

SUBJECT: Annual Letter 2016/17 from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

MEETING: Standards Committee

DATE: 25th September 2017

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

To receive the annual letter for 2016/17 from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales in respect of Monmouthshire County Council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

To note the contents of the annual letter 2016/17.

3. KEY ISSUES:

In the council's constitution, at Article 9, the roles and functions of the Standards Committee include at (d) – *monitoring and from time to time reviewing the operation of the members' code of conduct*, and (l) – *ensuring the council's complaints procedures operate effectively....*

Members will find attached to this report at appendix A the annual letter for 2016/17 of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales for matters involving Monmouthshire County Council. The letter gives the numbers of complaints received by the Ombudsman in respect of the services provided by Monmouthshire County Council – “maladministration complaints” and those received in respect of alleged breaches of the members' code of conduct. In respect of the maladministration complaints by service users, the number of complaints received by the Ombudsman has reduced from 27 in 2015/16 to 18 in 2016/17 with only one complaint taken forward to investigation. Roads and Transport was the subject area with the highest number of complaints with four and only 14% of complaints required intervention by the Ombudsman.

In respect of allegations that elected members breached the members' code of conduct, the Ombudsman closed 8 complaints, 7 after initial consideration and 1 after concluding that there was no evidence of a breach. In 2015/16, the Ombudsman closed 3 allegations that the code of conduct had been breached – 2 after initial consideration and 1 on the basis that no action was necessary.

4. REASONS:

The consideration of the annual report of the Ombudsman is within the role and function of the Standards Committee.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: None

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

The report does not raise any significant sustainable development or equality implications.

7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS: NONE

8. CONSULTEES: None

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

10. AUTHOR: Robert Tranter, Monitoring Officer

11. CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel: 01633 644064

E-mail: roberttranter@monmouthshire.gov.uk