR**

Peter Easy, Chair, on behalf of the Standards Committee



**SUBJECT: Annual Report of the Standards Committee for 2023/24**

**MEETING: Standards Committee**

**DATE: 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All**

**1. PURPOSE**

To present the Standards Committee Annual Report 2023/24 for approval prior to reporting to a meeting of Council.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

That the Standards Committee approves the draft annual report at Appendix 1.

**3. INTRODUCTION**

3.1 Section 63 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 ("LGE 2021") created a new requirement for standards committees to make an annual report to their authority.

3.2 Section 63 LGE 2021 prescribes the required content of the annual report which is reflected in the draft report attached at Appendix 1.

**4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

None.

**5. CONSULTEES**

Standards Committee  
Monitoring Officer – James Williams

**6. AUTHOR AND CONTACT DETAILS**

Peter Easy, Chair, on behalf of the Standards Committee

**7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1 - Annual Report of the Standards Committee for 2023/24

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**SUBJECT:** Annual Report of the Standards Committee for 2023/24

**MEETING:** Council

**DATE:** 24<sup>th</sup> October 2024

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:** All

### 1. PURPOSE

To present the 2023/24 annual report of the Council's Standards Committee.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the contents of the report.

### 3. INTRODUCTION

3.1 The Standards Committee is required by Section 63 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 ("LGE 2021") to make an annual report to their authority.

3.2 Section 63 LGE 2021 prescribes the content of the annual report as set out below.

### 4. DISCHARGE OF THE COMMITTEE'S FUNCTIONS

4.1 The Standards Committee is composed of nine members: three County Councillors, one community member and five independent members.

4.2 The Committee met twice in 2023/24 - on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

4.3 The functions of the Committee are defined in sections 54 and 56 of the Local Government Act 2000 ("LGA 2000"). The primary function is to

## **APPENDIX 1 – Draft Annual Report**

promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members and co-opted members of the authority, and by the members of community councils in Monmouthshire.

### **5. REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES (PSOW)**

- 5.1 The Standards Committee received one report from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (“PSOW”) during the year 2023/24 following an investigation into allegations that a member of Llantilo Petholey Community Council had breached their authority’s member code of conduct.
- 5.2 The matter was referred to a hearing of a Standards Committee Panel on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2024 and the outcome was reported on the Council’s website in accordance with the Committee’s procedure.
- 5.3 The PSOW’s annual letter to the Council for the year 2023/24 is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

### **6. ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE COMMITTEE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATION OF PSOW REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 Not applicable.

### **7. NOTICES GIVEN TO THE COMMITTEE BY THE ADJUDICATION PANEL FOR WALES**

- 7.1 No notices regarding member conduct were received from APW during the year.
- 7.2 No member of the County Council and no member of any community council in the area of Monmouthshire were respondents at APW tribunals.

### **8. TRAINING FOR MEMBERS**

- 8.1 All members of the Council are required to undergo Code of Conduct training. Code of Conduct training was provided for all members at County Hall on 12th May 2022 in person. Further training has been made available for those members who were unable to attend this training, or who have been co-opted to the Council since this date.
- 8.2 All members and co-opted members have received training on the Code of Conduct, either in person or via the online format.

### **9. COMPLIANCE OF POLITICAL GROUP LEADERS WITH NEW CONDUCT DUTIES s 52A(1) LGA 2000**

- 9.1 The Monitoring Officer is satisfied that all three MCC political group leaders complied with the duties set out above in s 52A(1) of LGA 2000 during the year ending 31st March 2024.

### **10. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE AUTHORITY**

- 10.1 Section 56B(5) of LGA 2000 states that:

## **APPENDIX 1 – Draft Annual Report**

*An annual report by a standards committee of a relevant authority may include recommendations to the authority about any matter in respect of which the committee has functions.*

10.2 The committee has no recommendations for the authority.

### **11. CONCLUSION**

11.1 The standards committee strongly commends all members of the authority for continuing to maintain high standards of conduct throughout 2023/24.

### **12. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

None.

### **13. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1 - PSOW's annual letter to the Council for the year 2023/24

### **14. CONSULTEES**

Standards Committee  
Monitoring Officer – James Williams

### **15. AUTHOR AND CONTACT DETAILS**

Peter Easy, Chair, on behalf of the Standards Committee

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