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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.

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- 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 16th 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

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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.

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